

Chapter Two

Boom and Bust

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Expectations

Overall Expectations:

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to

- explain some major ways in which Canada's population has changed since 1914
- evaluate the impact of some technological developments on Canadians in different periods
- explain changing economic conditions and patterns and how they have affected Canadians
- describe the impact of significant social and political movements on Canadian society
- describe how individual Canadians have contributed to the development of Canada and its emerging sense of identity
- assess the changing role and power of the federal and provincial governments in Canada since 1914
- describe changes in Canada's international status and its role in the world since 1914

Specific Expectations:

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to

- explain some of the ways in which the lives of adolescents, women, and seniors have changed since the First World War as a result of major population shifts, social changes, and technological development
- summarize the key struggles and contributions of the labour and women's movements in Canada during the 1920s and 1930s
- identify changes in Canada's international status since the First World War

Word List

Alberta Five

Bootleggers

Collective bargaining

Depression

Inflation

Prohibition

Socialism

Statute of

Westminster

Assembly line

Capitalism

Communism

General strike

League of Nations

Recession

Specialization of
labour

Advance Organizer

1915

1920

1 In the early years of the 20th century, women were not seen as equal to men. They were not encouraged to get jobs or a good education. It was difficult for women to become doctors or lawyers. A group of



women, including Emily Murphy, fought hard for women's rights.

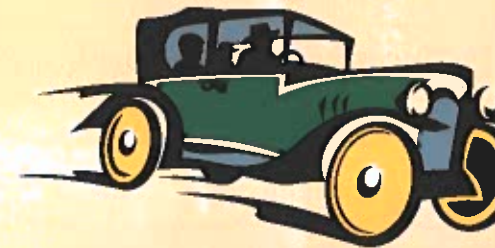


2 After the war, soldiers returned to find that the price of goods had increased and the number of jobs had decreased. Wages for existing jobs were low. Workers joined together to form unions. Trade unions helped workers demand higher wages.



In the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919, more than 30 000 workers left their jobs.

3 The “roaring twenties” was a decade of prosperity. There were many jobs and high wages. People could afford homes and cars. Restaurants, theatres, music halls, and dance clubs were popular. Many people put money into the stock market.



Most urban Canadians worked 9 to 10 hours a day, including a half day on Saturdays, but there was still plenty of time for pleasure on weekends.

Boom and Bust

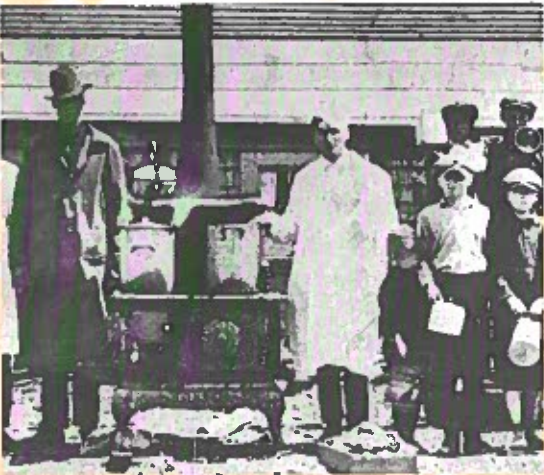
1925

1930

1935

1940

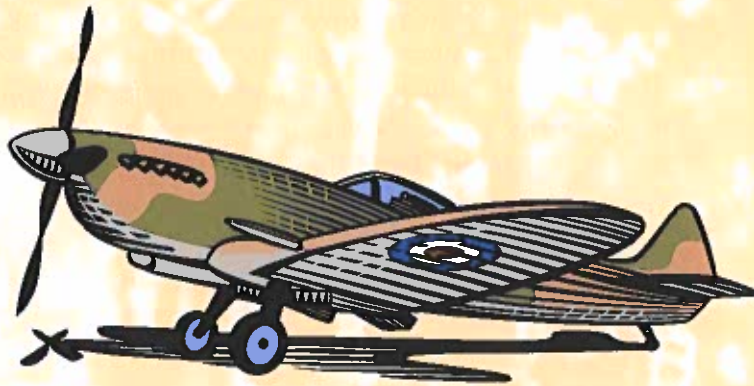
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4 In 1929, the bottom dropped out of the stock market. The Great Depression had begun. The stock market crash affected the whole world. Workers were laid off, causing them to search desperately for jobs that did not exist. Sometimes they ended up in hobo camps outside the towns.



5



5 Tough economic times lasted through the 1930s. Canada gained a greater sense of identity. The nation was a respected member of the world community. The Depression ended when the Second World War began.



By 1933, one in five Canadian workers had no job. There was no employment insurance. Two million people in this country were on relief.

After the War

The First World War ended on 11 November 1918, after four years of fighting. Canada's nine million people had reason to be proud of the country's war effort.

Many Canadian soldiers, sailors and airmen had not been home in a long time. Now they were returning to take up their lives again. What would they find? How would their nation welcome them back? Troop ships tied up at the government docks in

Halifax, and troop trains streamed west, loaded with returning heroes. Cheers greeted them at every station. Family and friends turned out in celebration; the celebrating ended, though, when they tried to get jobs and buy things. Prices all over the country had skyrocketed. The dollar did not buy as much as it had before the war. This **inflation** meant that people's savings and earnings were worth less.



These war veterans are protesting the lack of jobs. Why would they be so unhappy? What other ways might they have protested?

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Worker's Unrest

When Canada's war veterans returned home in 1919, after fighting "the war to end all wars," they expected that the country would be grateful, that they would find secure employment and live better lives. Instead, they found widespread worker unrest and frustration. Many ex-soldiers could not even find a job.

The year 1919 began a period of change for Canada. The booming economy ended with the war. Many industries fell into a slump, and factories closed or cut production. Ammunition, weapons, and military equipment were no longer needed. As factories closed, some people lost their jobs. Employers had no new jobs for ex-soldiers. As a result, unemployment increased and many people faced tough times. There was no employment insurance in 1919.

What had happened? Who was to blame? Some people blamed immigrants who had

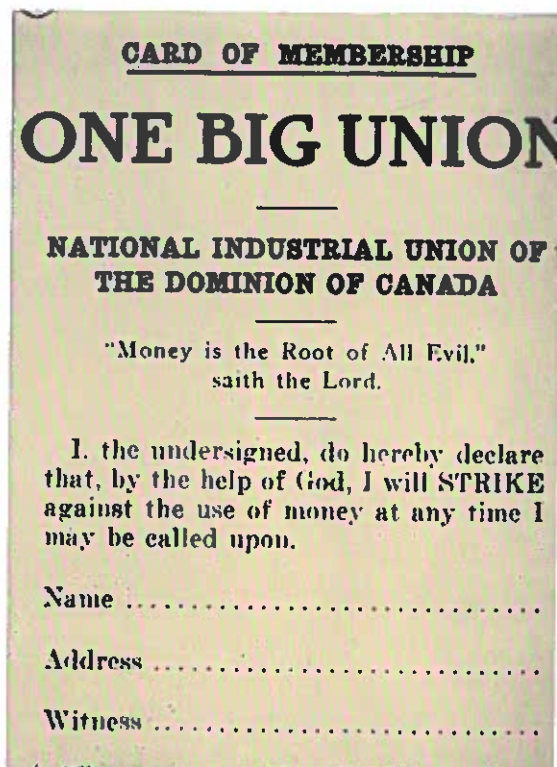
come to Canada before the war. They believed immigrants took jobs away from native-born Canadians. Many soldiers were also angry with some business people who had made much money during the war.

The Canadian government set up a Royal

Commission to study the labour problem, but it didn't help much. Unhappy workers wanted answers. The two political parties did not seem to have any.

In the late 1800s, workers had begun to band together to get what they wanted. Workers within the same trade (such as printers) formed trade unions. However, the government and business leaders did not allow them to strike for better conditions or wages. After the First World War, more people joined together to form unions. Each union chose a few people

to represent all its members and to bargain with employers. This process is called **collective bargaining**.



Unions become stronger after the First World War.

Robert Boyd Russell

BORN: 1888, Glasgow, Scotland

DIED: 1964, Winnipeg, Manitoba

SIGNIFICANCE: Russell was dedicated to fighting what he saw as the abuse of Canadian workers by rich factory and business owners. Russell spent his life championing the plight of the working class.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY: Russell became an apprentice machinist in 1900 at the age of 12, and learned how to build machines and engines from engineers' drawings. He immigrated to Canada in 1911. He settled in Winnipeg, and found a job in the Canadian Pacific Railway machine shop. He soon became involved in organizing a union at the CPR. During the First World War, Russell refused to support Canada's participation in the war. He believed that Canadian workers were being unfairly asked to bear the cost of the war on the battle lines, while their bosses sat back and made large profits at home. In 1919, at the close of the war,



Russell became a central player in the One Big Union (OBU) and helped organize the Winnipeg General Strike. He was arrested and spent two years in prison for his role in the Winnipeg General Strike. After serving time, Russell travelled widely in support of the OBU; however, he found that the ideal of a universal union was slowly losing ground. Workers left the OBU to return to their trade unions. In the 1930s, Russell supported the CCF (see page 110). He became the executive secretary of the Win-

nipeg Branch of the newly organized Canadian Labour Congress in 1956. He retired from political life in 1962 and died a few years later. Winnipeg's R. B. Russell Vocational School was named in his honour in 1967. **Do you think working people in Canada still need champions? How useful are strikes? Explain.**

CANADIAN LIVES

Companies were not always willing to discuss wage and working conditions. Union members could vote to strike or to stop work to put pressure on an employer. Sometimes, workers from many unions voted together to hold a **general strike**. General strikes could disrupt many public and private businesses.

In March 1919, workers met in Calgary to organize the One Big Union, or OBU. The founders planned to unite workers throughout Canada into one union. This one union would have enormous power. E. T. Kingsley and Robert Boyd Russell were two leading OBU organizers.

Organizing the different industrial trades,

however, was not easy. OBU leaders returned home to recruit more workers. They wanted to build a strong union, which could call a general strike to help its members get what they wanted.

Many Canadian political and business leaders did not like the OBU. Some believed it was based on **communism**. Others feared union power. They thought collective bargaining was dangerous. Politicians worried about what might happen if the unions got out of control. They wanted to make sure that a workers' revolution—like the one happening in Russia at that time—did not happen in Canada. Americans to the south worried about “The Red Scare.”

A CLOSER LOOK AT COMMUNISM

Karl Marx is the father of communism. His ideas were first written in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848). As Marx saw it, **capitalism**, with its constant search for profits, takes advantage of the working class. Marx believed that the only way workers could improve their lives was to overthrow the government and create a new government by

the working class. In this new system, everyone would share and benefit equally. Later, communist parties were established in many countries. The Communist Party of Canada was established in Guelph in 1921. At times, it was illegal or banned. Some members became active as union leaders and organizers.

FOCUS

1. How did the war benefit the Canadian economy?
2. What kind of economy did returning soldiers face after the First World War?
3. What was the One Big Union? How did it plan to use the general strike?

The Winnipeg General Strike

In May 1919, 2000 building and metal workers went on strike in Winnipeg. They wanted wages higher than 85 cents an hour and a workweek reduced from 60 to 44 hours. The Metal Trades Council also wanted to be recognized as a union with the right to bargain for its workers.



During the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919, the city ground to a halt. Thousands of workers walked off the job. What made them do so?

When employers refused, the workers asked the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council for help. The Council asked all unionized workers within the city of

Winnipeg to walk off their jobs in support of the metal workers. They believed that if all the workers went on strike, the employers would be forced to give in. Council members voted 11 112 to 524 in favour of a general strike. The strike began on May 15 at 11 a.m. Firefighters, streetcar drivers, telephone

operators, sales clerks, garbage collectors, street cleaners and dairy workers all left their jobs. Non-union members left their jobs, too. Within three days, more than 30 000 workers were on strike.

The strikers were led by a strike committee. When the police wanted to strike, the committee asked them to stay on the job to protect property. The committee also asked other essential service workers to return to work so people would be able to have electricity, heat and food. It asked theatres and movie houses to stay open so people would have something to do in their spare time.

A Divided City

Not all Winnipeggers supported the strike. Business people organized the Citizens' Committee of One Thousand to ensure essential city services were maintained. They wanted to make sure no lasting damage to

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the city's economy occurred. Some citizens feared that the workers wanted more than higher wages and claimed that the strike was part of a communist plot. Some union leaders seemed to speak in the same terms as the Russian communists, which suggested that the strike was the beginning of a revolution in Canada. Feelings against immigrants and foreigners ran high. The Committee of One Thousand urged the federal government to step in.

When Winnipeg employers refused to back down by the middle of June, workers' enthusiasm for the strike began to wane. Many strikers could not afford to stay out any longer. Public opinion began to turn against unions. The strike committee seemed to be running the city. People began to drift back to work; many strikers were disappointed.

The Arrests

Then, on June 17, the government decided to act. It arrested many of the strike leaders. The men were taken to Stony Mountain Penitentiary and charged with conspiracy and libel before being released on bail. Protests erupted all across Canada. A mass meeting and march were planned for



Angry workers overturn a streetcar during the strike.

