

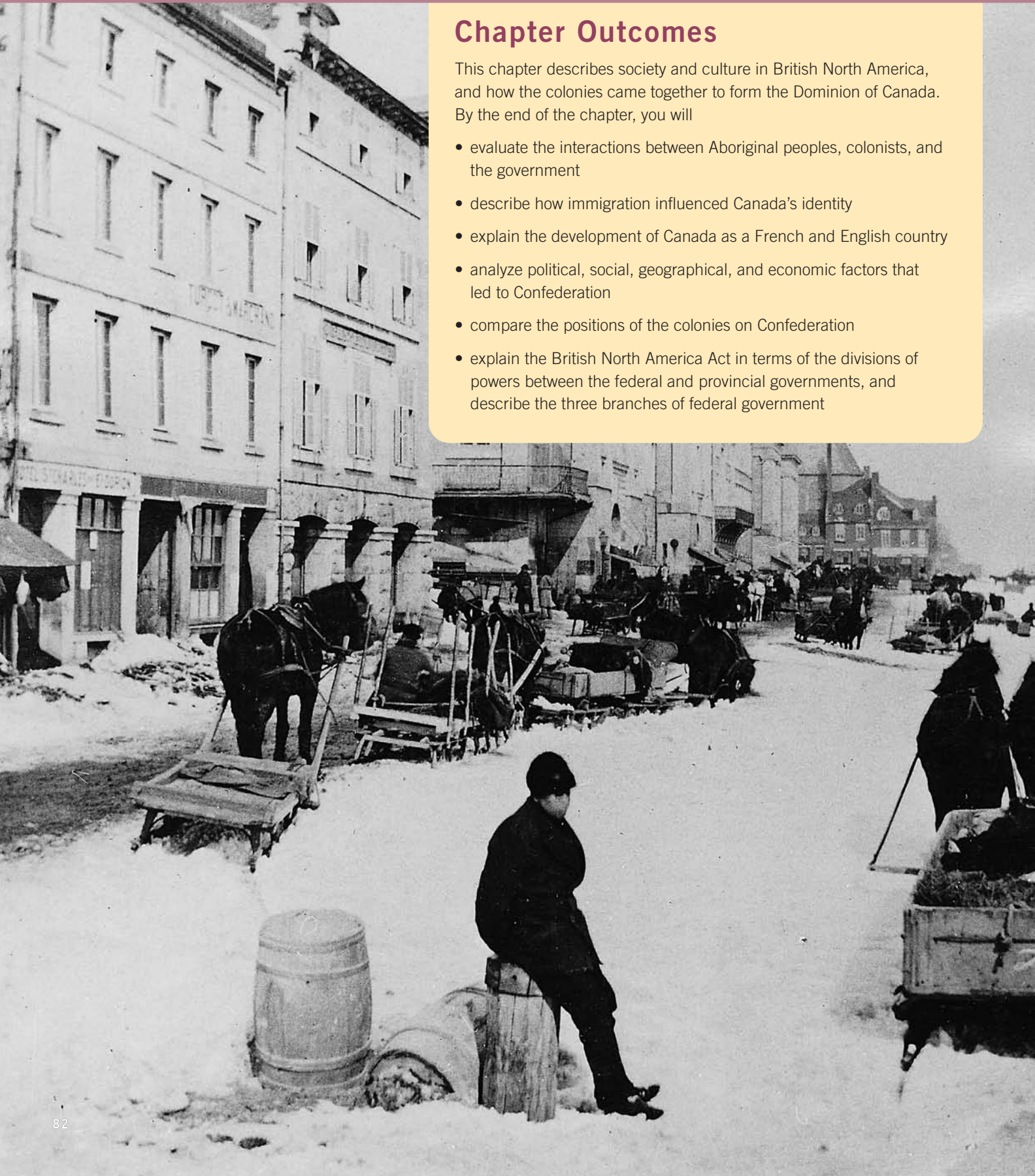
# 3

## Building a Nation

### Chapter Outcomes

This chapter describes society and culture in British North America, and how the colonies came together to form the Dominion of Canada. By the end of the chapter, you will

- evaluate the interactions between Aboriginal peoples, colonists, and the government
- describe how immigration influenced Canada's identity
- explain the development of Canada as a French and English country
- analyze political, social, geographical, and economic factors that led to Confederation
- compare the positions of the colonies on Confederation
- explain the British North America Act in terms of the divisions of powers between the federal and provincial governments, and describe the three branches of federal government





## What were the social, economic, and geographical factors behind the struggle to unify the colonies in Confederation?

Many people in the colonies of British North America were deeply divided on the issue of union. National unity and the gains that could come with it conflicted with fears of loss—loss of language, culture, identity, and freedom. These issues were especially important to those who were not members of the British ruling class.

### Key Terms

Victorian reserves	Rebellion Losses Bill
assimilate	federation
enfranchisement	Manifest Destiny
infrastructure	coalition
mercantilism	representation by population
	constitution



The image of Montreal's Bonsecours Market shown on the opposite page was taken in 1875, less than ten years after Confederation. Imagine being one of the people in the marketplace. How might you interpret the Confederation ball, depicted above? Now look at both images in light of the quotation below. What can you learn about some of the difficulties in creating national unity in Canada?

*[Those who support Confederation] are a few ambitious individuals, who feel our legislature too small for their capacity, and its rewards too [small] for their acceptance...*

—Halifax Citizen, November 1864

# The Colonies in the Reign of Queen Victoria

**Victorian** of or pertaining to the reign of Queen Victoria; also someone who shares the values of that period

## ► What effects would an increase in British immigration have on society, culture, and the people of the Canadian colonies?

After the Rebellions of 1837 ended, there was a new rush of immigrants to Upper and Lower Canada. Most were from the British Isles, and the population of English-speakers soon outnumbered the French. When the colonies of Upper and Lower Canada were joined together as the Province of Canada in 1841, this imbalance became even more pronounced and alarming for the French. English colonists of all classes still considered themselves to be British and happily followed the views, styles, activities, and prejudices of the **Victorians** in England.

Queen Victoria reigned over the British Empire for more than 60 years, from 1837 to 1901. Britain was the world's superpower, and its empire was vast. The Victorians grew increasingly proud of their empire, to which the British North American colonies belonged. No one suggested that the colonies should be a multicultural society—quite the contrary, in fact.

### TIMELINE

**1837** ● Rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada

**1838** ● Lord Durham's report is issued

**1841** ● United Province of Canada is formed

**1849** ● Lord Elgin signs the Rebellion Losses Bill  
● Crown Colony of Vancouver Island is created

**1854** ● Reciprocity Treaty is signed with the U.S.

**1857** ● Gradual Civilization Act is passed

**1858** ● Colony of British Columbia is created

**1864** ● Great Coalition is formed  
● Charlottetown Conference takes place  
● Quebec Conference is held

**1865** ● American Civil War ends

**1866** ● The London Conference is held

**1867** ● Canada becomes a Dominion



**FIGURE 3-1** In the mid-1800s, Toronto became a city with businesses, banks, and busy streets. Large buildings were constructed, such as Toronto's Crystal Palace (1858), which was used as an exhibition space. This expensive building copied London's Crystal Palace, which was built in 1851. How would feelings for the "mother country" influence those governing the colonies?

## Victorians Rich and Poor

In the mid-1800s, quality of life often depended on the social class to which a person belonged. With money, education, and social standing, life was comfortable and secure. With no income tax, it was possible to make a lot of money and keep it. The very rich, who lived in splendid houses with many servants, grew even richer after 1840. Most wealthy people were considered **middle class**—not aristocrats, but still very wealthy.

Thousands of others, however, lived in poverty in tiny one- or two-room houses or apartments.

In general, workers were not paid well and worked long hours. Work weeks were usually six days long, and there were no vacations. At that time, society had no employment insurance, no welfare, and no universal health care. In fact, there was no government assistance as we know it today, although churches and relatives provided help when they could. Everyone in a family was expected to work.

Into this social structure came many new immigrants to Canada. Coming from Ireland and Scotland, many had been forced to leave their homelands. Most were desperately poor and had little education. Some went to Toronto or to other growing towns, where they looked for work as manual labourers; others rented farmland in return for part of the harvest. Some immigrants could only afford to homestead cheap land, usually where the soil was thin and rocky. While many immigrants had opportunities in British North America that they did not have in Britain or Europe, life was still hard and often disappointing.

Religion was an important part of life. Christianity was the official religion, encompassing different faiths. Irish immigrants were often Catholic, while most Scots were Presbyterians. Upper- and middle-class people were usually members of the Anglican church, which was the official church of Upper Canada. Towns usually had at least one Anglican,

**middle class** at the time, a social class that had very wealthy members without aristocratic heritage



**FIGURE 3–2** This illustration from December 1875 shows wealthy people visiting the poor. Winter was the hardest time of year for those who could not afford heating. What obstacles did these residents face in trying to make a better life?



**FIGURE 3–3** St. James Cathedral was built in Toronto between 1850 and 1874. How does this church reflect the social standing of its members?

Presbyterian, Methodist, and Catholic church. The first Jewish synagogue in Canada was founded in 1768 in Montreal, but the Jewish population of British North America remained small until after Confederation.

Almost everybody went to church. Churches and their congregations were communities within communities, putting on social events, running charities, and sponsoring missionaries. Church leaders made decisions about education and schools, as well as community matters—even telling people whom to vote for. People felt that giving money to their church was a responsibility, but being active in the church also provided prosperous people with opportunities to show off their wealth.

## Victorian Attitudes and Values

During her reign, Queen Victoria's tastes, values, and behaviour set the standard in the British Empire. Victorians stressed morals, hard work, and personal success. They were sure of themselves and had few doubts about their values and beliefs.

Victorians placed a high value on modesty, seriousness, and duty. Nevertheless, the Victorian age was an optimistic one. The British Empire grew larger and stronger, and Britain's navy was almost beyond challenge. Discoveries in science, technology, and medicine were made almost daily.

Canadian newspapers were often filled with accounts of British triumphs. Many Canadians enjoyed reading these stories because they still thought of themselves as British.

Victorians were conscious of social class and status, even in the colonies. Occupation and social standing were determined by a person's family background, particularly by what one's father did for a living. Although many Europeans had immigrated to North America to escape the class system, they found no shortage of snobbery when they arrived.

**sentimentalize** to appeal to emotion rather than reason



**FIGURE 3-4** After 1840, the styles of homes in Canada West usually copied English and American fashions. What made it possible for the rich to build such large, lavish homes, such as this one on Jarvis Street in Toronto, built in 1867? What purpose would such a mansion serve?



**FIGURE 3-5** It is easy to **sentimentalize** life in Victorian Canada, but for many it was very hard. Scan this picture and make note of your observations about working conditions. How does it compare to the image to the left?

In fact, many immigrants would not have been invited to the Victorian homes of upper- and middle-class Canadians.

Victorians believed that people could be easily tempted to stray from “proper” behaviour, and they worried a lot about sin. However, they were also **materialistic** and enjoyed spending money on clothes and accessories, homes, and furniture. The Victorian preoccupation with status extended to the style of church buildings, which were often the largest and most important buildings in town, and even to elaborate funerals and gravestones.

**materialistic** valuing material possessions and physical comfort above all else

## Get to the Source • An Age of Contradiction

This illustration shows Queen Victoria near the end of her reign. Look carefully at the picture. Note the following: desperate people reach out for Victoria’s attention. The Queen pauses. What will she do?

- What do you see? Is this picture critical or supportive of Queen Victoria? How might a Victorian audience interpret the image?

- Look at the left side of the image.
  1. What are the British troops doing?
  2. Who might the poor people be? Why might they be trying to get the Queen’s attention? What does the illustrator imply about their request?

- Look at the right side of the image.
  1. What is the social class of the people shown here?
  2. How do the colours of this side of the image compare with the colours of the other side?
  3. What do you think the illustrator is suggesting about the Queen’s opinion of her people?



**FIGURE 3-6** An illustration of Queen Victoria at one of her jubilees, which was an official celebration of her reign.

## A New Age of Science and Medicine



**FIGURE 3-7** Smallpox, once one of the most devastating human diseases, was eradicated worldwide by 1980. Why do you think samples of the virus are still kept in two laboratories today?

British North America benefited from the growth of science and technology during the Victorian era. After 1850, life changed dramatically, particularly in the cities, as scientists and inventors made breakthrough after breakthrough. Exciting discoveries were reported in newspapers, which sometimes mixed fact and fiction. While science excited people, it also frightened them—usually people did not have reliable information or up-to-date news reports on what was happening.

Discoveries came so fast, and many ideas were so new that lack of understanding was common. For example, many people died after receiving medical treatment simply because nobody knew anything about bacteria and infection. When bacteria were first studied under microscopes in the 1870s, some scientists thought they were insect eggs. Although pioneering work on vaccinations had been done at the end of the 18th century, it wasn't until the mid-1800s that ordinary people could get vaccinations against terrible diseases such as smallpox.

Nevertheless, people hoped that scientific discoveries would be made to prevent and treat serious diseases. Smallpox was common, as was cholera, typhoid fever, scarlet fever, influenza, and tuberculosis. These diseases and others continued to kill millions of people into the 19th and 20th centuries, particularly children and poor people. Since doctors knew almost nothing about hygiene, they did not think that sterilizing operating theatres or medical instruments was necessary. They sometimes even smoked during surgery. So much bacteria could be introduced into a patient's body during surgery that it is astonishing that some people survived it.



**FIGURE 3-8** This early Canadian operating room—complete with a viewing gallery—was modern in its time, but it shows why many people thought that going into a hospital was risky. Make a list of things shown here that you would not expect to see in a modern operating room.

A breakthrough came in 1857 when a French scientist, Louis Pasteur, theorized that bacteria caused many illnesses, including anthrax, cholera, and rabies. He used carbolic acid as an **antiseptic** and vaccinated people and animals. Incidentally, Louis Pasteur did not become wealthy because of his discoveries, as some medical researchers do today. He chose instead to live a simple, generous life, and found satisfaction in his work. The process of pasteurization—heating a food or liquid, such as milk, to kill bacteria—is named after him.

**antiseptic** something that kills and prevents the spread of bacteria

## Zoom In ➤ Breaking Barriers: Emily Stowe

CRITICAL INQUIRY Patterns and Change

Emily Stowe, a Canadian woman, was one of the first female doctors in the British Empire. This was a remarkable achievement for the time because many Victorians believed that women should not have legal rights. Until 1884, married women could not own property or have bank accounts. In line with that thinking, education and job training for women were considered useless.

Emily Stowe was born in 1831. Her Quaker parents gave her a good education and, at age 16, she became a school-teacher—one of the few jobs open to women—and Canada's first female principal at 23. When her husband became ill with tuberculosis, she decided to become a doctor. In Canada, medical schools did not accept women, so Stowe went to New

York Medical College for Women and graduated in 1867. Even then, she could not legally practise in Canada because Canadian doctors had to have Canadian training. Stowe practised medicine illegally until she was granted a licence in 1880. She also worked hard for women rights, including the right to vote. She founded the Toronto Women's Literary Club and helped establish the Toronto Women's Medical College. She died in 1903.

- Given what you know about the time period and Emily Stowe's accomplishments, how would you describe her character?
- Do women still face challenges in modern Canadian society? What are they?

- Are there any modern examples equivalent to Stowe's struggle to become a doctor?

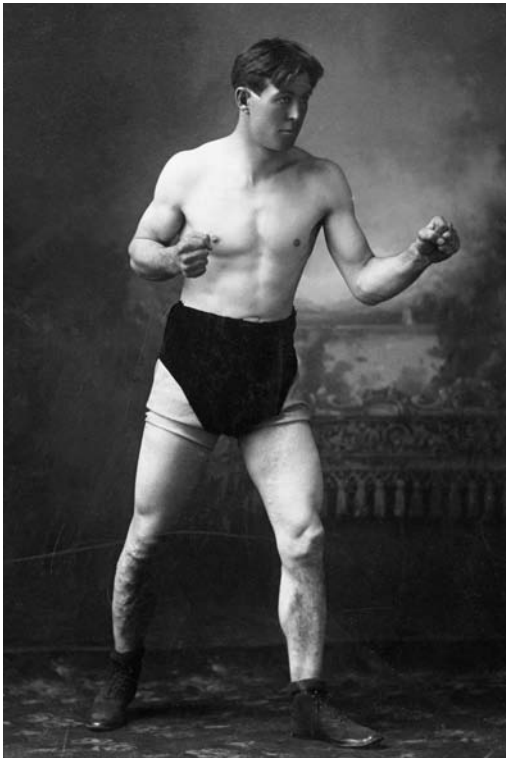


**FIGURE 3–9** Emily Stowe became a physician in 1867 after studying in the United States. Many Victorians believed that women should not enter the professions and that upper-class women should not even work outside the home.

## Leisure and Technology

Victorian Canadians liked to be entertained, so they attended concerts, fairs, circuses, and shows. In the country, people went to barn raisings, quilting bees, and dances. Books and magazines were also very popular. Blood sports, such as bear baiting, always had an audience. Other sports soon became popular—swimming for fun caught on in Canada after first





**FIGURE 3–10** Bare-knuckle boxing was popular in the Victorian period. The best fighters were celebrities like mixed martial arts fighters and boxers today. Why do you think such sports are still popular? What does this pattern tell us about society?

**huckster** a person who usually uses aggressive selling tactics to make a profit

**whist** a card game for four players divided into two teams

**leisure travel** travelling just for the fun of it, to get away for a holiday

**infrastructure** the roads, canals, sewers, public services, and transportation networks that allow a community to function

becoming fashionable in France. Bare-knuckle boxing matches were also well attended; sometimes boxers fought in bouts that lasted more than a hundred rounds.

Canadians also attended medicine shows. In these shows, **hucksters** sold mixtures that were supposed to cure almost anything. Most brews were harmless, but sometimes they were made from poisonous ingredients. At that time, the government did not regulate medicine.

With no television, radio, movies, CDs, or downloads, people relied on more personal ways to entertain themselves, particularly on dark winter evenings. They played music, held dances, did crafts, and played parlour games. Card games like **whist** were very popular, as well as checkers and chess. Some games crossed cultural boundaries. For example, lacrosse, a sport of Algonquin origin, was adopted by organized clubs in Lower and Upper Canada as early as 1856.

**Leisure travel** became more widespread after the mid-1800s, made possible by better roads and technology. Even transatlantic travel was easier, as steam engines shortened travel time to only a week or two. Wealthy travellers often went on tours to Europe.