Saturday, June 21. Winnipeg Mayor Gray forbade the rally and read the Riot Act. In protest, a group of ex-soldiers led thousands of people down Main Street. They were met by Mounties swinging clubs and firing pistols. Two people died in the riot that followed. The federal government sent troops into the city to patrol Winnipeg streets with machine guns. "Bloody Saturday" was a day many Canadians would never forget. The strike committee called off the strike a week later.

A Communist Plot?

The strike leaders were not planning a revolution. However, their speeches were filled with revolutionary-like words. The growth of communism in Europe, as well as several violent strikes in the United States, added fuel to some people's worries.

J. S. (James Shaver) Woodsworth

BORN: 1874, Etobicoke, Ontario

DIED: 1942, Vancouver, British Columbia

SIGNIFICANCE: Woodsworth was the first leader of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) in 1933.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY: Woodsworth was ordained as a minister at the age of 26. He preached what is known as the social gospel. He urged his followers to improve life for people on Earth rather than worry about heaven. In 1904, he moved from his middle-class church to a mission in Winnipeg's slums. He worked tirelessly to help the city's poverty-stricken immigrants. His experiences led him to write *Strangers Within Our Gate*, an analysis of Canada's immigration system. It was highly critical of government policies.

By 1914, Woodsworth had become a supporter of trade unions and pacifism. He was fired from his job as director of Social Research in 1916 because he opposed the First World War and conscription. In 1918, to protest the church's support of

the war, he resigned from the ministry. He took a longshoreman's position on the Vancouver docks.

In Winnipeg in 1919, Woodsworth took over the strikers' newspaper after its editor was arrested. His editorial position also caused Woodsworth to be arrested. Charges were dropped when prosecutors realized he had been quoting from the Bible.

In 1921, Woodsworth was elected as an Independent Labour member of Parliament (MP) for Winnipeg. As a politician, he continued his fight against workers' exploitation and the unfair treatment of immigrants. He also supported old age pensions and unemployment insurance.

In 1933, Woodsworth was elected leader of the newly formed Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF). By the outbreak of the Second World War, Woodsworth's belief in pacifism had not changed. He was the only MP to vote against Canada fighting in the Second World

War. Briefly outline your personal opinion of J. S. Woodsworth.



HISTOR!CA

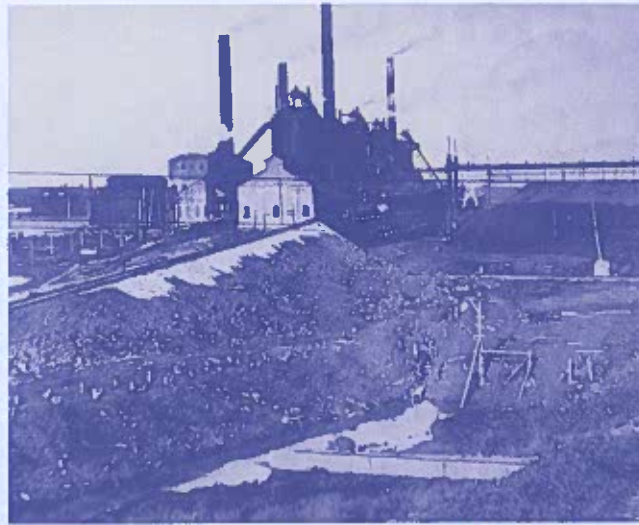
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CAPE BRETON MINERS' STRIKE

Winnipeg was not the only place to experience violent strikes. From 1921 to 1925, Cape Breton miners went on strike three times against the Montreal-based British Empire Steel Corporation. They demanded higher wages and better working conditions. Labour unrest lasted four years. More than two million workdays were lost to striking miners.

By far the most violent and bloody battle occurred in 1925, when the miners went on strike for five months. Credit was cut off from company stores, so the miners could not afford groceries and clothing. The company asked provincial police and federal troops to calm the angry workers. During a nasty battle at Waterford Lake, many miners were injured. One miner was killed by police. His death is still mourned



by Cape Bretoners every June 11, on Miners' Memorial Day. In the end, a Royal Commission reprimanded the company, but failed to help the miners.

Seven of the arrested strikers were convicted of conspiracy. They received sentences of up to two years in prison. Five men were never brought to trial. Two strike leaders, Fred Dixon and A. A. Heaps, were acquitted. Charges against J. S. Woodsworth were dropped. Four Slav immigrants who had nothing to do with the strike leadership were deported.

Although the strike had failed, it proved to be a turning point in labour relations. It sparked a political consciousness of the issues. In 1920, several strike leaders were

elected to the Manitoba legislature, and the following year, workers had political representation in Ottawa. Workers found other ways to solve their problems, and the public became more aware of these problems and concerns. The Canadian trade union movement gained support, although Manitoba's labour movement would be divided and crippled for many years.

Woodsworth turned to politics and later founded the CCF in 1933 as the first major democratic socialist party in this country.

FOCUS

1. What caused the Trades and Labour Council to call a general strike?
2. What was the goal of the Citizens' Committee of One Thousand?
3. Should government forces be employed to stop strikes? Why or why not?

Women Are Persons Too

Canadian women's positions were changing in the early years of the 20th century. Women were starting to take on different roles in the workplace, in sports, socially, and even at home. Alcohol, poverty, and child welfare became important social issues. Many women's groups believed that the use of liquor was hurting the Canadian way of life. They felt it caused financial problems, crime, and often physical and mental abuse

within the family. The Women's Christian Temperance Union, or WCTU (organized in Ontario in 1875) worked hard to ban the sale of liquor in Canada. Thanks to the need for grain for the troops in the First World War, and to Prime Minister Borden's desire to get elected, **Prohibition** began in March 1918.

But Prohibition did not work. People who really wanted to drink alcohol found it. Bootlegging became big business as criminals

found ways to make, sell, or import liquor illegally from the United States. By 1924, most provinces decided liquor control was better than Prohibition. Making alcohol legal would force bootleggers out of business. The government would be able to control liquor sales and make money from liquor taxes. Legal bars and beverage rooms would replace the illegal places to get liquor. Canada's temperance movement did not succeed, but it did make Canadians aware of alcohol abuse. Canadian alcohol use never again reached the same high levels of the late 19th century.



In 1938, Prime Minister W. L. Mackenzie King unveiled a plaque to honour the Alberta Five. With him (from left to right) are Back row: Senator Iva Campbell Fallis and Senator Cairine Wilson; Front row: Mrs. Muir Edwards (daughter-in-law of Henrietta Muir Edwards), J. C. Kerwood, and Nellie McClung. What is the significance of the two senators in the photo?

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Women Are Persons Too

In 1916, the city of Edmonton appointed Emily Murphy as Judge of the Juvenile Court. Within a year, the province of Alberta made her a magistrate. Murphy was the first female judge in Canada. On her first day in court, a male lawyer challenged her appointment. He claimed that only a “qualified person” could sit on the Bench. British law considered only men as persons; women were not even mentioned.

The persons issue did not go away. Canada’s constitution (the British North America Act) stated that Canadian senators must be “qualified persons.” Were women persons? Did the wording in the BNA Act mean women could not be senators? In 1919, the Montreal Women’s Club asked Prime Minister Borden to appoint Emily Murphy to the Canadian Senate. They wanted to test the law.

Borden refused. He claimed it was impossible for him to appoint a female to the Canadian Senate. Women’s groups believed Borden’s decision discriminated against women.

Murphy had given many years of public service to Canada. She worked for poor people, for new immigrants, for Aboriginal Canadians, for children, for women, and for drug addicts. Murphy’s book about the drug trade, *The Black Candle*, was the first of its kind. It had an impact around the world.

Many people felt its author would make an excellent senator.

By 1927, Emily teamed up with Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney, Irene Parlby, and long-time women’s rights worker Henrietta Muir Edwards. They

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Emily Murphy was an important political and social reformer in Canada.

became the **Alberta Five** and they fought the Persons Case in the courts. The government won round one when the Supreme Court ruled women were not persons. The court based its decision on social conditions at the

Agnes Macphail

BORN: 1890, Owen Sound, Ontario

DIED: 1954, Toronto, Ontario

SIGNIFICANCE: In 1921, Macphail became the first woman in Canada to be elected to Parliament. She was responsible for the first equal pay legislation in Canada (1951).

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY: Macphail became an MP for the United Farmers of Ontario in 1921. This was the first year women were able to vote in the province. As the only woman in Parliament, she was seen as a novelty and faced much discrimination. The press paid more attention to what she wore than to what she said. "I was intensely unhappy," she later recalled. "Some members resented my intrusion, other jeered at me ...

most of the members made me painfully conscious of my sex." That first year she lost 12 pounds. Rather than be stared at in the Parliamentary dining room, she ate in "greasy spoons."

Macphail fought for equality for women, peaceful solutions to international conflicts, family allowances, old age and disability pensions, and better conditions for workers and prisoners. Macphail was re-elected

four times. It wasn't until 1935, though, that another woman MP joined her. Macphail was an ardent spokesperson for female equality and women's rights. She founded the Elizabeth Fry Society of Canada and took an active part in the Woman's International League for Peace and Freedom. She championed the "powerless." Macphail fought tirelessly to improve the lot of farmers, workers, the elderly, and the physically and mentally challenged. Her socialist and pacifist beliefs often led her to support the politics of J. S. Woodsworth and, later, the CCF. Name a modern Canadian who



fights for the powerless. For more about the Elizabeth Fry Society, go to www.elizabethfry.ca.

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CANADIAN LIVES

time of Confederation in 1867. At that time no one expected women to hold office. The BNA Act never even considered women when it referred to persons. By 1927 times were different. The women now appealed their case to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England. This was the final court of appeal for all members of the British Empire. The Privy Council ruled on 18 October 1929 that women were indeed



Nellie McClung, reformer and suffragette.

“persons,” and that “the exclusion of women from all public offices is a relic of days more barbarous than ours.”

The Alberta Five had triumphed, but Emily Murphy never did become a senator. In 1930 Liberal Prime Minister Mackenzie King appointed another Liberal, Cairine Wilson from Montreal, to be the

first female in the Canadian Senate.

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In Their Own Words

Emily Murphy describes her first day in court:

“It was as pleasant an experience as running rapids without a guide. Besides, the lawyers and police officials looked so accustomed and so terribly sophisticated. Indeed, I have never seen brass buttons so bright and menacing as on this particular day. All the men became

embarrassed and started to stammer over their manner of addressing me. One said ‘Your Worship’ and others ‘Your Honour’... and the rest said ‘Sir.’”

How did Emily Murphy feel on her first day in court? How did the rest of the court feel?

FOCUS

1. Who were the Alberta Five? Why are they important?
2. Who was Emily Murphy?
3. Who was Agnes Macphail? How did she help the “powerless”?
4. Identify some current issues of importance to Canadian women.

New Opportunities for Women

Canadian society in the 1920s had many biases towards both minority groups and women. For instance, it was not proper for a married woman to work. Many employers even fired a woman who got married!

Not many women got university or college degrees. Society thought that if a woman had to work, she should be a cleaning lady, teacher, clerk or nurse.

People felt that these were the natural jobs for women. Jobs in medicine, law, and journalism were viewed as natural for men. It was difficult for women who wanted to study and practise in these fields. They faced discrimination, ridicule, financial hardship and loneliness. Only the most determined women were able to succeed.

Sports

Some women found freedom in sports. They played basketball, hockey and baseball, often for company-sponsored teams. Women's basketball games were broadcast on the radio. More than 6000 spectators

filled Toronto's Sunnyside Stadium to watch women's baseball games. Crowds for the men's games were often nowhere near as large.

Canadian female athletes began competing at the summer Olympic Games in 1928. Canada's track and field team won medals in nearly every event. Ethel Catherwood,

"the Saskatoon lily," won a gold medal in the high jump. Bobbie Rosenfeld won a silver medal in a dead heat in the 100 m race, and led the Canadian women to gold in the 400 m relay.

By the 1930s, though, women were discouraged from active sports. Men and boys became the "real athletes." Company sponsorship of women's teams decreased, and women's teams had trouble getting time in public sports arenas. Some doctors even said that doing sports harmed a woman's ability to have children. This attitude lasted well into the 1950s and beyond.



Sportswriters named Fanny "Bobbie" Rosenfeld the best Canadian female athlete of the first half of the century. She played on championship basketball teams, won the Toronto tennis championship, threw the discus and the javelin, ran the hurdles, and starred in hockey and softball. In 1928, Rosenfeld set three Canadian records which lasted almost 30 years: she long-jumped 18 feet 3 inches; threw the discus 120 feet; and soared 8 feet 1 inch in the standing broad jump.

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CANADA'S DREAM TEAM: THE EDMONTON GRADS

Canada's most successful basketball team ever was the Edmonton Grads. They were the Commercial Graduates Basketball Club at McDougall Commercial High School. Coached by Percy Page, the Grads ruled Canadian basketball from 1915 to 1940.