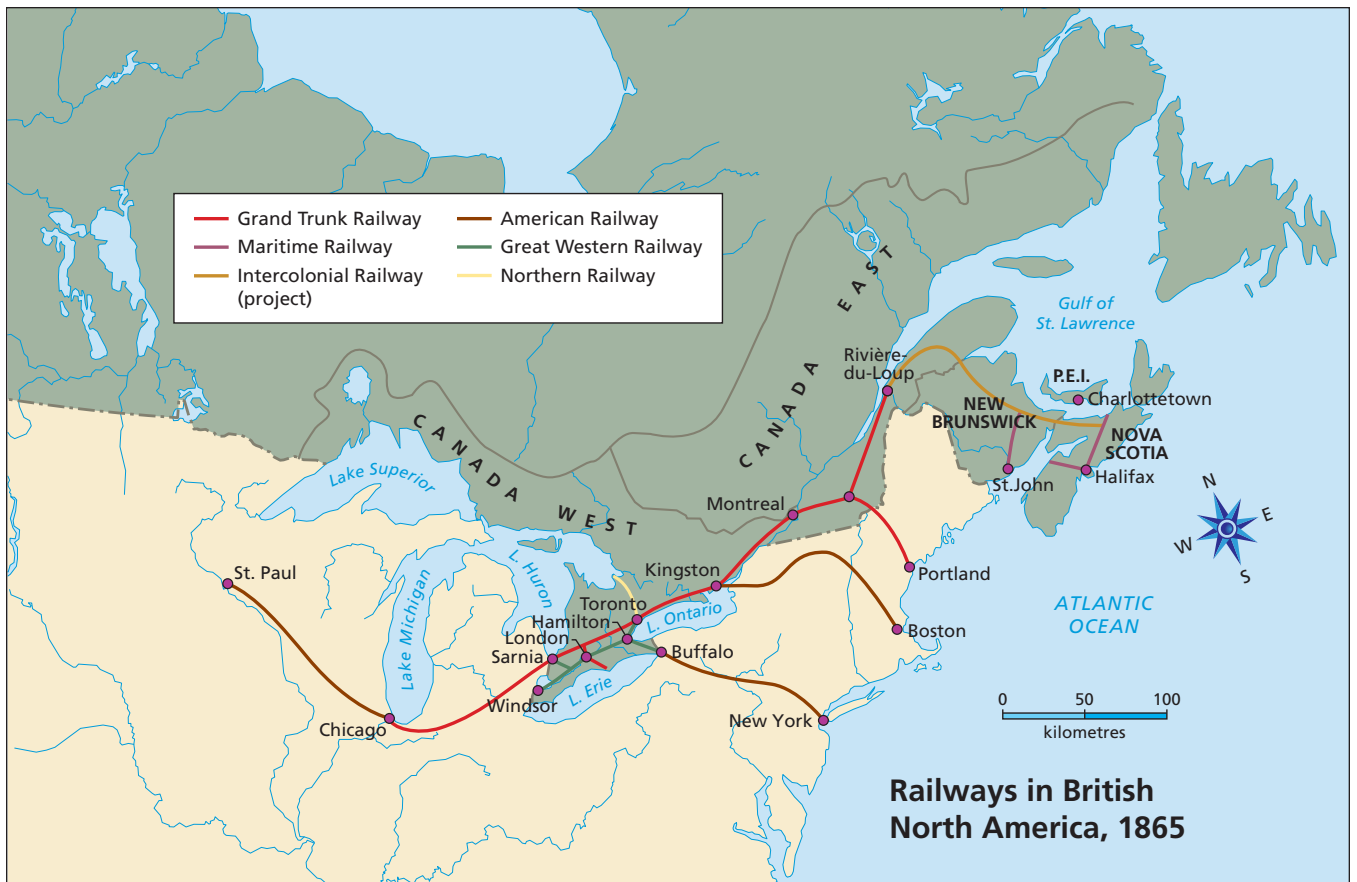
## Changing Technology

The steam locomotive was one of the most important new technologies of the Victorian age. Imagine how thrilling it would have been to suddenly make trips that earlier would have seemed impossible. Train tickets were also relatively cheap, and soon people of all classes could travel by train.

Railways and steamships became part of Canada's **infrastructure**—the network of transportation routes and services that supports the life and economy of a country. Canada's first railway, the Champlain and Saint Lawrence Railroad, was 40 km long and connected Montreal to Saint Jean. The train travelled at almost 48 km per hour, an amazing speed in an age of horse-drawn wagons.

Like all successful technologies, trains improved rapidly. New lines were built, train cars were more comfortable, and speeds increased to 80 km an hour. By 1865, rail lines ran from Windsor to Halifax, with branch lines to other cities. They even connected with American railways to become part of a greater North American system. Expansion meant access to new markets and ice-free ports, and a boost to the Canadian economy. Railways also became a vital part of the plan for Confederation, as you will see later in this chapter.

Railways kept strict timetables to keep goods and people moving, and to prevent trains from colliding on the same length of track. For this reason, even today, a train can be late but rarely early.



**FIGURE 3–11** Canada entered the railway age after 1837. By the end of the 19th century, rail lines linked major cities and connected with railway systems in the United States. Today, many rail lines have been abandoned. Compare this map with a modern road map of Canada. What took the place of trains? Can you make an argument for bringing back rail transportation?

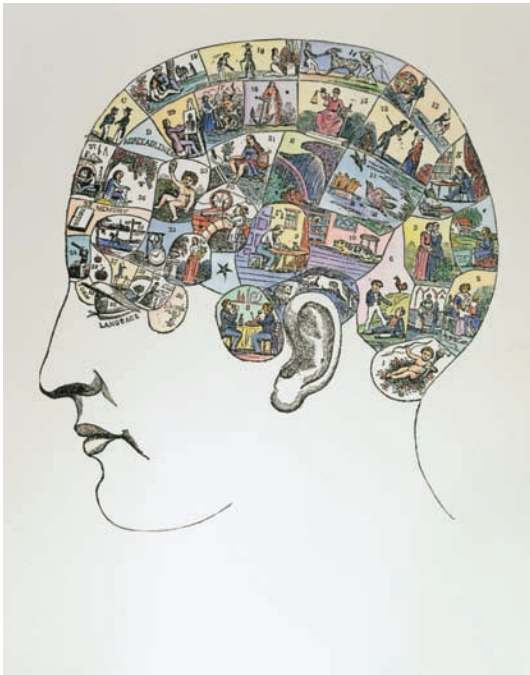
### Victorian Media: The Newspaper

Canada’s first newspaper, *The Halifax Gazette*, started in 1752. By the mid-1800s, every town in Canada had at least one newspaper—sometimes several. Some newspapers were published every day of the week, either in the morning or evening. Others were published weekly, especially in small towns. The newspaper was the media in Victorian Canada. Politicians used them to promote their ideas, as you saw with Mackenzie and his calls for reform. Businesses used them to sell products, and advertising quickly became a way for newspapers to make money. Canadians loved their newspapers, which became their principal source of news and information.

Victorian Canadian newspapers were much like today’s papers, but with important differences. They had no sports section, for example, because professional sports, other than boxing and horse racing, did not really exist. Aside from political cartoons, Victorian newspapers had no comics. There were no horoscopes, advice columns, or technology sections. There were few non-news or special interest features, except for “helpful hints.” By today’s standards, newspapers had limited sources of information. So how did they attract readers?



**FIGURE 3–12** The *Canadian Illustrated News* was a weekly magazine published in Montreal from 1869 to 1883. This illustration shows a woman, who represents Canada, welcoming new immigrants. Why were illustrations an important part of newspapers at this time?



**FIGURE 3-13** Can the bumps on a person's head hold the secrets to the personality within? This Victorian drawing demonstrates a fad science of the day—phrenology. What does this notion tell us about Victorian beliefs and ideas?

Victorian newspapers sensationalized the news. They were usually biased and sometimes not very truthful. They also focused on local news, which people liked. Court reports with the names, crimes, sentences, and fines of the offender made for interesting reading. In one paper, for example, Mary Morrison was fined 25 cents for using “abusive language.”

Self-help articles, recipes, and helpful hints were regular features aimed at women. Cures and medicines were also promoted, along with strange sciences. Phrenology, for example, was very popular. Phrenologists claimed to be able to tell a person's personality and future based on a study of bumps on the head.

Today, Victorian Canadian newspapers may seem quaint; however, they help us understand how people of the era thought and lived and what people considered important, just as our present-day media will do for future generations. Newspapers also played a role in the campaign for Confederation, offering support or criticism and giving people in the colonies information about the decisions politicians were making.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Write a conversation or a short one-scene play that involves people from different social classes in Victorian Canada. Show what social class means and how it affects what people do and think. How did Victorian views of social class influence the identity of Canadians?
2. Research medical discoveries of the Victorian age, and rank the discoveries in terms of importance. Compare them with present discoveries.
3. Describe how Canada's infrastructure developed after 1830. What aspects of life were affected by this development?
4. Can you think of any fad sciences that are popular today? How are they made popular?

### Patterns and Change

5. Create a PMI Chart (Plus/Minus/Interesting) of Victorian values and sensibilities. As you complete your chart, consider the positive aspects of your chosen values and the negative aspects. Then, include other considerations that you find neither positive nor negative. Explain why you find them interesting.
6. **a)** Are there Victorian values still evident today? Explain with examples.  
**b)** If Queen Victoria was the main influence of Victorian values, who or what do you think influences our values today?  
**c)** In this chapter, you saw some contradictions in Victorian values. Are there similar contradictions in values today? Explain.

# Victorian Times and Aboriginal Peoples

## ► How would immigration and government policies at this time affect the Aboriginal peoples of British North America?

Immigration had an enormous impact on Aboriginal peoples. Pushed aside to make room for colonial settlement, First Nations in **the Canadas** were forced to live on **reserves**, land that was only a fraction of their former traditional territories. They suffered greatly from disease, poverty, and other social problems. Aboriginal culture, which was based on a close relationship with the land, was hard to preserve under such conditions. Adapting to European ways often became a matter of survival.

For some Aboriginal communities, traditional ways of life were based on hunting and fishing instead of agriculture, and they lived in small family groups. The government usually tried to force them to settle and farm, a severe change in lifestyle that many resisted. Others, such as the Mohawks along the Grand River, were more successful in dealing with the government. They lived in larger communities, had farmed for centuries, and had a long-standing, internal government. They also had a long history of negotiating with colonial officials, merchants, and land speculators. However, this relationship changed as time and the pressures of colonial development continued.

Many Aboriginal leaders came to realize they were no longer being treated as allies by the colonial governments. A leader of the Anishinabé wrote this letter to the governor:

*...you have become a great people, whilst we have melted away like snow beneath an April sun; our strength is wasted, our countless warriors dead, our forests laid low; you have hounded us from every place as with a wand, you have swept away all our pleasant land, and like some giant foe you tell us "willing or unwilling, you must now go from amid these rocks and wastes..."*

—Little Pine, 1849



**FIGURE 3-14** This studio portrait from about 1850 shows Maungua-daus, also known as George Henry, a leader of the Anishinabé. He is posing in a costume he wore during public appearances. What did Henry or the photographer hope to project by showing him in traditional dress, which was no longer worn in everyday life?

**the Canadas** Canada East and Canada West, within the Province of Canada

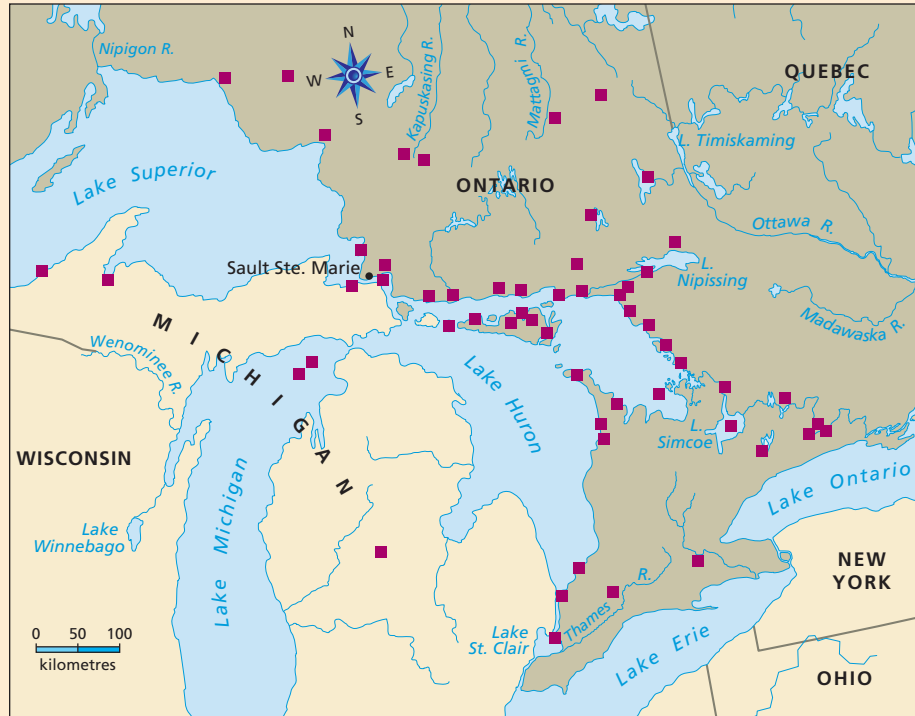
**reserves** land set aside by governments for the use of First Nations

### WEB LINK

For more information about Victorian times and Aboriginal peoples, visit the Pearson Web site.

As colonial settlement moved into Aboriginal territories, land buyers pressured the government to sell them the best land. Sometimes, immigrants and local governments challenged the terms of established treaties, forcing Aboriginal leaders to defend what had already been agreed to.

**FIGURE 3–15** These two maps show settlement patterns. The first shows Anishinabé reserves in the mid-1800s, where the Anishinabé were sent to live by the government. The second map shows the location of towns and cities at that time. What conclusions can you draw by comparing these two maps?



The government often persuaded **bands** to rent out good farmland on reserves, and then would sell the rights to immigrants. Since some bands were struggling financially, taking the money seemed to be one of the few options available to them. As a result, large sections of territory guaranteed by treaty were lost, often permanently.

In 1857, the government of the Province of Canada passed the Gradual Civilization Act, which was meant to **assimilate** Aboriginal peoples by making them citizens of Britain. If they were citizens of Britain, they would have none of the treaty rights or protected status of First Nations, and the government would be able to ignore agreements made in the past. **Enfranchisement** within the British Empire was presented by the government as a privilege, but for Aboriginal peoples this was just another way to make them more like Europeans. This legislation was the beginning of what would become the Indian Act, which was passed in 1876.

Interactions between the government of the time and Aboriginal peoples were coloured by the general feeling among the Victorians that Aboriginal peoples were uncivilized and childlike—so-called noble savages. Today, this attitude is considered condescending and insulting, but to the British Empire, Aboriginal peoples were “wild children.” This attitude influenced both popular culture and government legislation, as you will read in the following pages and in later chapters of *Horizons*.

In spite of tremendous pressure to change and assimilate into European society, Aboriginal culture was not entirely lost. **Elders** kept alive many traditions and oral histories that continue to this day.

**band** an Aboriginal community recognized by the government as an administrative unit

**assimilate** to join another culture and to give up one’s own language and traditions

**enfranchisement** granting someone the rights and protection of a citizen of a particular country

**Elders** people respected for their wisdom and understanding of traditional knowledge



**FIGURE 3–16** In 2001, outside the Supreme Court of Canada, a protestor listens to speeches at a protest rally for Aboriginal land rights. The process of assimilation of Aboriginal peoples included taking their lands. Are there other examples of assimilation in Canadian history? What is being done about it today?

In the 1930s, a man who called himself “Grey Owl” became one of the most popular celebrities in Canadian history. His books, films, and lectures were influential in early efforts to preserve the Canadian wilderness. The world knew him as an Apache, yet his identity as Grey Owl was a fraud. In fact, he was only pretending to be Aboriginal, and he became famous by taking advantage of a stereotype.

The growing interest about Aboriginal peoples and their ways of life had led to the stereotype of the “noble savage.” Aboriginal peoples were considered “noble” for their spirituality, non-materialism, and closeness to nature. They were considered “savage” for their hunter-gatherer lifestyle and their lack of modern technology or Christianity.

Interest in Aboriginal lifestyles became a fad, and for some people it was an obsession. Grey Owl’s real name was Archibald Belaney, and he was born in England in 1888. As a boy, he developed a rich fantasy life based on North American Aboriginal culture. At 17, he left England for Canada, where he befriended an Anishinabé family, learning their language and how to trap and live in the wild.

In 1925, he married an Iroquois woman named Anahareo. She convinced him to give up trapping and to protect wild animals instead. Grey Owl became a bestselling author. He also made films. Once he became a public figure, Grey Owl’s fraud was complete. He told everyone he was the son of an Apache, and appeared dressed in Aboriginal clothing.

Grey Owl became one of the most famous Canadians of his day. Although his relatives, and almost all of the Aboriginal people he met, knew the truth, he was not exposed until after his death in 1938. Today, he is still considered a powerful early voice for conservation—his love of nature was genuine.

When Grey Owl was famous, he was a larger-than-life example of the romantic stereotype of Aboriginal peoples. This stereotype has appeared in countless Hollywood films and TV shows. In real life, Grey Owl was a bigamist who drank too much and someone who dyed his hair and skin. However, if he had not become famous, would his calls for conservation have been heard? Was Grey Owl a hero or a villain?



**FIGURE 3–17** Archie Belaney as a boy in England. Compare this image with how he presented himself as “Grey Owl” below.



## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Grey Owl is usually seen as a hero, and has even been the subject of a Hollywood movie starring Pierce Brosnan. Does his positive image regarding his support for conservation excuse him, even though he committed a huge hoax? Did the end justify the means? Write your opinion in a letter to the editor.

### WEB LINK

Learn more about Grey Owl on the Pearson Web site.

Many people believe that the act of settling First Nations on reserves and forcing them to adopt European ways was **cultural genocide**. Colonial government policy was to assimilate Aboriginal peoples, often by relocating them away from their original homes, as Lieutenant-Governor Colborne's policy shows (right).

- Many Aboriginal cultures were based on small groups who travelled across extensive areas. How did this lifestyle fit with Colborne's policy?
- What happened to Aboriginal societies when people were "settled" in villages that were not their homes?
- How are Aboriginal peoples working to regain their culture today? Research an Aboriginal organization and explain the purpose of their work.

#### WEB LINK

Read the United Nations convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide on the Pearson Web site.

**cultural genocide** the act of completely destroying the culture of a people

*1st. To collect the Indians in considerable numbers, and settle them in villages with a due portion of land for their cultivation and support.*

*2nd. To make such provision for their religious improvement, education and instruction in husbandry [farming]...*

*3rd. To afford them such assistance in building houses; rations; and... such seed and their agricultural implements as may be necessary...*

—Sir John Colborne, Lieutenant-Governor, 1828



**FIGURE 3-18** After 1920, First Nations and Inuit children were forced to attend residential schools far from home. They were punished if they spoke their own language. How did residential schools contribute to the destruction of Aboriginal language and culture? What does the photo above tell us about this school?

## ACTIVITIES

1. Aboriginal culture is based on oral tradition. Speeches and stories were used to address important issues. Create a speech to protest the policy of assimilation of Aboriginal peoples.
2. Today, the Canadian government does not try to force people to give up their culture. Why was assimilation the government's goal in the past?
3. Do you see examples of "the noble savage" in today's popular culture? Present your findings in a visual format that demonstrates the presence or absence of such stereotypes today.



## SKILLBUILDER • Bias in the News

In this book, you will study a variety of primary sources. These sources will include first-person accounts, speeches, newspaper editorials, illustrations, cartoons, and paintings.

Newspapers are good primary sources from the past. They often expressed popular opinion, which gives us an impression of society at the time. However, editorials were also used to sway opinion. They generally held a biased point of view, like the ones shown on the opposite page.

**Bias** was common in newspapers in Victorian Canada. Papers usually had connections with different political parties. As you saw in Chapter 2, newspapers promoted political reform—or rebellion, in the case of William Lyon Mackenzie. Fortunately, there were lots of newspapers, and most people knew who ran them and what views were being promoted.

How can we detect bias when reading newspapers from the past? Is bias still common today?

There are three checkpoints to remember when detecting bias in primary sources:

1. Recognize fact versus opinion, and remember that fact and opinion can be combined within the same document.

- A fact can be verified with evidence.
- An opinion is based on a belief or point of view, not on evidence.

2. Recognize the language of bias. Assertive or extreme language tends to show bias.

3. Identify the author's purpose. Who wrote the article? Why was it written?

Following these checkpoints will help you become a critical reader of primary sources. Remember that while a source may be biased, that fact may lend insight to the events and people you are studying, showing what people thought about a particular subject. Look for evidence from many different sources in order to create a balanced view of the past.

Keep this exercise in mind as you continue with this chapter and explore the issues surrounding Confederation.

**bias** strongly favouring a point of view to the point of misrepresenting other views



**FIGURE 3–19** Political cartoons were commonly used in newspapers to promote opinion. Here, artist Jean-Baptiste Côté depicts Confederation as a monster controlled by politicians. What can you tell about *La Scie's* view of Confederation from this image?

*But it is said that the Canadians have outgrown their Constitution... If they are in trouble let them get out of it; but don't let them involve us... Are not the Canadians always in trouble? Did not Papineau keep Lower Canada in trouble for twenty years, and McKenzie [sic] disturb the Upper Province for about the same period? Then did not both Provinces break out into open rebellion, which it cost the British Government three or four millions sterling to suppress? What would have been the situation of the Maritime Provinces then, had they been controlled by the Canadians? But they were not... They maintained their loyalty unsullied.*

—*Morning Chronicle*, Halifax, January 11, 1865: “The Botheration Scheme”

*So far as the people of Upper Canada are concerned, the inauguration of the new Constitution may well be heartily rejoiced over as the brightest day in their calendar. The Constitution of 1867 will be famous in the historical annals of Upper Canada, not only because it brought two flourishing Maritime States into alliance with the Canadas, and opened up new markets for our products, and a direct railway route to the Atlantic through British territory, but because it relieved the inhabitants of Western Canada from a system of injustice and demoralization under which they had suffered for a long series of years. The unanimity and cordiality with which all sections of the people of Canada accept the new Constitution, gives the happiest omen of its successful operation. We firmly believe, that from this day, Canada enters on a new and happier career, and that a time of great prosperity and advancement is before us.*

—*The Globe*, Monday, July 1, 1867: “Confederation Day”

#### WEB LINK

Are you interested in learning more about reading political cartoons, such as the one on page 98? Check the Pearson Web site.

## APPLY IT

1. What important issue do the accounts address? Why might this have been an issue at that time?
2. How is each source biased? Provide examples to illustrate your answer. Think about what the account leaves out, what it leaves in, and the choice of words.
3. How do these accounts corroborate, or support, each other? How do they contradict each other?
4. Give examples of modern television shows or newspapers where people use the host's or writer's bias as entertainment.
5. Can bias be justified? Give examples of circumstances where media bias is justified and where it is not.

# Toward Confederation

## ► What economic and political situations led to the idea of Confederation?

As you saw in Chapter 2, Lord Durham had recommended joining together Lower Canada and Upper Canada. Although Lower Canada, which would become Canada East, was opposed to the idea, the British government favoured the plan and acted upon it immediately. Lord Sydenham declared the Act of Union in 1840.