They never lost a series in the 23 years they competed in the International Underwood Championships. Indeed, they won that cup so often they were given permanent possession of it in 1940. They won 96 percent of their games and 49 out of a possible 51 Canadian titles. After losing the first North American Championship, the Grads came back with a vengeance—winning the next three years straight. They played in the 1924 Women's Olympics in Paris and were declared World Champions by the Federation Sportive International. In 1928, they won the French and European championships.



During their 25-year career, the Edmonton Grads had only 48 different players on their roster. The turnover rate for this phenomenal dream team was less than two players a year. All team members, with the exception of two, attended McDougall Commercial High School. Playing against both

men and women throughout their history, the Edmonton Grads held 108 local, provincial, national and international titles at the time of their retirement. Known simply as the “finest basketball team ever,” by basketball's inventor, Canadian James Naismith, the Edmonton dream team played for the love of the sport. No member ever received payment for her skills on the basketball court. **What made the Grads so special in Canadian sports history? For more, see www.collectionscanada.ca/women.**

Clothing

Another aspect of women's lives that changed dramatically in the 1920s was clothing. Skirts barely covered the knees. Bobs and shingled haircuts replaced long hair and hairpins. The “boyish look” was all the rage. The ideal body shape was to be thin, almost manish. Short, loose dresses emphasized the legs and arms rather than the hips and breasts. Bare, sun-tanned legs replaced stock-

ings. Corsets were replaced by bras and girdles, with their new “two-way stretch” materials of silk, cotton, and rayon. Department stores opened junior sections of “foundation garments” for 12- to 14-year olds, and recommended girdles to prevent their figures from getting larger.

Other freedoms followed. It was not uncommon to see young women smoking—and even drinking—in public.

Elsie MacGill

BORN: 1905, Vancouver, British Columbia

DIED: 1980, Cambridge, Massachusetts

SIGNIFICANCE: MacGill was the first woman to graduate with a degree in electrical engineering. She pioneered in aeronautical research.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY: MacGill was the daughter of Helen MacGill, women's rights activist and journalist who was appointed a juvenile court judge one year after Emily Murphy's appointment. MacGill was raised in a strongly feminist environment. Excelling at science and mathematics, she enrolled in the University of Toronto's Engineering Department in 1923. Four years later, she became the first woman to graduate with a degree in electrical engineering. She pursued her studies at the University of Michigan. In 1928 she became the first woman to graduate with a degree in aeronautics. Determined to continue her studies, MacGill was accepted by the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1933 to contin-



ue her work in aeronautical research. From 1934 to 1937, she helped test-fly the first Canadian-designed and -built all-metal aircraft for Fairchild Aircraft Ltd.

in Longueuil, Quebec, where she was employed. In 1939, MacGill left this job for another at the Canadian Car and Foundry in Fort William (now Thunder Bay), Ontario. She was in charge of engineering on the Canadian-built Hawker Hurricanes and the U.S. Navy Helldivers, which were launched by catapult from aircraft carriers. In 1946, MacGill helped the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) establish air-worthiness regulations. She married Eric Soulsby, an executive at the firm. She opened her own consulting business, which she ran well into the 1970s. In 1955, she published a biography of her mother entitled *My Mother the Judge*. In 1967, continuing the legacy of her mother, she served on the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. **Why might MacGill make an excellent role model for Canadian women today?**

C A N A D I A N L I V E S

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

Nurses The first trained nurses who arrived in Quebec in 1639 were members of a Roman Catholic religious order. These nuns served as doctors, helping the sick in and around Quebec. The Sisters of Charity, a non-cloistered order, arrived in 1737 and are thought of as Canada's first public health nurses. Training was mostly on the job. They built hospitals and canoed to remote areas to provide care to the sick.



Their first hospital opened in Montreal in 1737.

In 1874, the first school of nursing opened in St. Catharines, Ontario. Nursing programs next opened in hospitals in Toronto in 1881 and in Montreal in 1890. Nurses in these programs did little more than make the hospitals look nice. They had no professional status. Their training was decided by the doctors who ran the hospital. Working hours were from 12 to 20 hours a day with half a day off every week. Working conditions were cramped and crude. Most graduates left the hospital for private nursing in the homes of the wealthy.

The Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) was established in 1897 by Lady Aberdeen. She wanted to close the gap between the nursing care that the rich could afford and that which the poor received in the hospitals. The VON built and operated over 40 hospitals. During the early years of the 20th century, a group of nurses tried to get professional status for nurses. They wanted to improve the education of nurses and protect the title of nurse. The

Canadian National Association of Nurses was formed in 1907, as a result of their action. The University of British Columbia began a university degree program for nurses in 1919, but most nursing schools remained under the control of the hospitals. It was not until the 1960s that nurses gained control of their education. At last, professional degrees were widely available to those entering the profession. Today, there are more than 250 000 registered nurses in Canada. **For more information about this community, visit the Canadian Association of Nurses at www.cnc-nurses.ca.**

FOCUS

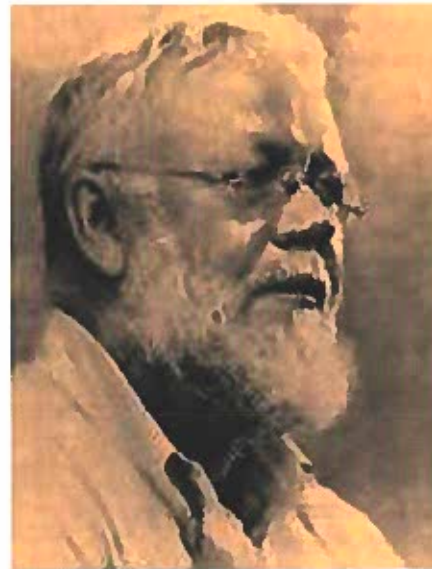
1. What gains did women make in the 1920s in employment and recreation?
2. How did the change in fashion mirror a change in social attitudes towards women?
3. In your opinion, what is Elsie MacGill's most important achievement?

The Roaring Twenties

The Age of Radio

In 1923 there were 10 000 radios in Canada. Six years later, there were 300 000. By 1931, about one-third of Canadian households owned a radio. The average North American household listened to the radio three to four hours a day.

Evenings in many homes were spent around the kitchen table listening to homemade crystal radio sets. Crystal sets did not have amplification so listeners had to wear earphones. Montreal's CFCF was Canada's first commercial radio station. By 1929, all the major cities had radio stations. Big electric radios in fancy wooden cabinets became a major source of family entertainment. Farmers and small towns were no longer isolated from the



Canadian Reginald Fessenden is credited with making the first radio broadcast in the world in 1906. He is known as "the Father of Radio."

cities. Businesses could advertise their products. Politicians could speak instantly to the public. The first radio broadcasts were live. Performers, dressed in tuxedos or long gowns, would sing or play their instruments right in the studio. Listeners often heard the broadcast unedited, complete with mistakes.

Technology and Canadian Life in the 1920s

Today, Canadians take many things for granted. We flip a

In Their Own Words

"I'll always remember the first time I listened to a radio. I was fourteen years old, so that would have been 1924.... Trembling with excitement I put the earphones on. Like magic, from the very air around, I heard the song 'Oranges and Lemons.' The music was in my ears, clear and melodic, as if the singers were actually in the room. How could they possibly be a hundred miles away? In a trance I listened, wishing I could listen forever.... Papa tapped me on the shoulder when it was time for Esther and Thora to listen. I took off the earphones and returned to reality. The music was gone. But I could see it now in my sisters' smiles and in their faraway, unfocused eyes."

Source: Irene Morck, *Five Pennies*
(Calgary: Fifth House, 1999)

Boom and Bust

1910 1915 1920 1925 1930 1935 1940

The Technical Edge

Batteryless Radios In 1912, at the age of 13, Edward Rogers won a prize for making the best amateur radio in Ontario. He won an American contest seven years later. This next prize was for low-power broadcasts sent across the Atlantic Ocean. Rogers quit his job at the Independent Telephone Company in 1925 and worked on the world's first alternating current (AC) radio tube. This invention allowed radios to run on a regular 110-volt household current. Up until that time, radios were run on acid-filled batteries that needed to be recharged. The noise from these receivers was often louder than the radio signals. Roger's new invention eliminated this problem.



In 1929, Rogers and his father founded Rogers Majestic Radio Company to sell batteryless radios. The following year, he established several broadcasting companies, including 9RB (named for Rogers Batteryless). This station later became CFRB, which is still on the air today. In 1931, Rogers was awarded one of Canada's first television licences. He died in 1939 at the age of 38. His son Edward Jr. later founded Rogers Radio Broadcasting. This company pioneered FM broadcasting in 1962 with Toronto radio station CHFI. Now, Rogers Communications has interests in cable television, telephones, wireless communications, and the Internet.

switch and turn on our lights, our TV, and our appliances. Many homes have central heating and air conditioning. Compact discs have digital sound, and computers provide multi-media and satellite communication. Life was not always so. An era of invention in the early 1900s gave the lifestyle we know today. Electricity became part of everyday life in the 1920s. People could buy electric stoves, washing machines, irons, vacuum

cleaners and toasters. These appliances may not have looked like those we use today, but they helped make housework and cooking easier.

Improvements in technology made the telephone more common in Canadian homes. By 1928, over 1 million Canadian homes had telephones—an average of 12.79 telephones per 100 people. New international lines in 1927 made it possible for Canadians to phone

relatives in Great Britain. Overseas calls were not cheap. There was a charge of \$75 for 3 minutes and \$25 for any additional minute. In 1928, rates were reduced to \$45 for the first three minutes plus \$15 per extra minute.



This radio studio was a dynamic exhibit at the 1934 Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto. Curious crowds gathered to see live broadcasts behind clear glass.

Leisure Time Entertainment

Most urban Canadians worked long hours. They toiled 9 to 10 hours a day, including a half-day on Saturdays. When they finished working they wanted to relax. As a result, the entertainment industry boomed. People looking for something to do had lots of choice.

Many Canadian cities and towns had theatres, which had been built during the early 1900s. Travelling theatre companies performed the latest plays from London or New York. Live variety shows for the whole family, known as vaudeville, were popular. So

were burlesque shows where, in between the stand-up comics and the skits, audiences watched the ladies in the chorus line, or the exotic dancers, or even the strip-tease artists.

Many young people flocked to nightclubs, where they listened to jazz music. Others went dancing, doing the tango, Charleston, black bottom, and more. Live orchestras in the dance halls played the latest tunes.

But the most popular entertainment of all was the movies. In the beginning, motion pictures had no sound. Live music from an orchestra, subtitles, and sound effects were used instead. There were movie houses in every city and town across the country. Many people felt a week was not complete without time spent laughing and crying with Charlie Chaplin, falling in

love with Rudolf Valentino, or watching Douglas Fairbanks rescue a beautiful woman from certain death.

In 1927, the first talking motion picture, *The Jazz Singer*, starring Al Jolson, was made. It ended the era of silent films.

Consumerism

Canadians learned to be “buy now, pay later” consumers. People could buy a car with a small down payment, and pay the balance (with interest) over a two- to five-year period. Consumer spending rose rapidly as prosperity grew. People wanted to buy more

and more products. Canada had entered a new era of consumerism as large department stores, such as Eaton's and Simpsons, carried the many items consumers wanted.

Increased world demand forced the price of Canadian wheat up in 1924. Canada exported \$352 million worth of wheat by 1928. Many Canadian farmers on the prairies took advantage of the boom to buy expensive new equipment. Most borrowed the money from banks or bought the machinery on credit. Farmers organized into wheat pools or co-operatives, which allowed them to sell their product for the highest possible price. Farm co-op stores allowed farmers to buy their supplies and materials for the lowest possible price.

Not everyone in Canada thrived. The economy of the Maritime provinces remained poor. Life was hard for immigrants in the cities. They often did not speak English, and had few job skills. Employers paid them as little as possible. Women were paid much less than men for doing the same work. Wages for most factory workers stayed low. A company might be making huge profits, but workers did not share in them. Business owners priced goods as high as possible. Often, the workers could not afford to buy the very

goods they helped produce. As a result, unsold merchandise began to pile up in warehouses and stores.

Most people thought the booming twenties would last forever, but some people saw danger signals. They did not like the unequal



The twenties were sometimes referred to as "The Jazz Age."

distribution of wealth. The rich got richer, while workers, immigrants, and some farmers did not have enough money to buy their share of the goods.

FOCUS

1. How did radio change Canadian life during the early twenties?
2. What new inventions changed Canadian lives?
3. How did consumerism change the way Canadians purchased goods?
4. Why did many (a) immigrants, (b) women, and (c) factory workers not share in the prosperity of the 1920s?

Easy Street

Cars in Canada

The automobile began life at the turn of the century as a motorized cart. One early design was a large tricycle with a small motor.