However, Durham had also recommended responsible government for the colonies, an idea that was not well received in Britain—or by the Château Clique and the Family Compact. The idea that the colonies should govern themselves—democratically—was entirely new. Nobody knew if, or how, self-government would work. Many thought that it would seriously weaken the British Empire and perhaps even strengthen Britain's political enemies (such as France and the United States). Some feared that government by amateurs—inexperienced elected politicians—would be economic suicide. The old idea of **mercantilism**, which had always been good for colonial Canada, was still strong. The economic relationship between the colonies and Britain gave the colonies a significant advantage, so most people wanted to remain under British rule.

**mercantilism** an economic system based on colonialism, in which the home country uses raw goods imported from the colonies to manufacture goods

**Corn Laws** laws which protected agriculture in the British Empire by limiting the import of grain from other countries

**tariff** a duty, or charge, that must be paid on an imported item

**economic depression** a period of low economic activity marked by high unemployment

## Economic Pressures

Britain's economic relationship with the colonies, however, was already changing. In 1846, the British government repealed the **Corn Laws**, which were part of the Navigation Acts and gave preferential treatment to British colonies. Canadian grain came into Britain with lower **tariffs** than grain from other countries. This helped Canadian producers by increasing profits, but limiting the import of grain from other countries made bread in Britain expensive. This contributed to the starvation the Irish suffered during the Potato Famine. By repealing the laws and not restricting itself to Canadian grain, Britain could buy wheat, flour, and other products at the lowest price—from any country.

The end of the Corn Laws drove the colonies into an **economic depression**. Although Canadians exported timber and agricultural products, they manufactured very little. With the old economic relationship now in tatters, and with few factories or industries, Canadians began to look at the union of all of the colonies as a way of helping their economy. Joining together would mean larger markets, more industry, and better transportation systems. A more independent Canadian government could develop its own economic policies—policies that would serve Canada rather than Britain.

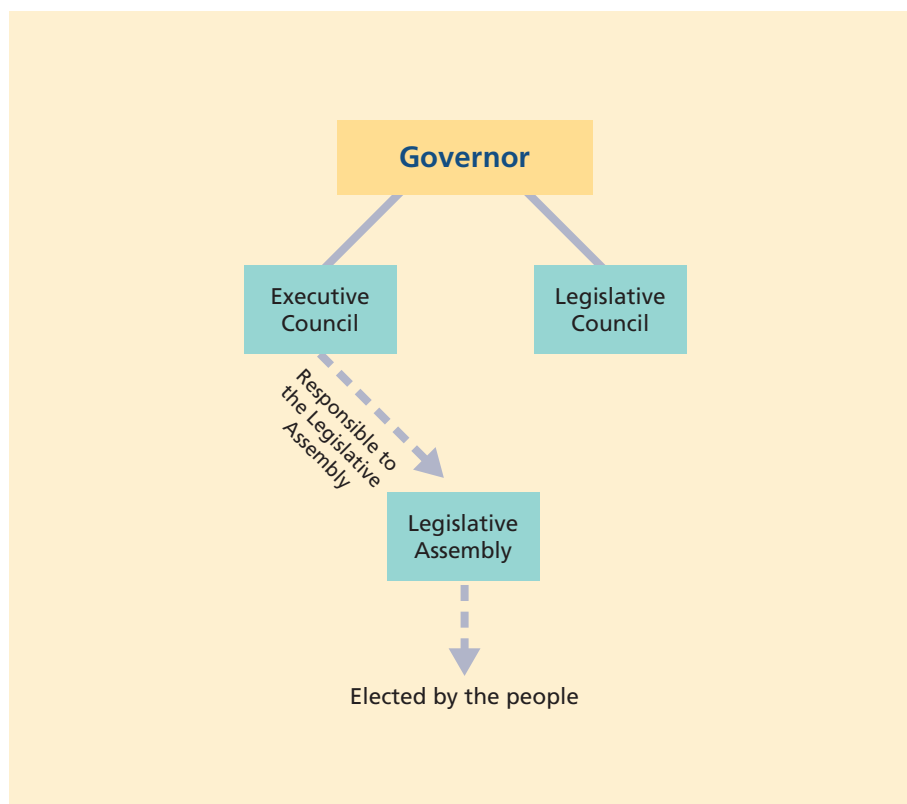
To achieve this, self-government was needed. Still the colonial governors who came after Durham did not like the idea. Even though Governor Charles Bagot had brought reformers such as Robert Baldwin and Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine into the councils, Bagot did not think that he had to do what other people wanted. In other words, the governor still governed, not the elected Assembly. This was not responsible, democratic government. It would take direction from Britain for any change to be made.

## Lord Elgin and Responsible Government

In 1846, the British government appointed James Bruce, Lord Elgin, as governor general of Canada. As Lord Durham's son-in-law, Elgin shared some of Durham's ideas for reform. Elgin's job was to make responsible government a reality. This policy would help relieve Britain of economic responsibility for the colonies while still keeping them in the British Empire. (It was becoming too expensive for Britain to continue to govern, defend, and economically support the colonies.) Elgin set out to make Canada a semi-independent nation and to introduce enough democracy that the citizens of the new nation would not be drawn into a revolution—as the Americans had in 1775.

### Did You Know...

In 1848, Nova Scotia became the first British colony in the world to achieve responsible government. Journalist and politician Joseph Howe (see page 112) had led the call for reform.



**FIGURE 3–20** Responsible government meant that the elected Assembly had the real authority to make laws. In time, the Executive Council would become today's Cabinet, and the Legislative Council would become today's Senate. What is the modern equivalent to the Legislative Assembly?

### WEB LINK

Read more about the modern-day structure and functions of the Canadian federal government on the Pearson Web site.

**Rebellion Losses Bill** a bill promising compensation to people of Canada East who suffered property damage during the Rebellions of 1837

### Did You Know...

After the riots in Montreal, Elgin moved the location of Parliament to Ottawa, which later became the capital of Canada.

During the Rebellions of 1837, many people suffered property damage. In 1849, the newly elected and reformist government presented the **Rebellion Losses Bill**. The bill proposed to use tax money to compensate anyone in Canada East who lost property in the Rebellions—even some of the rebels, unless they had been convicted of treason. The bill was modelled on compensation that had already been offered to those in Canada West. However, as you saw in Chapter 2, the rebellions in Canada East were more violent and lasted longer than the rebellions in Canada West. There were still deep feelings of resentment and anger at those who had taken part in the fighting.

After Elgin signed the bill, some English-speaking citizens in Montreal were furious. A mob attacked Elgin's carriage as he left Parliament, pelting him with stones and rotten eggs. English newspaper headlines stated that “the end has begun.” After two days of violence, the mob set fire to the Parliament Buildings, which burned to the ground. Following the riot, some angry English merchants and citizens published the Annexation Manifesto—a plan to allow the United States to take over Canada.

## Zoom In ➤ Lord Elgin's Dilemma

Ironically, although the Rebellion Losses Bill had been written to help heal divisions in Canada East, the bill outraged many people. Some politicians were violently opposed to the bill. They still saw the rebels as traitors to Britain and thought it was a crime to give tax money to people who may have participated in the rebellion. Fearing the loss of political power, they also saw the bill as a move by the French to gain political sway in the colonies. Despite their protests, the bill was passed by the reform-minded legislature. They then turned to Lord Elgin to stop the bill.

Personally, Elgin had his doubts. He, too, saw the bill as a reward to possible traitors. At the same time, he was determined to follow the principle of responsible government. He felt that the governor had no right to veto a bill that had been passed by the elected Assembly.

Threats, arguments, and anti-French speeches and headlines did not stop Elgin from signing the bill into law in 1849.

- If you had been in Elgin's position, what would you have done?



**FIGURE 3-21** This cartoon of Elgin appeared in a Canadian newspaper at the time of the riots. Why would a cartoonist portray Elgin in this fashion? What statement is he making?

Annexation never happened. However, by signing a bill he did not agree with because he believed in responsible government, Elgin had laid the foundation for Canadian democracy. Responsible government had passed its first test, and the colonies were now heading toward the complicated process of Confederation.

## Building a Nation

*...the scheme [Confederation] as a whole has met with almost universal approval.*

—John A. Macdonald, 1864

John A. Macdonald, one of the architects of Canadian Confederation, said the words above when giving a speech in 1864. His speech was brilliant and engaging but untruthful in parts: he ignored the fact that almost as many people were against the union of the colonies as were for it.

First, the colonies felt that if they were joined together in a **federation**, they would lose their independence. There would be a central government, and it would most likely control defence, foreign affairs, money, postage, and taxation. Although Britain already controlled some of these areas of responsibility, many colonists preferred dealing with London, which was far away, rather than a new government located in Canada West or Canada East.

**federation** a union of provinces, each of which keeps certain powers but gives up other powers to a central, national government



**FIGURE 3–22** This painting shows the Parliament Buildings burning after Elgin signed the Rebellion Losses Bill. The riots lasted for two days and involved thousands of people—mostly English-speakers. Strongly anti-French speeches and headlines appeared just before the riots. Why did the mob choose to attack the Parliament Buildings?



**FIGURE 3–23** John A. Macdonald was well known for his skills as a public speaker. How did this talent help him promote his plans for Confederation?

Second, most people did not feel any great attachment to the people of the other colonies. French Canadians felt they had little in common with English-speaking Canadians. They had no desire to become even more of a minority in a larger, mostly English-speaking country. Nor did the people in the Maritime colonies feel that they should be part of a greater “Dominion of Canada.” Their economies had closer links to Britain and eastern United States than to the Canadas.

Third, the idea of Confederation started “at the top.” The population at large had to be convinced, which was not easy. In addition, Confederation could cost a lot of money, which would have to be paid for with more taxes. Victorian Canadians were as skeptical of what politicians promised as people are today. Those who wanted union had to convince people that their proposal had merit, which involved a lot of time and effort.

With these varying factors and conflicting concerns, the process of Confederation took a great deal of debate from all sides. In fact, the Maritime colonies remained more interested in a Maritime union than Confederation for quite some time. However, even though these political decisions affected them as well, minority groups, such as Aboriginal peoples and French-speaking Acadians were not consulted.

Even so, the idea of creating a new country was exciting. The new nation envisioned by Macdonald would one day extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific and to the Arctic Oceans, becoming one of the largest countries on earth. Still, while the idea might be exciting, those who wanted union needed something more to make it happen.

## ACTIVITIES

1. What happened to Canada’s economic relationship with Britain in the 1840s? What brought on the change? Write a letter to the editor explaining why you think Canada should be more independent.
2. Be a witness to the Montreal riots. Write a one-minute news item for television, describing the scene and giving background information.
3. Explain the reasons for anti-French sentiments before and during the Montreal riots. How were these sentiments connected to the Rebellion Losses Bill?

### Cause and Consequence

4. Why was signing the Rebellion Losses Bill a difficult decision for Lord Elgin? Why was it important that he sign the bill?

# Political Factors

## ► How might Confederation solve political problems for the colonies?

Until 1867, with the exception of the Province of Canada, the colonies of British North America were separate and independent of each other. The people living in the colonies were British subjects, and the British colonial office was responsible for their well-being. The colonies were often on good terms economically and socially, but they had separate legislatures and operated like small, independent countries.

After Union and the repeal of the Corn Laws, Confederation became a hot topic. Some argued that the comfortable days of the past were over, and that adaptation was the key to survival. Trading between the colonies, for example, would replace the trade lost with Britain. Joining together politically would make this easier, and would benefit all of the colonies.

## The West and the American Threat

Confederation opened up another possibility—that of expansion to the West. The vast western territories, which were held by the Hudson's Bay Company, could be **annexed** to Canada, and therefore denied to the United States. Canadians were suspicious of American intentions in the West. After all, American politicians made speeches about **Manifest Destiny**, which claimed that the destiny of the United States was to own all of North America. Americans had already invaded Canada twice—during the American Revolution and during the War of 1812. The small, scattered colonies of British North America had almost no defences against American aggression, but the United States would be less likely to invade a united, sovereign country.

The **American Civil War**, which began in 1861, heightened the threat. When the war ended in 1865, the army of the victorious northern states could have easily invaded Canada because it had more soldiers than the total population in all the Canadian colonies. Britain had also angered the North by supporting the South during the war, providing warships and money. Confederates (southerners) had been able to attack the northern states by travelling through Canada. Many wondered if the North would retaliate against Britain by sending the army into Canada.

**annex** to take over a territory and add it to the territory of another country

**Manifest Destiny** an American idea that it was the fate of the United States to control all of North America

**American Civil War** also called the War Between the States, it began in 1861 and ended in 1865. The industrialized North fought the agricultural South. A divisive issue was slavery, which the South supported.





**FIGURE 3–24** The colonies of British North America covered vast territories but had a much smaller population than the United States. Why were Canadians afraid of American expansion?

## The Promise of Better Government

Confederationists promised to replace an inefficient system with better government, especially in Canada East and Canada West, which together were called the Province of Canada. Today, modern political parties keep members of the party in line—and working with the leader—so that everyone in the party speaks with one voice. The person responsible for party discipline is called the **whip**. The whip ensures that members of the party vote together on bills. While this practice reduces the independence of members, it also makes the party stronger and more efficient.

By contrast, the government of the Province of Canada was filled with independent politicians who answered to no one. These members could topple a government by voting against one of its bills, a situation that created crisis after crisis as governments tried to survive. The government of Canada was always made up of a number of parties—a **coalition**. If even one party left the coalition, the government would fall. Governments survived by doing nothing. People hoped that Confederation would bring change.

**whip** the person who is responsible for ensuring discipline and solidarity within a political party

**coalition** in politics, when one or more political parties or interest groups work together to achieve a common goal

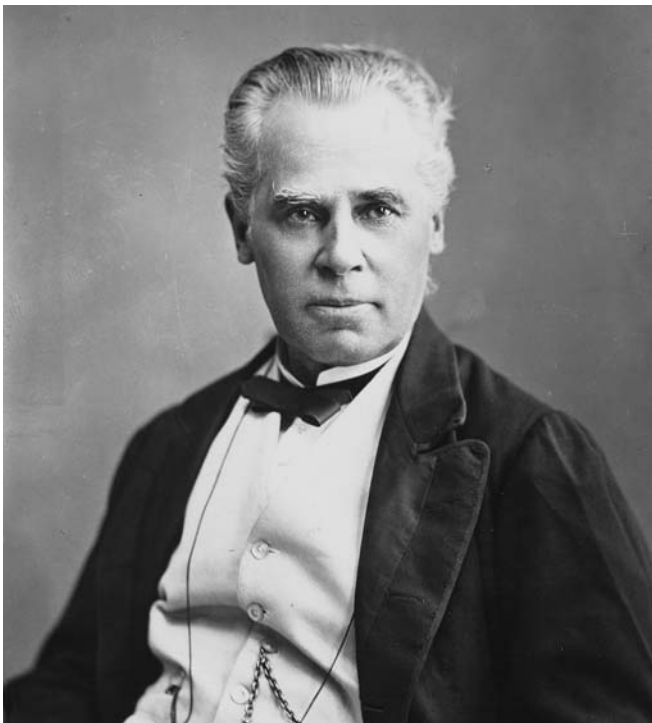
## Party Politics

Political parties were a relatively new concept in pre-Confederation Canada. A political party attracts people who have similar ideas and goals. In Canada, political parties formed to represent the interests of the French and the English. Other groups, including Aboriginal peoples, had no representation and no party. Parties developed a platform, which described the changes they wanted to make and how they would achieve their goals.

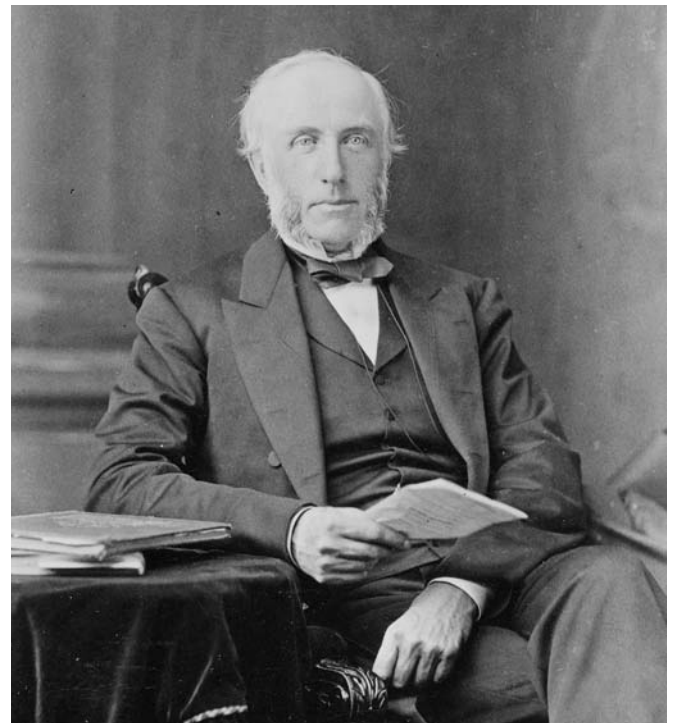
In Canada East, Louis-Joseph Papineau, former radical and rebel, led the *Parti Rouge*. It represented French-speaking farmers and business people, wanted American-style government, and despised the Act of Union. The *Parti Bleu*, led by George-Étienne Cartier, had similar support but focused more on economic development and the protection of French-Canadian culture and rights. It was not as radical as the Parti Rouge, and it had the support of the Catholic Church. The Parti Bleu was prepared to work with politicians in Canada West to achieve its goals, as long as English Canada did not threaten French interests.

In Canada West, the Clear Grits, a more radical party, was led by George Brown. Brown was the publisher of the Toronto newspaper, *The Globe*. The Grits attacked **corruption** in government, wanted more democracy, and defended English-Canadian interests. Brown was an abrasive man who disliked both Catholics and the French, and he made enemies easily, so an alliance between the Grits and a French party was unlikely.

**corruption** in politics, taking bribes or using one's influence to gain an unfair advantage



**FIGURE 3–25** George-Étienne Cartier was a wealthy Francophone who invested in railways. As a young man, he was part of the Lower Canada rebellion. Later, Cartier was a driving force behind Confederation. Why do you think Cartier would have changed his mind about Canada?



**FIGURE 3–26** George Brown used his newspaper, which is today's *The Globe and Mail*, to spread his views. Why would owning a newspaper, or any media outlet, be an advantage to a politician? Do you think individual politicians should be allowed to own media?

### representation by population

a form of proportional representation in government; areas with higher populations have more elected officials in government

The Grits pushed for **representation by population**: the number of members in the Legislative Assembly representing an electing area, or riding, should be determined by the population of the riding. This is an important feature of democratic government, but it was not popular in Canada East, where “rep by pop” meant fewer seats for French Canadians.

The middle ground in Canada West belonged to the Tories, led by Macdonald. His views were less democratic than Brown’s, but he was a more astute politician. Macdonald made a deal with the Parti Bleu that enabled the combined party—the Liberal-Conservatives—to form a government. This important step toward Confederation also helped with the problems of double majority, which was another barrier to good government.

Double majority meant that a bill became law only if a majority in both Canada East and Canada West voted for it in the Legislative Assembly.

Imagine how hard this would be. It would be like passing identical laws in British Columbia and Quebec—what works for one is not necessarily good for the other. Bills concerning taxation, trade, language, or education did not usually pass, which severely limited the government’s work.

The problems arising from French–English and Catholic–Protestant divisions were serious barriers to the government of the united Canadas. Without having their own provincial governments to legislate matters of provincial interest, both groups were forced to work in a single government. As a result, there was little progress.



**FIGURE 3–27** Issues of proportional representation in government continue in Canada today. These voters are acting as “Doctors of Democracy,” encouraging reform of Ontario’s electoral system in 2007.

## ACTIVITIES

1. List in order of importance three ways the United States was a factor in Confederation. Defend your choices with examples.
2. Explain the concept of Manifest Destiny. How much of a threat to British North America was the United States?
3. In what ways did politicians expect Confederation to solve economic problems in the colonies? Assess their expectations.
4. Chart the major political parties in Canada East and Canada West, listing two or three characteristics of each.
5. Explain the “double majority” principle of government. Why would it make effective government difficult?