Henry Ford brought cars to North Americans. He invented the **assembly line**. In this manufacturing system, each piece was installed by a separate worker as the car moved gradually from worker to worker. One group of workers added wheels, another the motor, others the gas tank, and still others the radiator. Each worker or group did a single job on many cars. This was called **specialization of labour**. Ford's assembly line could produce cars cheaply. In 1917, the "Tin Lizzie" cost \$495. By 1925, so many cars were rolling off Ford's Canadian assembly line in Windsor that the price had dropped to \$424.

By 1919 more than 13 000 workers (mostly in Ontario) had jobs making cars.

Thousands more made tires or spare parts, or repaired cars. Thousands of workers and engineers worked on roads. Many new occu-



Gas stations soon appeared all over the country. Gas was relatively cheap.

pations emerged or increased in numbers because of the automobile. These included service station attendants, motel operators, traffic policemen, camping ground owners, sign makers, and travelling salespeople.



Mud was a problem for cars in the 1920s. Few roads were paved.

Boom and Bust

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The car allowed people to travel. This ability promoted the growth of tourism, which added more than \$300 million to the Canadian economy by 1929. About 94 percent of the tourists came from the United States.

Industrial concentration began during this time. Big companies swallowed up small companies. This was certainly the case in the automobile industry. At one time, about 70 companies, many of them Canadian, sold cars in Canada. By 1926, there were only 14 such firms left. Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler made 75 percent of all cars sold in Canada. The last Canadian car firm, Brooks Automobile Company, went out of business in 1927. From that date on, most of the cars made in Canada were from plants owned by American companies.

Cars changed the way Canadians lived. Families could drive up to 40 km to visit friends and still be home by dark. Weekend outings became popular. Farmers had faster access to markets.

Soon the car became a status symbol. Exotic makes like the Auburn, Cadillac, Lincoln, and Cord, many with 16 cylinder engines, could reach speeds of 160 km per hour. These expensive models shared the roads with lower priced Model Ts and Chevrolets.



The car opened Canada's vast wilderness. Camping became accessible to more people.

The number of new cars grew from 838 672 in 1926 to 945 672 in 1927. Of the 9832 km of new roads constructed in 1927, 4043 km were dirt roads, 4481 km gravel, 388 km asphalt, and 240 km concrete. The car was not much use in winter. Even if it started, roads were often too dangerous to travel. Many people put their cars up on blocks until the spring.

Driving during the other seasons could be risky, too. Many farmers made extra money by lending their horses to pull vehicles out of the mud. The Canadian Motor Vehicles Act of 1903 set speed limits of 16 km per hour in the cities and 22 km per hour in the country (speeds raised to 30 km and 40 km in 1919). The limit on Ontario roads was 10 km per

Frederick Banting

BORN: 1891, Alliston, Ontario

DIED: 1941, in a plane crash

SIGNIFICANCE: He discovered insulin.

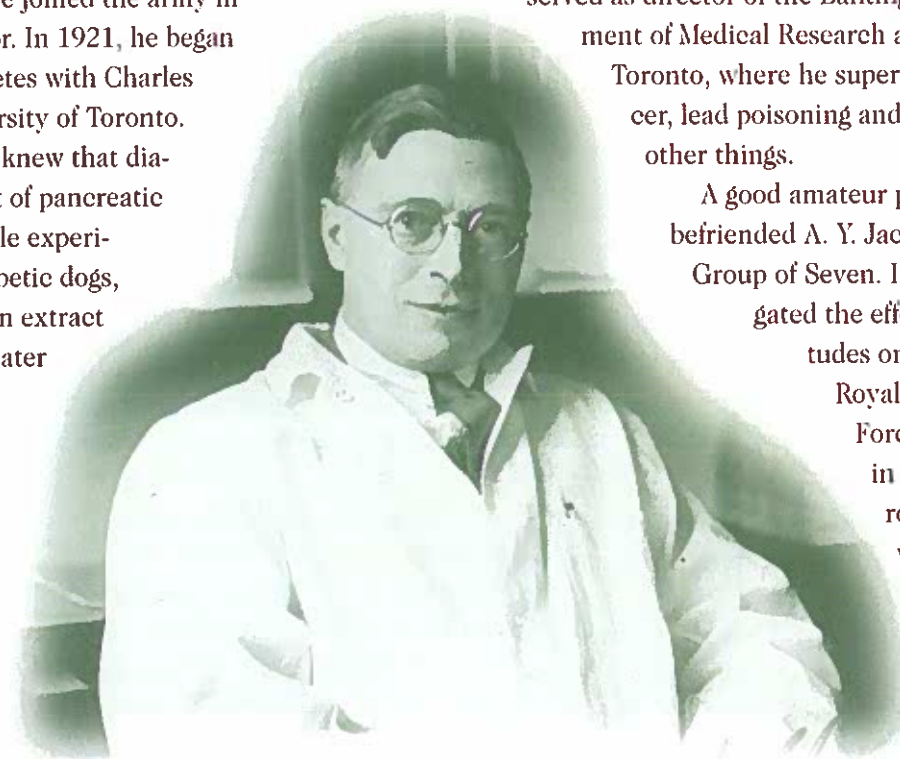
BRIEF BIOGRAPHY: Banting graduated from medical school in 1916. He joined the army in France as a doctor. In 1921, he began research on diabetes with Charles Best at the University of Toronto. Banting and Best knew that diabetes was a result of pancreatic malfunction. While experimenting with diabetic dogs, they found that an extract of the pancreas (later called insulin) controlled sugar buildup in the blood. The only known treatment for diabetes at the time was starvation. If the body did not get food, it would slow the blood sugar buildup.

In 1922, Banting tested insulin on Leonard Thompson, a 14-year-old diabetic who had lost so much weight he was close to death. Within a few

weeks, the boy had regained normal health. Banting sold the insulin patent to the University of Toronto for one dollar, as long as any profits went to medical research. In 1923, Banting was awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine. From 1923 until 1929, Banting served as director of the Banting and Best Department of Medical Research at the University of Toronto, where he supervised work on cancer, lead poisoning and silicosis, among other things.

A good amateur painter, Banting befriended A. Y. Jackson from the Group of Seven. In 1939, he investigated the effects of high altitudes on pilots for the Royal Canadian Air Force. He died in 1941 in a plane crash on route to England while on a "mission of high importance" for the government. **Why is Banting considered to be such a great**

Canadian? For more information about the discovery, visit CBC Digital Archives at www.cbc.ca/archives and look at the file, "Banting, Best, Macleod, Collip: Chasing a Cure for Diabetes."



CANADIAN LIVES

hour whenever a horse-drawn carriage was near. Ontario drivers were not licensed until 1927, and even then, no one had to pass an exam. Anyone who had driven 800 km, who had no physical or mental impairments, and who paid the \$1 fee could get a licence.

Investing in Stock

The 1920s was a time of social and economic revolution in North America. More Canadians than ever before were able to afford the comforts of life. One of every two Canadian families owned a car in 1928. By 1929, more than 60 percent of Canadians had electricity in the home.

Many businesses were too large to be owned by one person or family. When these companies needed money, they financed themselves by selling shares of company stock to the public through the stock market. Share prices were set by supply and demand. If the stock was popular, its price rose. If more people wanted to sell shares than buy, the stock price fell.

Careful investors bought wisely. They investigated a company's prospects before purchasing stock. Stock values increased dra-

matically during the 1920s, and the stock market rose. As the excitement of buying and selling took over, some people forgot what the whole business was about. Many people borrowed money to invest. Shares were traded at higher and higher prices. Investors made huge profits, at least on paper. However, the price of a company's shares often bore no relation to the real value of its earnings and profit.

Taking Risks

Compared to the general population, the number of investors was small, but everyone bought into the "get rich quick" philosophy of the time. Daring investors took big risks. They bought on margin (with borrowed money) paying the stockbroker 10 to 15 percent of the price of the shares. If the value of the stock rose, the shares would pay for themselves. Investors could sell, pay the broker what was owed, and still make a profit. Of course, if the stock fell, the broker could ask for his money and the investor would have to pay all the money owed. But no one worried about this. The stock market was rising too fast to worry. This "boom" mentality would not last forever.

FOCUS

1. What are the advantages of producing goods on an assembly line?
2. In what ways has the automobile changed our lives?
3. What was dangerous about investing in the twenties?

The Dirty Thirties

The Stock Market Crash

Nobody knew on 3 September 1929 that the stock market had finally reached its peak. Prices began to slip, but they had slipped before. Most investors expected a turnaround soon. None came. Prices continued to plunge and brokers wanted their money. Investors could not pay up.



Winnipeg Grain Exchange. What are the men in the upper half of the picture doing?

On Thursday, 24 October 1929, thousands of stock shares bought on margin were dumped onto the stock market. There were no buyers, however, so prices took a nose-dive. When the news hit the newspapers, other investors panicked. Five days later, things were even worse. This day is known as Black Tuesday. Small investors began dumping stock, rushing to sell out before they lost everything. The stock market bubble had finally burst. Within days, stocks that were once valuable became worthless. Within

months it became obvious that the economic downturn, or recession, had turned into a worldwide depression. The price of raw materials collapsed: pulp dropped from \$29.57 per ton in 1929 to \$19.65 per ton in 1932; copper prices fell from \$19.75 to \$7.02. Investors lost everything.

The Great Depression

The panic that caused the stock market crash of 1929 began in the United States. It spread quickly to Canada and to all other countries involved in trade. The stock market crash triggered the Great Depression of the 1930s. Canada suffered greatly while the whole world was in an economic slump. At first, many Canadians did not realize the seriousness of the problem. Mackenzie King's Liberal government believed the economy would correct itself naturally. Many small investors thought they could survive the crash. After all, they still had jobs. Many more Canadians had never invested in the market at all. Why should its crash affect them?

The Downward Spiral

Canada's economy was resource based and Canadian prosperity depended on the export of raw materials. Our natural resources—wheat, lumber, fish and minerals—were sold to other countries, particularly the United States and Europe. After the crash, these countries bought much less and the decrease

Boom and Bust

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THE ECONOMIC CYCLE

PROSPERITY

RECESSION

DEPRESSION

RECOVERY

- many jobs
- money to spend
- much production
- much business expansion
- high profits
- more jobs & spending

- fewer sales/jobs
- business cuts
- low profits
- unemployment
- bankruptcies
- more job cuts

- very low sales
- high unemployment
- business closings
- very low wages
- low demand for goods
- more unemployed

- jobs increase
- production increases
- demand increases
- jobs are added
- more money to spend
- business expands

What phase in the economic cycle is Canada in at present? Explain.

in demand resulted in lower prices. Canadian farmers were unable to sell their wheat. Mining companies were left with unsold coal, iron ore and copper. Lumbering companies lacked buyers for their pulp and logs. In the meantime, they were unable to keep up payments for equipment bought on credit. Many companies went bankrupt.

The Depression spread around the world. Other countries that normally bought our wheat, fish, wood, and other goods could no longer afford to buy them. Eighty percent of the products of our farms, forests, and mines were sold abroad. To help their own people, many countries reduced Canadian imports by putting a tax (tariff) on them. The United States, for example, taxed Canadian cattle and dairy products. When Spain, Portugal, and Italy taxed Canadian dried cod and fresh fish, it crippled the Atlantic fishery.

Canada's manufacturing industry fared no

better. Many Canadian businesses had too much unsold inventory. They had been over-producing, churning out new products as fast as they could to meet consumer demand. Now, no one could afford to buy cars, boats, appliances, or even clothing. Factories and businesses closed down, or laid off workers until the backlog of goods was sold. Companies that stayed in business often made workers take pay cuts. Companies were forced to lower their prices to survive. Banks called in their loans. Many businesses and people could not repay their loans, so they went bankrupt.

People no longer had money to buy luxuries like radios and vacuum cleaners. Workers who made these products were laid off. Then the people who supplied the raw materials to build these products lost their jobs. Soon, many Canadians could not afford to buy coats, dresses, or even shoes. Most consumers who had bought goods on the

“buy now, pay later” plan could no longer make the payments. People lost their furniture, their cars and even their homes.

By 1933, one in five Canadian workers were unemployed. There was no employment insurance. Two million people in this country were on government relief. The area hardest hit was Canada’s four western provinces. Canada’s Atlantic provinces never had a chance to recover from the economic depression that hit them in the 1920s, but they were partially sustained by fishing and farm-

into the office with tears in their eyes suffering humiliation at being forced to apply for assistance.”

Women seeking well-paying jobs were frowned on because men “needed the jobs more.” Many women accepted lower wages, and they sometimes found jobs when men could not. Every day that wives, sisters, and mothers went out to work, their husbands, brothers, and sons lost a little more self-respect.

To ensure that only people who



Soup kitchens seemed to appear overnight in the Depression. Does Canada have similar places today? Explain.

ing. Canada’s young people, small business people, and farmers were the true victims of the Depression. Many large businesses, property owners, and people with jobs actually made money during this period.

Learning to Survive

Perhaps the worst part of living through the Depression was the shame of being out of work. People had been taught that if they were poor, it was their own fault. Only lazy people failed. Every time Canada’s homeless, hungry, and unemployed lined up at a soup kitchen or accepted vouchers to exchange for goods, their despair grew. One Edmonton relief officer noted: “I have seen men come

“deserved” help received it, the government often forced people to work for food. Some people were required to cut fire wood, others pulled dandelions beside the road, or dug a hole one day and filled it in the next.

Who got relief and who didn’t depended on the province, the town, and the person in charge. A relief officer refused to give one newly married couple relief because he thought that people who married during such hard times should not expect any sympathy or help. People who received relief could not drink alcohol, or own a phone, a radio, jewellery, or a car. Individuals seen drinking, driving a car, or attending a race track lost their relief.

But Canadians did not give up; they made do. People patched old clothes. When the clothes fell apart, they wore flour sacks. Wads of newspaper placed in worn-out shoes made them last longer. Tea leaves, coffee grounds and soup bones were used over and over until there was no flavour left. People bartered services for goods. Many Canadians left the cities to return to the land. When there was nothing left at home on the land, they set off across the country, looking for work.

the next town. A knock on the farmhouse door sometimes got them a meal, but rarely any work. Often, these transients worked for their food. Lines of unemployed gathered at factory gates only to find “No Help Wanted” signs and no work.

In summer, people slept beside open fires in hobo jungles on the edge of town. In winter, they might be allowed to sleep on a jail-house floor, or in barns or church basements. For many Canadians, this way of life went on for 10 years. These were the Dirty Thirties.



Top: Sleeping on the street became a way of life for many in the thirties.
Bottom: Riding the rails was one way to find work.

Riding the Rails

With money scarce, some people rode in empty freight cars or rode on top of them. Others hitchhiked along the highways.

Perhaps there would be work on the next farm or in



AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME PER PERSON

(in dollars)

	1928	1933
Saskatchewan	480	140
Alberta	550	210
Manitoba	470	240
British Columbia	590	310
P.E.I.	280	150
Ontario	550	310
Quebec	390	220
New Brunswick	290	180
Nova Scotia	320	210
CANADA	470	250

Source: John Herd Thompson and Allen Seager.
Canada, 1922-1939: Decades of Discord
(Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1985), page 351.

FOCUS

1. Explain what happened to cause the stock market crash of October 1929.
2. Compare the upward economic spiral of the 1920s with the downward spiral of the 1930s.
3. How did people survive during the Dirty Thirties?
4. How do poor people cope with their situation today?

The Drought and the Dustbowl

The worst place to be during the Depression was on the Prairies. In 1929, wheat sold for \$1.60 a bushel. By 1932, farmers could hardly get rid of their crop at \$.38. World economic conditions improved slightly in 1933. Some

factories in central Canada hired more workers. Mines started to reopen. For farmers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, however, the real trouble was just beginning. The world's supply of grain was much higher than the

demand, and wheat prices remained low. Workers on the Prairies had no jobs, and many farmers abandoned their homes and their land. The weather brought more trouble.

Although parts of the Prairies had been experiencing droughts as early as 1927, 1931 was a particularly dry summer. Drought returned in 1933. It would be another five long years before Prairie farmers would see real rain again.

Crops grow in soil or topsoil on the land's surface. Topsoil contains the moisture and nutrients plants need to develop.

Subsoil contains no real nourishment. The 1930s drought caused topsoil in the prairies to dry up and turn to dust. Strong winds whipped the dust into black



It is hard to imagine that this is Canada. Years of drought turned fertile soil into dust.

Boom and Bust

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blizzards, piling it high against fences and barns. Farmers stood by, watching helplessly as the land that fed them blew away. They watched as their once fertile farms turned to rocks and clay, and the few remaining wheat plants to survive the wind shriveled and died in the parched subsoil. Canadian wheat production decreased from 440 million bushels in 1927 to a low of 219 million bushels in 1936.

Then the grasshoppers came. They hatched by the millions in the prairie desert.

Grasshoppers thrive under drought conditions. Farmers would look up to see dark



Dust storms darkened prairie skies during the drought and depression of the 1930s.

In Their Own Words

SASKATCHEWAN

*Saskatchewan the land of snow,
Where winds are always on the blow,
Where people sit with frozen toes,
And why we stay here no one knows.*

*Our pigs are dyin' on their feet
Because they have no feed to eat,
Our horses, though of bronco race,
Starvation stares them in the face.*

*The milk from cows has ceased to flow,
We've had to ship 'em East, you know,
Our Hens are old and lay no eggs,
Our turkeys eat grasshopper legs.*

*But still we love Saskatchewan,
We're proud to say we're native ones,
So count your blessings drop by drop,
Next year we'll have a bumper crop.*

Bill Smith

clouds of these insects blotting out the sun. Little was left alive after the grasshoppers passed. One farmer reported that they had even stripped the bristles from his broom—only the metal band and a chewed handle remained. During the 1930s, grasshopper damage to Saskatchewan wheat crops rose as high as 40 percent and up to 80 percent to other cereal crops.

Saskatchewan produced 8 750 000 tonnes of wheat or 1.6 tonnes per hectare in 1928. In 1937, the worst year of the thirties, production was only 920 000 tonnes or .2 tonnes per hectare. It was no wonder that the average Saskatchewan farmer was in debt \$9771 in 1936.

Hit by the double blows of the Depression and the Dustbowl, families went barefoot, dressed in flour bags and burned wheat instead of wood because it was cheaper. They

ate gopher stew. Farmers did without telephones, newspapers, and cars. They fell behind on their mortgage payments and were forced off their land when the banks foreclosed. Some farmers moved to parkland areas north of Prince Albert where rain fell. Others gave up and headed for the cities of Ontario or west to British Columbia. Over one-quarter of wheat farms on the Prairies were abandoned during the thirties.

Most families just hung on, hoping that the rains would come next year. Even if the crop was good, the price they were paid for it did not cover the growing costs. The rains came again in 1938. So did the grasshoppers and hailstorms.

It was not until 1939 that farmers on the Canadian Prairies began to recover. It took the Second World War to bring farming back to a profitable level.

In Their Own Words

"Every year of the Depression was worse than the one before it. We were all short of money.... One day, a neighbour came into [the] store for his mail. 'Oh good,' he said, 'this must be the cheque from the cattle I shipped to market last week. I sure need it. Me and my family are just plumb out of money.'

'Bet that cheque will hardly be worth cashing,' said one of the farmers, 'the way the price of cattle has been falling.'

'Yeah. You might get a couple of dollars per steer, or something ridiculous like that,' said another.

'Anything is better than nothing,' said the man, opening the envelope. His smile vanished, to be replaced by a look of horror. 'I don't believe it. This can't be true.'

'What's wrong?' We all rushed over to him. 'A bill. They say I owe them money.'

'For what?'

'For freight.' He looked ill. 'They say it cost more for the railway freight charges to ship my cattle than what they sold for at the market! Where am I going to get the money to pay this bill?'

In the weeks to come many more farmers had the same horrible experience, having to pay a bill when they sold cattle. Soon no farmer dared send livestock away to sell. What family could take that chance?"

Source: Irene Morck, *Five Pennies*
(Calgary: Fifth House, 1999)

The Technical Edge

Food for Thought In our nutrition-conscious age, we often forget that it was not always easy to find healthy food. In the early 1900s, people ate what was available. In the summer they ate fresh garden vegetables. In the winter they ate vegetables, such as rutabaga, carrots, and potatoes, that could be easily stored. Childhood diseases were common. Thousands of Canadian children died before reaching their fourth birthdays. Two Canadian discoveries helped change all this.

Fish was not a popular food for most Canadians, because there was no way to transport it without losing freshness. Dr. Archibald Huntsman worked at the Biological Board in Halifax in 1926. He proved that if fish was frozen at the height of its freshness, it would keep both its flavour and nutritional value. After three years in the lab, Huntsman finally had a product that people would buy. His frozen fish packages were called "Ice Fillets." They went on sale in Hamilton, Ontario, in January 1929. Today,

millions of Canadians enjoy the benefits of eating fish without having to live near an ocean.

In the early 1900s, Canada's infant death rate was a serious problem. Doctors were seeing many childhood sicknesses that they believed were caused by poor nutrition. Dr. Frederick Tisdall, Dr. Alan Brown, and Dr. T. G. H. Blake were pediatricians, or children's doctors. They worked at the Toronto Hospital for Sick Children. Many baby cereals were made from refined flour. These cereals did not have enough vitamins, minerals, and protein to ensure healthy growth. First, the



Hungry prairie farmers line up for food.

doctors invented a vitamin-packed biscuit, but babies needed something that they didn't have to chew. In 1931, these three doctors invented Pablum. It was the first scientifically engineered baby food. Instead of using refined flour, Pablum is made up of wheat meal, oatmeal, cornmeal, wheat germ, bone meal, brewer's yeast and alfalfa. It became an instant hit around the world. Now, all children could be given a healthy meal.

FOCUS

1. Give three reasons why the Prairies were the worst place to be during the Depression.
2. How did families survive during this great economic slump?
3. What Canadian inventions improved health for Canadians?
4. How would you survive an economic depression? Explain.

The On- to-Ottawa Trek

The Depression was probably hardest on young, single men. When employers were forced to cut staff, they let the young and single go first, assuming that older, married employees were more dependent on the work. Young women were often unemployed, but it was considered natural that their families would support them.



These men are at a relief camp in Ontario. What were the problems with relief camps?

Canada's young men set off to look for work in other cities across the country. Usually, there were no jobs anywhere. City relief officers worried about these drifters. Relief monies and goods were already being used up in support of regular city residents. There was nothing left for the newcomers. The young men were asked to move on. There was no place to go. The drifters were desper-

ate for food, for shelter, and for work.

Authorities had many fears. What if the men turned violent? What if they organized together with the help of communist agitators? Canada could find itself in the middle of a revolution, just as Russia had in 1917. Canadian city officials demanded action from Ottawa.

Relief Camps

The federal government decided to stop a possible revolution before it started. It set up Unemployment Relief Camps in remote areas of the country. It wanted to move the growing crowds of drifters off the roads, out of the cities, out of trouble, and to places where they could easily be controlled. Canada's relief camps were run by the Department of National Defence.

Camp inmates worked 8 hours a day, 6 days a week. They built roads, dug ditches, and planted trees. In return, each worker received clothes, a bed, food, and 20 cents a day. Most men were unhappy. They felt that they were living in a mixture of army and prison camps. They were cut off from the world, without a future. They were bored—there was nothing to do after work. One bunkhouse measured 24 m by 7.3 m, and had no windows. The 88 men who lived there slept 2 to a bunk.

Boom and Bust

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Reaction

In April 1935, 1500 men from British Columbia's relief camps went on strike.

They made their way to Vancouver and took over the city library and the Hudson's Bay Company store. On May Day, 20 000 striking men and their supporters paraded through the city.



Men boarded trains during the On-to-Ottawa Trek. Why might the Trek make government leaders nervous?

Vancouver could not help them. It had little relief money. Still, the strikers remained in the city for two months. When organizer Arthur "Slim" Evans of the Worker's Unity League (WUL) suggested that the men travel to Ottawa to carry their message directly to Prime Minister Bennett, the response was enthusiastic. The On-to-Ottawa Trek was born.

The Trekkers had no money. They would

have to ride the rails to Ottawa. On June 3, 1000 strikers climbed on top of the boxcars of an eastbound CPR freight train. First stop was Kamloops, after a long overnight ride through the mountains. Next came Golden, then Calgary after the terrifying trip through the long Connaught tunnel. Most Trekkers thought they would die from the black

engine smoke. Then it was on to Medicine Hat, Swift Current, and Moose Jaw. The Trekkers were met by crowds bearing food and good wishes at every stop. There were Tag Sales to raise money. Other unemployed people joined the Trek. Even the train crews co-operated.

Bennett's government was terrified. It had set up the relief camps to avoid trouble. It had forbidden camp workers to form committees, and still a mass movement had begun. Crowds of

workers waited in Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, and Toronto to join the strikers. The On-to-Ottawa Trek had to be stopped. When 2000 Trekkers arrived in Regina, Bennett ordered the railroads to refuse further transport. The Trekkers were rounded up and taken to the Regina Exhibition grounds. Eight leaders, including Evans, were allowed to continue to Ottawa for a meeting with the prime minister on June 22.



The Trek came to a violent end in Regina. What additional information do these photos supply?

The meeting was a failure. Both sides were angry. Bennett refused to listen to the Trekkers' demands. He believed the strikers were trying to start a revolution. Bennett called Evans a criminal, and Evans called Bennett a liar. The delegates returned to Regina determined that the Trek would continue. Bennett was equally determined it would not.

The Regina Riots

On July 1, Dominion Day, Trekkers and their supporters held a meeting in Regina's Market

Square. They needed to raise money to continue. The government was worried that the crowd would get out of control and planned to arrest the strike leaders. It stationed troops in large furniture vans at each of the four corners of the square. At the sound of a whistle, the van doors opened, and out poured RCMP and city police waving batons.