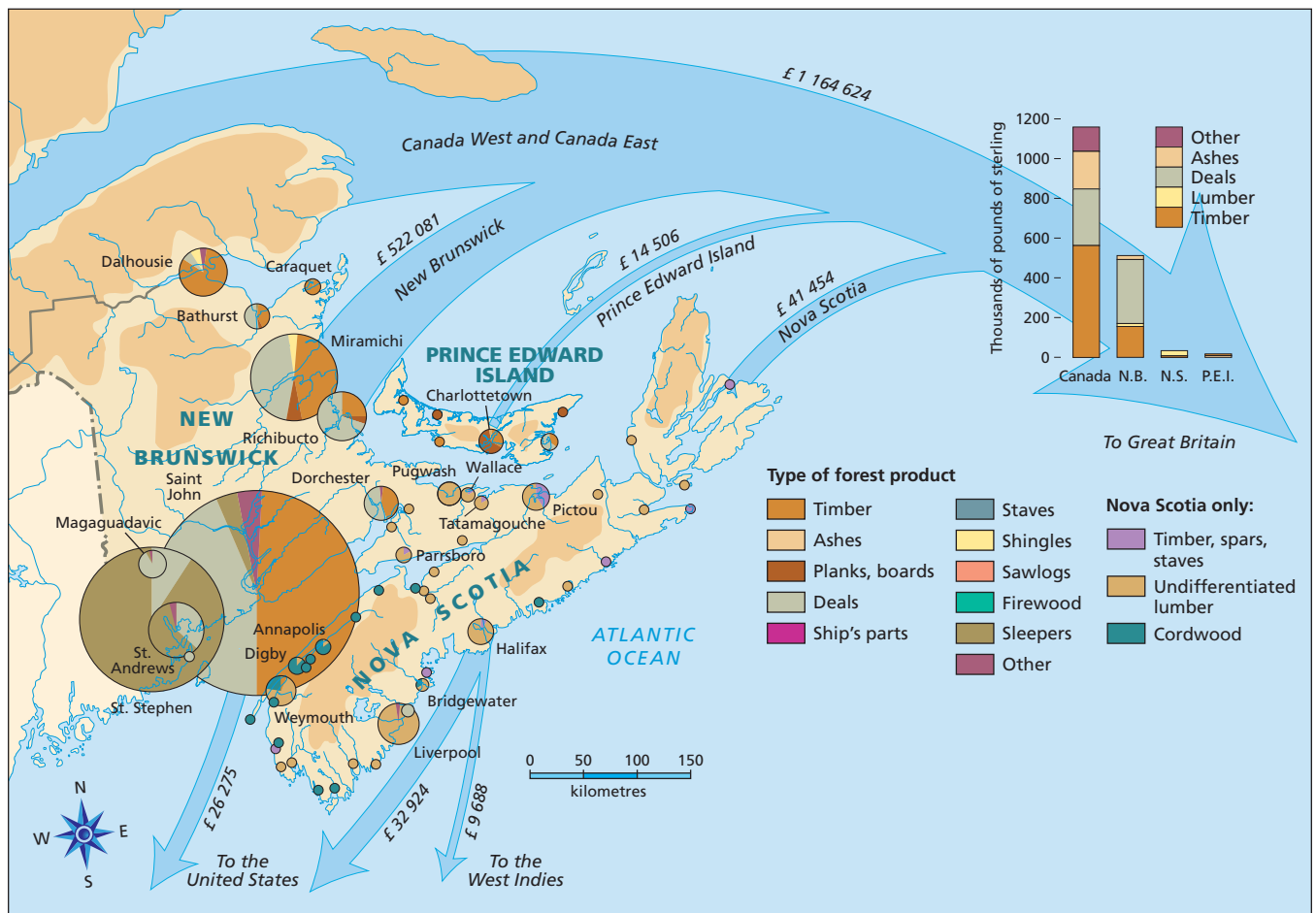
# Confederation Achieved

## ► What brought the colonies together to form Confederation?

In addition to political pressures, the colonies were under tremendous pressure economically. Supporters of Confederation argued that Canada and the other colonies would prosper because trade barriers and tariffs between the colonies would end. Trade would also be improved by a new national railway. Individual colonies could never finance a railway on such a large scale, but they could do it together.

In addition, linking the central colonies with the Maritimes would mean that goods travelling to Europe in winter could use the ice-free port at Halifax. Access to Halifax would certainly benefit central Canada, since the large port of Montreal was closed in the winter months. As well, a railway could go all the way to the Pacific—to the new colonies of British Columbia and Vancouver Island. Suffering from economic depression, fear of the United States, and struggling to organize politically, the colonies were suddenly willing to make a deal.

**FIGURE 3–28** The Maritime colonies had close economic ties to Britain and the New England states. Why might changes in these trading relationships make the Maritime colonies more interested in Confederation? Why might some in the Maritime colonies want to preserve these trade links?



Negotiating the terms of Confederation, however, would be difficult. Macdonald wanted a strong central government and not much power for the provinces. Contrary to this view, the idea that they would be ruled by central Canada did not sit well with Maritimers. They had a sense of shared identity and history. They also traded far more with the United States than with the Province of Canada. Why should the Maritime colonies give up anything?

## New Brunswick and Nova Scotia: A Maritime View

In the 1860s, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia were small, prosperous colonies. Their populations were mainly made up of the English, French-speaking Acadians, Scots, Irish, and Mi'kmaq and Maliseet Nations. Many New Brunswickers and Nova Scotians could trace their lineage to British and Black Loyalists who had escaped the American Revolution by moving north. Saint John and Halifax were large and busy port cities, comparable to Montreal and Toronto at that time.

Both colonies had already achieved responsible government—Nova Scotia in 1848 and New Brunswick in 1854. This fostered a feeling of independence and self-sufficiency—a sentiment that was not favourable to Confederation. Many felt that in joining Confederation they would become a smaller part of a whole, rather than an equal partner in the Dominion of Canada. Minority groups, such as the Acadians and the Irish Catholics, were particularly fearful.

However, there were also vocal supporters of union. They believed that Confederation would offer security and that the railway would provide larger markets for their products. Loyalty to England was also a factor, as this editorial shows:

*Ask a true man, who loves his country for itself why he is in favor of Union, and he will tell you: I am in favor of Union, because I wish to remain a loyal subject of Queen Victoria; because it will cement more closely these Colonies and the Mother Country; because England desired it in order to consolidate our strength; because it will ensure us against aggression...*

—From *The Pictou Colonial Standard*, Nova Scotia

Protection was a particular concern for New Brunswickers, who shared a border with the United States. This fear would come to a head with the Fenian attack on Campobello Island in 1866.

### WEB LINK

Read more about how the different colonies responded to Confederation on the Pearson Web site.

Then came news that the United States would end **reciprocity**, a free-trade agreement that had helped the colonies after Britain repealed the Corn Laws. Also, new ships were now being made of steel instead of wood, which did not help the Maritimes, where building wooden ships was a vital industry. Macdonald tried to convince Maritimers that Confederation would help their economies but Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island were not convinced. In their view, a new railway would be a drain on their resources, with no benefit.

In spite of opposition, planning for Confederation went ahead. The province of Canada had the most to gain—it was almost bankrupt, and its government hardly worked at all. In fact, 12 different governments came and went between 1849 and 1864. Finally, George Brown joined John A. Macdonald and George-Étienne Cartier in the Great Coalition to promote Confederation.

**reciprocity** an agreement that provided for free trade between the United States and the British colonies

## Zoom In > The Fenian Raids



Cause and Consequence

When the American Civil War ended in 1865, an Irish organization known as the Fenians planned to attack the British Empire in revenge for the injustices inflicted on Ireland by the English. One strategy involved former Civil War soldiers attacking Britain's colonies, including the Canadas and the Maritimes.

In 1866, the Fenians captured Fort Erie in Canada West, but they were turned back to Buffalo. In the same year, Fenians crossed into Canada East, where they remained for two days. They also launched an unsuccessful raid into New Brunswick, attacking Campobello Island.

The Fenian attacks convinced many colonists, including those in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, that the American threat was real. At the same time, Irish people in the colonies were caught between sympathy to the Irish cause and the desire to appear loyal to

their own governments. In the end, many Irish, such as those in New Brunswick, threw their support behind Confederation in order to show their loyalty. John A. Macdonald was able to use the raids to gain support for Confederation and to counter

opposition from Joseph Howe and others.

- Did the Fenians succeed in punishing the British? Explain the consequences of the Fenian raids in this context.



**FIGURE 3–29** This romanticized painting shows the Fenians fighting British troops in Canada West. In reality, the Fenians were a ragtag group dressed in old Civil War uniforms. Without the support of the American government, the Fenians were doomed to fail. Why were they successful in inspiring fear among the colonists?

Confederation stirred emotions for many reasons, perhaps because it raised questions of identity—in particular, the question of a Canadian identity. Read the following excerpts from speeches by John A. Macdonald and Joseph Howe. Notice how the speakers cleverly link identity to other issues. What are some of these issues? Howe, a long-time Nova Scotia politician who had guided the colony to responsible government, strongly opposed Confederation and was a vocal critic of Macdonald.



**FIGURE 3–30** Joseph Howe was a famous journalist and newspaper publisher in Nova Scotia. Later he became a politician. He considered Confederation to be bad for Nova Scotia.

*Why should anything be done? Nova Scotia, secure of self-government, can even bear with serenity an Administration that certainly tries her patience at times. She has been blessed with a good crop, an abundant fishery, her mining interests are extending; her shipyards have been busy all the year; her railroads are beginning to pay, and her treasury is overflowing... We have not a question to create angry discussion with the mother country, with our neighbours in the United States, or with the Governments of the surrounding colonies. We have entirely reorganized our militia, and drilled every man liable to be called out under the law, within the year. Who says, then, that something should be done? Those who desire to daub this peaceful picture, with the hues of their distempered imaginations.*

—Joseph Howe

*We find ourselves with a population approaching four million souls... With the increased security we can offer to immigrants who would naturally seek a new home in what is known to them as a great country... our future progress will be vastly greater... Instead of looking at us as merely a dependent colony, England will have in us a friendly nation—a subordinate but still a powerful people—to stand by her in North America in peace or war. I implore you not to let this opportunity pass. If we do not take advantage of the time it may never return, and we shall regret having failed to found a great nation under the fostering care of Great Britain and our Sovereign Lady, Queen Victoria.*

—John A. Macdonald

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. In an organizer, list Howe's points against Confederation (and any others you think he might have made) in one column and Macdonald's points in favour of Confederation in the other.
2. Compared to Canada today, what circumstances were different for Howe and Macdonald? (Consider factors such as cultural differences or communications technologies.) How do you think these factors influenced their thoughts and actions?

A major force behind Confederation was the need for economic union between the colonies, which were much like the small countries of Europe. What might have happened if the architects of Confederation had chosen an entirely different model of union, such as the one that has evolved into today's European Union?

After the Second World War, Europe looked for ways to recover from the war and improve trade. In 1946, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill called for a "United States of Europe."

The first to try this were Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, who eliminated trade barriers between them in

1948. In 1951, France, West Germany, and Italy joined. By 1993, the group had 12 members, and was now called the European Union (EU).