"We took it for a few minutes, and then we let go against them," one Trekker recalled. The riot lasted until late evening. One person was killed, several people

injured and 130 were arrested. The On-to-Ottawa Trek was over. The Trekkers disbanded. Many of them returned to Vancouver by train at government expense. The government would shut down the relief camps within a year, but the problems of the unemployed remained.

Depression Across Canada

If one worker in five was out of a job, four people were still working. The hardship was great, but the country survived. Everybody suffered to some degree, but those who produced goods for export had particular problems.

The factories of southern Ontario and Quebec produced goods that were sold mainly in Canada. These products were protected by high tariffs. This kept foreign-made goods out of the country, but made these goods more expensive. Some factories remained in production, but produced much less than before.

Farmers in Central Canada and the Maritimes had mixed farms. They planted wheat, corn, and other vegetables, and they raised cattle and poultry. They traded or bartered their produce when they could not sell it. Local storekeepers knew their customers

had no cash. A few dozen eggs and a barrel of apples could be traded for a pair of shoes. Maritimers were used to hardship. They had missed out on the boom of the 1920s, and although depression conditions were worse, they knew how to survive.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON RELIEF 1930–1937*

* in millions of dollars

Year	All Governments	Federal Governments
1930	18	4
1931	97	38
1932	95	37
1933	98	36
1934	159	61
1935	173	79
1936	159	81
1937	165	89

What year saw the greatest increase in government spending on relief?

British Columbia was almost entirely dependent upon exports. Lumbering, mining, and salmon fishing were the major industries. There were no markets and no jobs.

Prairie farmers were the hardest hit. First, they could not sell their wheat. Second, the Dustbowl meant they could not even grow it.

FOCUS

- 1. What caused the government to set up relief camps?**
- 2. What caused the On-to-Ottawa Trek?**
- 3. Describe the Regina Riots.**
- 4. How did people cope with the Depression?**

Bennett and King

Except for a few months, William Lyon Mackenzie King was prime minister from 1921 until 1930. As a teenager, King had written in his diary, "Surely I have some great work to accomplish before I die." He believed he was marked for greatness.



R. B. Bennett was prime minister from 1930 to 1935. Although he tried, Bennett failed to solve the Depression in Canada.

But during the hard economic times of 1929 and 1930, Canadians lost faith in his leadership. They became worried and wanted solutions to the problems of the Depression. Canadians wanted to get back to work. Prime Minister King and his Liberals had no

answers. "Prosperity is just around the corner," they said. The Liberals thought it best to let the Depression run its course. When the provinces (most of which had Conservative governments) asked for unemployment relief, King refused. He would not give "a five-cent piece" to any Conservative. King said each province needed to provide for itself. Voters did not like this answer. The Liberals lost the 1930 election to Richard Bedford (R. B.) Bennett and the Conservatives.

Bennett was from New Brunswick. His first job was as a teacher. He saved his money and used it to pay for university law courses. He worked hard and invested his money in real estate. He also inherited a fortune. Bennett became leader of the Conservative Party in 1927 and three years later became the prime minister. Bennett promised dynamic action to solve the nation's problems.

Boom and Bust

1910 1915 1920 1925 1930 1935 1940

Bennett moved to protect Canadian factory jobs. He did this by placing high tariffs on imported goods. Canadians would then buy more products made in Canada. Next, he introduced the Unemployment Relief Act. This gave \$20 million in relief aid to the provinces during its first year. He also worked to develop a trading group with countries that were part of the British Commonwealth. Most Canadians, however, felt little effect from these policies. They were still out of work. The lines outside the soup kitchens grew longer.

In 1933 the American President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, announced his New Deal to the people of the United States. Roosevelt had decided that the Depression would not cure itself. He brought the government into the economy by spending money and creating jobs. Slowly, things began to improve in the United States.

R. B. Bennett introduced his Canadian version of the New Deal in 1935, just before the federal election. Bennett proposed an 8-hour workday, a minimum wage, unemployment insurance, and price controls.

"King or Chaos"

Mackenzie King scorned Bennett's plans. The Liberals campaigned on the slogan "King or Chaos." Canadian voters wanted to know why the Conservatives took five long years to do something while Canadians starved?



Mackenzie King was a clever politician who returned to power in 1935.

In Their Own Words

Letters to Prime Minister Bennett

R. B. Bennett was a rich man, but he could not solve the problems caused by the Depression from his private fortune. He received many letters from desperate Canadians, and often responded with gifts of clothing or money. Which of these letters is the most moving in your opinion? Why?

Chichester, Quebec

March 13, 1935

Dear Mr. Bennett:

I am a little boy 11 years old I live in a very back wood place and I am very poor there is a bunch of us I am going to school My little Sister and I we have three miles to go and break our own path but we don't mind that if we were only able to buy our books, the Quebec books are very expensive so I just thought I would write you maybe you would give us enough to buy our books if you don't I guess we will have to stop and try and earn a little money to help out our father please excuse paper and pencil as I have no better. Hoping to hear from you real soon I am

Yours Loving Friend

Albert Drummond

Please answer soon soon soon

Murray Harbour, P.E.I.

March 24, 1935

Dear Sir:

I am writing you to see if there is any help I could get. As I have a baby thirteen days old that only weighs One Pound and I have to keep it in Cotton Wool & Olive Oil, and I haven't the money to buy it, the people bought it so far and fed me when I was in Bed. if there is any help I could get I would like to get it as soon as possible. there is five of a family. Counting the baby. there will be two votes for you next Election. Hoping too hear from you soon

Yours Truly

Mrs. Jack O'Hannon

Calgary

June 18, 1935

Dear Mr. Bennett,

Do please raise the Old Age Pension to at least thirty dollar per month. So many of your very old friends, myself included, have really not enough to exist on.

Very best wishes for your good health,

Sincerely, Alma Ward

Sudbury

May 20, 1931

Mr. Bennette

Since you have been elected, work has been impossible to get. We have decided that in a month from this date, if things are the same, We'll skin you alive, the first chance we get

Starving Unemployed

Regina, Sask.

May 24, 1935

Dear Sir:

You will, no doubt be surprised to received this requaist.

I thought that you would have second hand clothing that would not be suitable for you to wear. as I am strapped for clothes fit to wear to Church I desided to write to you.

My best suit is over 8 years old and pretty well frayed.

Judging you by your picture I beleve you are about the same size as myself.

I might say my people and I have allways been stunch Conservatives I wouldn't ask a Liberal part if I had to go naked.

I was 69 years of age May 22/35.

I voted as a farmer's son when I was 18 years old for Sir John A McDonald's Government and Im still on the list

I am yours respectfully

J. A. Graydon

Bennett's New Deal sounded like an election ploy to get votes.

King and the Liberals swept to victory in 1935. They didn't offer many new ideas, but Canadians were tired of Bennett. Everyone now believed that government action was needed to help people out of the Depression. The situation was also confused by disagreements between federal and provincial politicians. The federal government could raise money through taxes, but social action, such as unemployment relief, had to be paid for by the provinces. It seemed to be an impossible situation.

In 1937, King set up a Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations. This Rowell-Sirois Commission supported important changes in the tax system. These changes helped federal-provincial co-operation. The Commission suggested giving more federal money (equalization payments) to the less wealthy provinces than to the wealthier provinces. It argued that the federal government should be responsible for employment insurance.

The Rowell-Sirois Commission's report was not released until 1940. By that time, the Depression was over. The Second World War had begun. Neither the policies of Bennett nor those of King ended the Great Depression—it was ended by the Second World War.

In Their Own Words

"Though Depression and prairie drought had generated massive unemployment and widespread penury, there was no federal welfare department. Old age pensions of \$20 a month were paid by the provincial government to paupers over 70, and to those pensions the federal treasury made a 75-percent contribution. The total federal budget was a half a billion dollars a year, including grants to provincial governments to assist in the relief of the unemployed and of destitute farmers in the Prairies."

Source: J. W. Pickersgill, *Seeing Canada Whole: A Memoir* (Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1994)

On 10 September 1939, Canada declared war on Nazi Germany. Canada's unemployed went to work in the army and in the arms factories. The country was ready for another war-related economic boom.

FOCUS

1. Why was King defeated in 1930?
2. What was Bennett's New Deal?
3. Why did voters elect King in 1935?
4. Would governments today do more to help their citizens? Explain.
5. What event ended the Great Depression?

The New Politics

Canada's Liberal and Conservative parties first believed that the government should not direct the economy. They felt that economic problems would solve themselves. Other people disagreed. They wanted the government to help. These people formed new political



The first Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) convention was in Regina in 1933. The CCF later became the New Democratic Party (NDP).

parties and movements to try to get their ideas heard.

With the Depression came new political ideas. In Alberta, William Aberhart blamed the Depression on Toronto and Montreal bankers. Why, he asked, were stores filled with goods that no one could afford to buy? The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) believed that capitalism was to blame. Fascist parties blamed the Depression on minority groups, like the Jews, and used the fear of communism to attract supporters.

(See Chapter 3.) Communists wanted to overthrow the government and replace it with a government by the workers.

The First World War had a major effect on Canadian politics. Prime Minister Robert Borden's decision to conscript soldiers to

fight in the war angered most French Canadians. It would be another 41 years before Quebec would vote for a federal Conservative party. The war also angered many Western Canadian farmers. They believed that business people and politicians in Ontario and Quebec controlled the economy for their own benefit. When the economy did poorly

after the war, Western Canadians formed their own political party in 1919—the Progressive Party. It was the first successful third party in Canadian history. It was based in Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and the rural areas of Ontario. The Progressive Party took 65 seats in the 1921 election—more than the Conservative Party. Five years later, however, better economic times brought an end to the Progressive Party. The fragments of the party would later form the nucleus of the CCF.

Boom and Bust

1910 1915 1920 1925 1930 1935 1940

Co-operative Commonwealth Federation

The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) was founded in 1932 in Calgary.

Progressives, Labour Party members, middle-class intellectuals, labour leaders and supporters of the British socialist movement joined together to form it. The CCF platform, known as the Regina Manifesto, was drawn up in 1933. The CCF believed in socialism. It wanted the government to control business and industry for the good of everyone.

The CCF believed that private enterprise and greed had thrown the country into the Great Depression.

Many Canadians confused the socialist CCF with the Communist Party. There were big differences. Communists believed that change could come about only through violent revolution.

The CCF believed that change should be made democratically. Communists did not feel individual rights and freedoms were as important as the welfare of the group. The welfare of the state, which represented all, mattered most. The CCF upheld the individual's civil rights. People must be allowed to vote freely. The CCF elected J. S. Woodsworth as its first leader.

Woodsworth had worked hard to help immigrants, the elderly, and trade unions. He was highly respected by all political parties.

THE REGINA MANIFESTO – Program of the CCF

- 1. The people (the government) should own all the banks and financial institutions.**
- 2. The people should own key industries such as railways, mines, lumbering, telephone systems, and hydroelectric companies.**
- 3. There should be a large-scale program of public works (housing, roads, public buildings) to provide jobs for the unemployed.**
- 4. Laws should guarantee minimum living standards for all through programs such as unemployment insurance, family allowances, old age pensions.**
- 5. Farmers' land should be protected from mortgage foreclosures.**
- 6. There should be a guaranteed minimum wage.**

Which of the above do you support? Why? Which do you reject? Why?



William "Bible Bill" Aberhart became premier in Alberta in 1935. His Social Credit Party remained in power until 1971.

Poverty in the Midst of Plenty

Alberta stores were stocked with clothes, radios, and tractors, but people had no money to buy them. Farmers had wheat but when and if they sold it, the price they got was often less than the cost of sowing and harvesting it. It was a vicious circle.

William Aberhart was famous in Alberta. To some he was known as Bible Bill, the radio preacher of the Calgary Prophetic Bible Institute. In 1932, this high school principal began to talk about a new political idea. He called it Social Credit. He believed the main problem with the Depression was that people did not have enough money to buy the goods being produced. If people had more money, they could buy more goods. If more goods were bought, more would need to be made. More people would have jobs, and they would earn more money. The Depression would be over and the prosperity cycle would return. Aberhart's Social Credit Party proposed to give each Alberta citizen a monthly cheque of \$25. People could use the money to buy what they needed.

This idea made great sense to the farmers and workers of Alberta. They trusted Bible

Bill Aberhart. In the 1935 provincial election, Social Credit won 56 of 63 seats and Aberhart became premier.

The federal government ruled that issuing money was a federal power. Aberhart's government had no right to print money. Many Albertans felt that this showed how the Liberal and Conservative parties favoured Ontario and Quebec. It seemed that these parties were more interested in talking about laws than helping people in need.

New parties and new politics sprang up all over Canada during the Depression. In British Columbia, Liberal Premier Thomas

In Their Own Words

"You can strip down the appeal of Social Credit to the \$25 a month. All of us farmers were in desperate straits. Here was William Aberhart promising \$25 a month, and he was a Minister of the Gospel. I asked him about that \$25 after one of his meetings, and he told me I must have faith."

A farmer from central Alberta

Pattullo tried to assist the economy with a "work and wages" program. Maurice Duplessis swept to power in Quebec in 1936 as the leader of the new Union Nationale party. Mitch Hepburn, Liberal premier of Ontario, adopted ideas from the Progressives, including auctioning government limousines.

FOCUS

- 1. Summarize the main ideas of the Regina Manifesto.**
- 2. Would you have voted for the CCF or the Social Credit Party during the Depression? Explain.**
- 3. What did Aberhart believe was the main cause of the Depression?**
- 4. How did his Social Credit Party propose to end it?**

On the Sunny Side of the Street

Life in the thirties was not always dull and drab. People had fun in many ways. If they could not afford to travel, they could still get together with friends and neighbours. They could go to the beach or have a picnic.

Communities co-operated to help the needy. Parties held at a poor person's home deliberately broke up early, leaving enough left-over food for the rest of the week. Neighbours got together to help one another with planting, harvesting, or barn building.

On Saturdays, there were often concerts in the bandstand at the local park. Amos and Andy, Eddie

Cantor, Bing Crosby, Fanny Brice, and Jack Benny were popular entertainers of the thirties. Once you owned a radio, your pleasure was free. Soap operas could be heard every day. People could hardly wait to hear of the loves, fears, disasters and joys of Helen Trent, Our Gal Sunday, or Ma Perkins. Monday evenings, the Lux Radio Theatre presented radio versions of the latest movies. Other nights, people pushed aside the furniture and danced to the music of the big

bands. Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians was one of the best known. Every year, millions of North Americans welcomed in the New Year by listening to the Royal Canadians play "Auld Lang Syne."

The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Corporation was established by the government in 1932. By 1936, when the CRBC became the CBC, it had 8 stations and 14 private affiliates. The first French station was added in 1937. Canadians from coast to coast could now listen to entertainment provided by Canadian talent. CBC listeners laughed at

the antics of Vancouver's Stag Party, or hummed along with the music of Toronto's Happy Gang. On Sunday mornings, boys and girls listened to the stories of "Just Mary" from the Maritimes.

At Christmas, families gathered around the radio for the King's Message. Farm news first appeared on the French station, and the programs were so popular that English farm broadcasts began shortly after. CBC's first "on-the-spot" news report was of the Moose



Radio announcer at KUKU. What might be considered unusual about his clothing?

Boom and Bust

1910 1915 1920 1925 1930 1935 1940

River Mine disaster in Nova Scotia. J. Frank Willis reported the news. When Ontario Premier Mitch Hepburn confronted striking auto workers at Oshawa's General Motors plant, Canadians heard about it on the CBC. Canadians learned about the British royalty on the radio. Saturday night was Hockey Night in Canada. Everyone sat around the radio waiting for Foster Hewitt's welcome, "Hello Canada and hockey fans in the United States and Newfoundland," and his famous cry, "He shoots. He scores!"

Many towns had their own movie house. On Saturday afternoon children watched cartoons, the latest episode of *The Shadow* or *Tom Mix*, a full-length movie for 10 cents. They could buy a chocolate bar or jellybeans for just a nickel more. Sometimes they even got a free comic book. A generation grew up on "cowboy and Indian" movies. These

movies painted an unreal picture of the Aboriginal struggle for survival. Today, Aboriginal peoples are still fighting the warped attitudes these movies created.

Canadians wanted to escape real life during the Depression. The movies were a perfect way to do this. Comedians Charlie Chaplin, the Marx Brothers, Laurel and Hardy, and W. C. Fields were all popular. Hollywood made many movies about Canada. Although these movies painted a strange picture of the country, this did not seem to bother anyone. Jeanette MacDonald's *Rose Marie* and Shirley Temple's *Susannah of the Moundies* were two popular movies said to be set in Canada. Hollywood producers seemed to think that if they added snow, birch bark canoes, handsome lumberjacks and "wicked" French Canadians to mountains and Moundies, the Canadian picture was complete.

HIT SONGS OF THE 1930s

The music of the thirties reflected the spirit of the time. Some tunes reflected the struggles people faced. Others were more upbeat and hopeful. Which of the following song titles best reflects the Great Depression?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can't give you anything but love | <input type="checkbox"/> Smoke gets in your eyes | <input type="checkbox"/> They can't take that away from me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> On the sunny side of the street | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue moon | <input type="checkbox"/> Moonlight serenade |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brother, can you spare a dime? | <input type="checkbox"/> I've got you under my skin | <input type="checkbox"/> My prayer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm getting sentimental over you | <input type="checkbox"/> What a difference a day makes | <input type="checkbox"/> I'll never smile again |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> The lady is a tramp | <input type="checkbox"/> Happy days are here again |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Pennies from heaven | |

The car was very popular by the 1930s. Automobiles now had curved fenders with lots of chrome. Ford made a powerful V-8 engine in 1932. Cadillac introduced its second V-16 engine in 1938.



Chrysler produced a curved one-piece windshield. Automatic transmissions and power brakes were offered for the first time. Canada's roads had also improved. Ontario's Queen Elizabeth Way opened in 1939. It was the first four-lane highway in North America. Canadians could drive between Toronto and Hamilton with ease.

Sport

Professional sports became popular during the 1930s. The Montreal Royals and the Toronto Maple Leafs baseball teams played against American teams. Football was beginning to attract attention. Each year the best Western team travelled east to play the Eastern champions for the Grey Cup. Each year, the west lost the game. Finally in 1935, Fritz Hanson, and several other American imports, led the Winnipeg 'Pegs (later Blue Bombers) to victory. Serious rivalry for the Grey Cup

had begun (and still continues).

Then, as now, hockey was the Canadian sport. The excitement was carried across the country by the radio. Children who had never seen the Montreal Canadiens or the Toronto Maple Leafs play knew everything about the latest game. If they missed it on radio, they read the story on the sports page of the newspaper the next day.

Hard times resulted in the NHL (National Hockey League)

becoming more American. Some teams folded; other clubs moved to larger cities. In 1930, the Canadian Division included the Montreal Maroons, the Montreal Canadiens, the Toronto Maple Leafs, the Ottawa Senators, and the New York Americans. The Boston Bruins, the Chicago Black Hawks, the New York Rangers, the Detroit Falcons, and the Pittsburgh Pirates composed the American Division. After the Montreal Maroons collapsed in 1938, the NHL was reduced to seven teams playing in only one division.

MAPLE LEAF GARDENS

Maple Leaf Gardens, home of the Toronto Maple Leafs, opened on 12 November 1931. The Toronto Maple Leafs played the Chicago Black Hawks in front of 15 000 spectators. Toronto lost the game 2-1, but would go on to win the Stanley Cup that year. Maple Leafs' owner Conn Smythe took a risk trying to finance such a huge building in the middle of the Depression. Construction workers helped out by taking 20 percent of their salaries in Maple Leaf stock. The Gardens was finished in five months. It would be home to the Maple Leafs until 13 February 1999.



The Technical Edge

Table-top Hockey During the Depression Don Munro was one of many Canadians out of work. Munro did not have money to spend on toys, so he decided to create a game for his children. Using regular household items and recycling old materials, Munro created table-top hockey. The first version had a four-man team of wooden players. One lever on the board controlled the goalie and another moved the other three men. The steel ball was kept moving by a slight bump in the centre of the board. Munro's children were so happy with their new toy that Munro patented his invention.

He also paid a visit to the toy buyer at the local Eaton's store. The buyer was worried about buying something new during a period of such widespread economic uncertainty. Yet, he was intrigued with the game so he bought one to see how things would go. He sold that game before Munro had returned home. Within hours he was on the phone ordering another six games. Before long, the Munro family business became Munro Games Ltd., and table-top hockey became a major part of growing up in Canada.

Is table-top hockey still popular among Canadians?

The Dionne Quintuplets

The most publicized event of the thirties was the birth of the Dionne Quintuplets in 1934. The five sisters were born to a poor Franco-Ontarian family near North Bay, Ontario.

They were the first quintts in the world to survive. This miracle-baby story captured the hearts and minds of many people. The Ontario government took the girls away from their family and put them in a special hospital. Tourists paid to watch the girls (behind glass) during three daily visiting times. The quintts made millions of dollars for the government during the nine years they were on display. They were used in movies and in baby food advertisements. They had

no family life. Finally, in 1998, after a long legal battle, the Ontario government agreed to pay the three surviving sisters \$4 million for the suffering it had caused all of the quintts for so many years.



The Dionne Quintuplets, born in 1934, were Canada's sweethearts during the dark days of the Depression. For more, visit www.quintland.com.

FOCUS

1. What types of radio programs did Canadians enjoy?
2. Describe an afternoon at the movies during the 1930s.
3. How did sports fans find out about the achievements of their favourite teams?



Towards a Canadian Identity

Canada became a nation in 1867. Britain, however, still made foreign policy decisions for Canada and the rest of the British Empire. For example, in the First World War, Canada did not declare war on Germany. Britain declared it, and Canada was automatically at war when Britain went to war. Several important events after 1914 helped Canada achieve full independence from Britain.

The First World War made Canada a more mature nation. Canada and the other Dominions of the British Empire became more important countries and took part in making wartime decisions. At the end of the war, they all sat as separate nations during the Paris Peace Conference. Later, Canada was an active, independent member of the new League of Nations.

In 1923, Canadians and Americans agreed on a treaty to protect halibut on the Northwest coast. Canada announced that its own minister of fisheries would sign the treaty. This was the first time that Canada, with its new independence, signed a treaty on its own.

The British Commonwealth of Nations

The new relationship of countries within the British Empire had to be worked out. At the Imperial Conference of 1926, Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King was responsible for the Balfour Report. This report stated that the Dominions were free and equal. It still agreed that they were united by the Crown as mem-

bers of the British Commonwealth of Nations. In 1931, the British Parliament passed the **Statute of Westminster**. This Act declared that the British Parliament had no power over the laws of the Dominions. Canada began to open its own embassies in cities such as Paris, Tokyo, and Washington.

Canada's Constitution, the British North America Act, was an act of the British Parliament. When the Statute of Westminster was passed, Canadians had not yet worked out how they would make changes to the constitution. Britain kept the power to amend the BNA Act until 1981. When Canada decided to go to war in 1939, it did so on its own, as an independent nation, not as a colony of Great Britain.

A Changing Identity

The Canadian government established the National Research Council (NRC) in 1917. Its job was to "create, acquire and promote the application of scientific and engineering knowledge to meet Canadian needs for economic, regional and social development." The NRC's national laboratory in Ottawa was founded in the late 1920s. It later played a crucial role in war research. NRC scientists researched in many areas. These included weapons development, fuels, packaging, aeronautics, mechanical engineering, medicine, food, energy, and the biological sciences. By 1939, 300 men and women worked at the laboratory.

Boom and Bust

1910 1915 1920 1925 1930 1935 1940

As British traditions faded and American influences on Canadian life became stronger, the federal government helped people have a sense of their own country. Many people believed that it was important for Canadians to have this. The CBC helped develop a sense of Canadian identity. It provided news, entertainment, and education services. It also informed Canadians about local and international events from a Canadian point of view.

In 1939, the King government created the National Film Board (NFB). The Board helped to make films for Canadians. These films also informed the rest of the world about Canada. British documentary filmmaker John Grierson was Canada's first Government Film Commissioner. By 1945, the NFB employed more than 700 people. It was one of the largest film studios in the world.

Transport by Air

The CPR and CNR helped open the Canadian west in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. They thus helped in unifying Canada. In the 1920s and 1930s, airplanes opened up Canada's north. First World War aces, such as Punch Dickens and Wilfrid May, became bush pilots. They flew under harsh conditions into the Northwest and Yukon Territories. The planes brought food, supplies, mail



First passengers on a Trans-Canada Airlines flight. Passengers tended to dress up for air travel.

and medical assistance to Canadians in these remote areas. They also brought prospectors searching for gold and silver. Airline companies were small. They often had only one or two single-engine planes. Passenger service was beginning and no company was able to serve the whole country.

The federal government made the Trans-Canada Airlines a Crown corporation in 1937 (it later became Air Canada). Within two years, the company had 15 ten-passenger aircraft. Former bush pilots became airline pilots. In the early days, flight attendants were also nurses in case a passenger needed medical help.

Canadian Vision

The Group of Seven

Perhaps best known of all Canada's artists, the Group of Seven came together in 1920 as an organization of "modern" painters. The original members included Frank Carmichael, Lawren Harris, A. Y. Jackson, Franz Johnston, Arthur Lismer, J. E. H. MacDonald, and F. H. Varley. They were greatly influenced by Tom Thomson, who painted daring portraits of the land in and around Georgian Bay. His work encouraged the Group of Seven to think about painting landscapes differently. Thomson died in 1917.

The Group of Seven was best known as landscape painters. Traditional landscape painters of the time painted a realistic likeness of their environment. The Group of Seven's art was an expression of their feelings about nature. Rather than depict what a scene looked like, they wanted to show how it made them

feel. They used bold, striking colours and brush strokes to capture the beauty and ruggedness of Canada's land, especially in the Ontario north.

People were critical of their style and paintings at first, but eventually the Group of Seven became very popular. Franz Johnston retired from the Group in 1926 to pursue other interests, and A. J. Casson took his place. The Group disbanded in the early 1930s, but by then, they were famous in Europe, the United States, and at home. Most members became art teachers, influencing the next generation of Canadian artists.



"Thomson's Rapids, Magnetawan River," by J. E. H. MacDonald, reflects the painter's love of the land north of Lake Superior. The Rockies was another favourite painting place.

Canadian Vision

Governor General's Literary Awards

In 1937 the Canadian Authors Association initiated the Governor General's Literary Awards. Writers were judged for their works of fiction, nonfiction and drama or poetry. Stephen Leacock won the 1937 nonfiction award for his book *My Discovery of the West*. He was thought to be one of the best comedy authors in the English language. The Canada Council now selects the winners of the Governor General's Awards with the help of two juries—one French speaking, the other English speaking. Each jury has nine members who are experienced writers, academics, and literary critics. Awards have been given to some of Canada's best authors, Margaret Atwood, Dionne Brand, and Rohinton Mistry among them. To review present and recent winners, visit www.canadacouncil.ca.

Achievements

Canada was no longer a colony, but an independent nation. It was proud of its citizens and their achievements.

Canadian researchers gave much to the field of medicine. Doctors Frederick Banting and Charles Best discovered insulin. It changed the life of diabetics. In 1934, the Quebec government, in conjunction with the Rockefeller Institute, established the Montreal Neurological Hospital under the direction of Canadian surgeon Wilder Penfield. It would become world famous as an institution devoted to the teaching, research, and

treatment of nervous system diseases such as epilepsy. Medical missionary Wilfred Grenfell worked for years with the deep-sea fishers, permanent settlers, and Inuit of Newfoundland and Labrador. In 1928, he opened a modern hospital at St. Anthony, Newfoundland.

Literary and visual arts in Canada flourished between the world wars. The Group of Seven, painters of Canada's rugged north, were active from 1920–1933. Emily Carr's striking paintings of West coast scenery and Aboriginal life added a new dimension to the Canadian character. Miller Brittain, Carl Schaefer, and Jack Humphrey contributed realistic paintings.

HISTOR!CA

Minutes

HISTOR!CA

Minutes

FOCUS

1. How did the Statute of Westminster of 1931 describe Canada's position within the Commonwealth?
2. Name three organizations in Canada established by government.
3. List major Canadian achievements in art, medicine, and literature.

Sharpening Your Skills

History Is Interpretation

THE SKILL

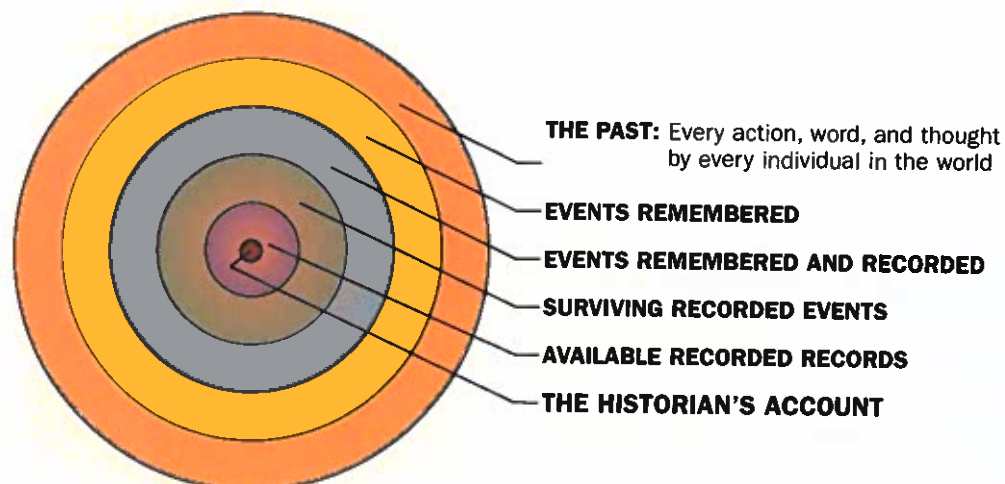
Understanding that “interpretation” is at the heart of all historical writing

THE IMPORTANCE

Not taking everything written in history books as accurate

- 1) History is **everything** that happened in the past.
- 2) History is the **remaining** record of what was said and done in the past.
- 3) History is the **study of the evidence** that remains of what happened in the past.

Note the major difference between the first and second definitions—everything that happened versus what remains of everything that happened. Think of what you did today. When you are long dead, what records will there be of everything you did, heard, or saw today? Historians have only this remaining memory of the past to examine. This means that there may easily be a difference between what really happened and the written record of what happened.



If a tree falls in the forest and no one heard it fall, did it make a sound? Relate this cartoon to the three definitions of history.

Historians face several major problems. First, they have too much information. Let's pretend that you become a famous brain surgeon. It is 50 years after your death and Professor Wrong wants to write your biography. If it is to be a complete history of your life, the professor must include everything you said, thought, saw, heard, read, and did throughout your life. Imagine writing down everything you said, saw, and did in just one day—it would fill an entire book. As a result, the final biography of your life is so big it fills an entire classroom.

No one will publish the biography—or read it. Professor Wrong will have to reduce the 500 volumes into one book. The professor must decide what information to include and what to leave out of the biography.

Naturally, not everyone would agree on what to include, what the important influences on your life were. Should the biography include what you learned in this class, your favourite music, your taste in clothing, what pictures you hung on your wall, or who you dated? There is not space for everything. What is significant and what is not?

The final biography is Professor Wrong's

interpretation of your life. Other historians would no doubt include different information and arrive at different conclusions.

The other major problem in writing your biography is that there is not enough information. Many of your actions and most of your thoughts, for example, were never recorded. Perhaps you can think of several topics that you have never told anyone. Professor Wrong must fill in the blanks with educated guesses. Why did you decide to become a brain surgeon? Was it because you read about several interesting Canadian doctors in this textbook?

Because there was both too much information and too little, Professor Wrong's biography will differ from the real past. It will be the professor's interpretation of what was important in your life. This task is more like that of the painter than of the photographer. The result is a likeness rather than an exact duplication. Perhaps this is why Napoleon suggested, "History is a trick played by the living upon the dead."

Written history is thus interpretation. What is written down and what is left out of the story is based upon the author's choices.

Application

Take one topic in this chapter. What information have the authors left out about this topic? You can do this assignment by using your imagination, by comparing this text to another book, by

consulting other people, or by going on the Internet. Now, try to imagine why the authors of this book did not include the additional information.

Questions & Activities

Match the items in column A with the descriptions in column B.

- | A | B |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. One Big Union (OBU) | a) states the original program of the CCF. |
| 2. Social Credit Party | b) granted Canada full independence within the Commonwealth. |
| 3. Regina Manifesto | c) fought for women to be legally recognized as persons. |
| 4. Alberta Five | d) wanted to give each citizen \$25 a month. |
| 5. Statute of Westminster | e) wanted better bargaining power by uniting all workers. |

Discuss and Debate

1. If a general strike like the one in Winnipeg was organized in your community, what industries and services would be closed down? How would you be affected? Do you think workers should have the right to organize general strikes? Why or why not?
2. Summarize some of the main advances in rights and freedoms made by women between 1919 and 1930. What issues remain today for women in Canada?
3. Discuss the impact of the automobile on
 - a) shopping patterns
 - b) city and community planning
 - c) jobs and industry
 - d) travel and vacations
 - e) convenience and leisure
 - f) social life

4. During the 1930s, the government set up work camps for unemployed young men. Some people suggest that a similar system, but with more freedom, should be established for the unemployed today. There would be a choice of
 - a) working in local parks, public buildings, etc.
 - b) helping the aged or handicapped
 - c) replanting forest land
 - d) joining the armed forcesWhat do you think?

5. How involved should the government be in running industries and providing services? Here is a list of organizations started by the federal government. What does each one do? Why did the government become involved in these areas? Which are no longer run by the government?
 - a) NRC
 - b) CBC
 - c) NFB
 - d) TCA (Trans-Canada Airlines)

List other industries and services run by the federal, provincial or municipal government. Do you think the government should continue to be involved in these areas? Are there other industries or services that you think the government should run? Why or why not?

6. Do you think that Canada is likely to suffer another depression at this time? Explain.

Do Some Research

1. Do any members of your family belong to a trade union? Compile a list of unions that people in your community belong to. Name other unions in Canada today. What are their objectives? How have union aims changed since the Winnipeg General Strike? How have they remained the same?
2. Find out more about one of the following and complete your own Canadian Lives feature:
 - a) R. B. Bennett
 - b) William Lyon Mackenzie King
 - c) Emily Carr
 - d) Charles Best
 - e) The Alberta Five
 - f) one member of the Group of Seven
 - g) Ethel Catherwood
 - h) Bobbie Rosenfeld
3. Write a report about an outstanding woman in Canada today in one of the following areas: (a) industry and commerce, (b) sports, (c) politics and law, (d) entertainment, (e) science and technology.
4. After further reading about the causes of the Great Depression, write a paragraph noting which cause you feel is the most important and why.
5. During the interwar years, many Canadians made a major impact or contribution to Canadian and world events. Research the importance of any one of these Canadians:

David Milne	Mazo de la Roche
Jimmy McLarnin	Ralph Connor
L. M. Montgomery	Sinclair Ross
W. O. Mitchell	Frederick Philip Grove
Ada Mackenzie	Morley Callaghan
Guy Lombardo	Mary Pickford
Leslie McFarlane	Morse Robb
Norman Bethune	
6. Do some research on automobiles of the 1920s. Describe the basic features and options that were available. How have automobiles changed since the 1920s? What features have disappeared? What new features have been introduced? What "options" of the 1920s are now standard features?
7. Find out more about one of the following: (a) movies of the 1920s, (b) the early days of radio, (c) movies of the 1930s, (d) records and record players. Write a paragraph describing their main features and importance.
8. Find out more about the success of Canadians during the 1928 Olympics. Compare their record to that of Canadian athletes in more recent Olympics. Can you draw any conclusions from this comparison?
9. The Edmonton Grads were one of the most successful sports teams ever. Do further research on the Grads or another Canadian sports team of the 1920s and 1930s. Your report should have some information under the following headings:
 - a) Beginnings
 - b) Coaches
 - c) Star Players
 - d) Win-and-Loss Records

Be Creative

1. Write a letter from a soldier who has just returned home at the end of the war. Your opening might be: "I'm so pleased to see my family and friends again, but the town sure has changed."
2. With a group of other students, prepare a folder on the role of women from 1914 to 1930. Your folder should include
 - a) a poster advertising a women's rights rally
 - b) a speech by a supporter of women's rights
 - c) a picture of women's fashions and hairstyles during the 1920s with an explanation of how these gave women new freedom
 - d) an editorial favouring or opposing the right of women to be senators
 - e) a letter to the editor disagreeing with the editorial
3. Design an advertisement for a product or appliance that became available during the 1920s. Let your ad explain how buying the item will make life easier, more convenient, or more entertaining. As a class, compile a brochure called "Advertisements of the Roaring Twenties."
4. Make a mural or picture map of Canada showing industries across the country in the 1920s.
5. Write a letter to Prime Minister Bennett asking for help for you and your family. Write Bennett's reply.

6. Prepare an edition of a newspaper in your community for a specific date in the 1920s or 1930s. Your newspaper should include
 - a) reports on local, provincial, national and international events
 - b) entertainment and sports news
 - c) information on new inventions and scientific discoveries
 - d) human interest stories
 - e) editorials
 - f) letters to the editor
 - g) political cartoons
 - h) business news on local industries and job opportunities
 - i) advertisements for new products
 - j) fashion news
 - k) Want ads

For some items you will need to do additional research beyond this textbook.



An image of postwar spending and prosperity.

Web Watch

For more information about some of the topics in this chapter, consider a visit to these sites:

The Canadian Encyclopedia: www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com

Canadian Labour Congress: www.clc-ctc.ca/index.php/history (History of Canadian Labour)

CBC Digital Archives: www.cbc.ca/archives—review some of the following files:

“Fair Game: Pioneering Canadian Women in Sports,” “Electing Dynasties: Alberta Campaigns 1935–2001,” “Group of Seven: Painters in the Wilderness,” “Mackenzie King: Public Life, Private Man.”

<http://www.edmontongrads.com/> (Edmonton Grads)

<http://www.ontoottawa.ca/index1.html> (On-to-Ottawa Trek)

<http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/R.-B.-Bennett> (R. B. Bennett)

<http://www.city.north-bay.on.ca/quints/digitize/dqdpe.htm> (Dionne Quints)

<http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/5202/win1919.htm> (Winnipeg General Strike)



An image of the Great Depression.

CANADA AT WAR



These 1942 stamps are part of a series featuring Canadian contributions to war work. Top: A 25-pound gun being inspected at a munitions factory; Below: A corvette ready to be launched at a smaller shipyard—corvettes were used to transport men and supplies to war fronts.

What do these stamps say about Canada's effort to fight the Second World War?