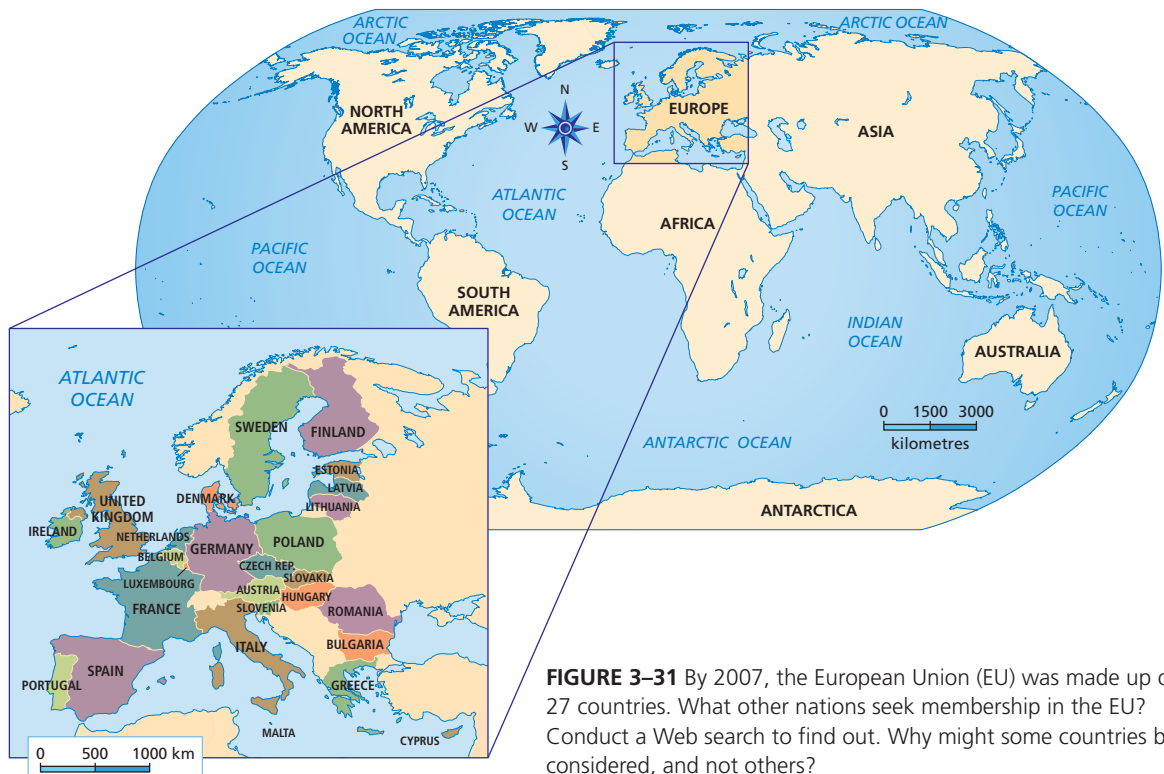
In the EU, trade can move freely across the borders of member countries. Each member nation maintains its sovereignty, but labour and environmental laws, quality control, and agricultural policies are harmonized. If an outside nation, such as Canada, wishes to export goods to

a member of the EU, then it must meet EU standards. As a result, other countries find it difficult to trade with the EU. Some observers call it "Fortress Europe."

The Fathers of Confederation probably never saw the possibilities of a system like the European Union, where individual member states would retain a high level of independence and national identity even though they were connected by economic and environmental laws and practices.

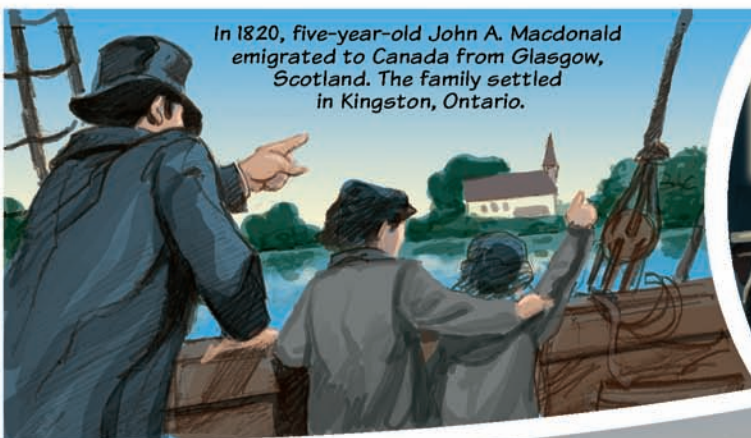
**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

1. How would Canada look today if Confederation had been similar to the European Union? Would the "Canadian Union" be better off economically than the current nation of Canada? Why or why not?



**FIGURE 3–31** By 2007, the European Union (EU) was made up of 27 countries. What other nations seek membership in the EU? Conduct a Web search to find out. Why might some countries be considered, and not others?





In 1820, five-year-old John A. Macdonald emigrated to Canada from Glasgow, Scotland. The family settled in Kingston, Ontario.

**TRAGEDY STRIKES**

John experienced many personal tragedies in his life. When he was seven, he witnessed the traumatic killing of his younger brother.

James!

By the age of 15, John was apprenticing with a Kingston lawyer. Intelligent and driven, by age 21, he had his own law practice. As a teenager, John drank heavily. This was the beginning of a lifelong abuse of alcohol.



In 1837, John served in the volunteer militia and helped to put down William Lyon Mackenzie's rebels at the Battle of Montgomery's Tavern [also known as the Bar Fight on Yonge Street] during the Upper Canada Rebellion.

In 1843, the year John entered politics, he married Isabella Clark. They had two sons, but their first born, Alexander, died at 13 months. Sick most of their married life, Isabella became addicted to opium and died in 1857.

**TRAGEDY STRIKES AGAIN**



ISABELLA CLARK  
WIFE OF  
JOHN A. MACDONALD  
DIED DEC. 28, 1857  
AGE 48 YRS

John worked hard to build support for the idea of Confederation. In 1867, his dream came true.

**CONFEDERATION!**

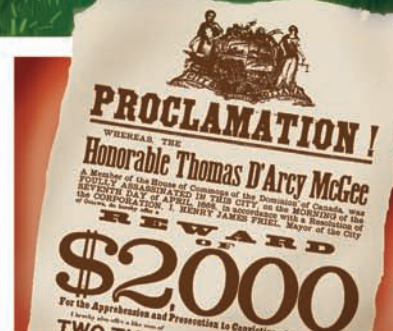


John was knighted on July 1, 1867.

In the year of Confederation, John married Susan Agnes Bernard. Their daughter, Mary, was born with physical and mental disabilities. John doted on his daughter, reading to her every night before dinner, and even taking her to Parliament to listen to his speeches.



Baboo, shall we read this one again?



On April 7, 1868, John came home with blood on his clothes from carrying the body of his good friend D'Arcy McGee, murdered for his support of Confederation.



Macdonald championed a national policy of industrialization, railway building, and western settlement. He was accused of accepting bribes from contractors.

... and the fate of Canada will then, as a Dominion, be sealed.

### CANADIAN PACIFIC SCANDAL

John sent this telegram to Hugh Allan, which revealed his part in the bribery scandal. The telegram read...

*Ottawa, July 14th 1872*  
 I must have another \$10,000.  
 Will be the last time of calling.  
 Do not fail me. Answer today.  
*John A Macdonald*

Sir John A. Macdonald served as prime minister from 1867-1873 and 1878-1891.



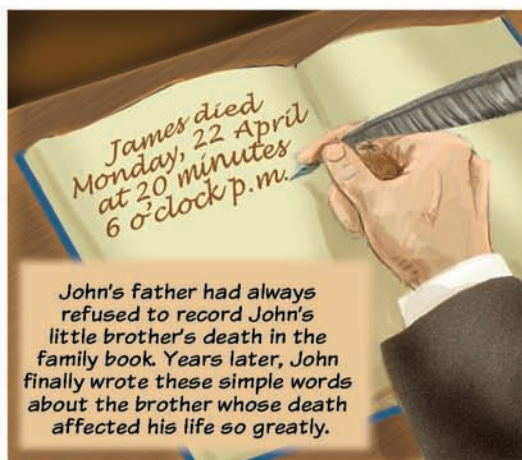
When fortune empties her chamber pot on your head, smile and say "we are going to have a summer shower."

### THE LAST SPIKE

Once the railway was completed, the Macdonald cabinet imposed a head tax to limit Chinese immigration. In 2006, the Canadian government apologized for this policy.

When John and his cabinet made the final decision to hang Louis Riel, John is known to have said...

"He shall hang though every dog in Quebec bark in his favour."



John's father had always refused to record John's little brother's death in the family book. Years later, John finally wrote these simple words about the brother whose death affected his life so greatly.

John once told his private secretary, Joseph Pope...

I never had a childhood.

A man of great vision and many sorrows, John A. Macdonald's accomplishments had a huge impact on Canada.

### Did You Know...

The French-speaking Acadians of New Brunswick were not invited to the meeting of Maritime Union, despite the fact that they had elected representatives in the provincial legislature.

## The Conferences

Confederation was only possible if an agreement could be hammered out among the leaders of the colonies. To accomplish this, conferences were held. The first was in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, in September of 1864. In fact, this meeting was intended to be a conference for the premiers of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island about a union of their colonies. Seizing their chance, Macdonald, Brown, and Cartier, the three members of the Great Coalition, accompanied by land speculator and railway builder Alexander Tilloch Galt, asked to join the discussion to present their plans for Confederation. They convinced New Brunswick's Samuel Tilley, Nova Scotia's Charles Tupper, and Prince Edward Island's Edward Whelan that Confederation could work. All agreed to attend another conference in Quebec to work out the details. Newfoundland also agreed to send representatives, even though there was little support for Confederation in that colony.

The delegates to the Quebec Conference, which was held in October of 1864, were planning a new nation, a difficult and time-consuming task. There was much to decide, such as the operation and powers of the new federal government, the powers of the new provinces, and the issue of protecting French language and culture. However, it is likely that no one gave any thought to Aboriginal peoples.

After much discussion, the delegates decided that provincial governments should retain many powers. Macdonald had wanted a strong national government, but he had to compromise. In the end, the Quebec Conference produced 72 Resolutions and a blueprint for Canada.



**FIGURE 3–32** The “Fathers of Confederation” met in Charlottetown, P.E.I., in September of 1864. John A. Macdonald and George-Étienne Cartier are in the middle in this photograph. How would the composition of such a group be different today? Who was left out in 1864?

The conference delegates had made decisions about Confederation, but they still needed their legislatures to approve the proposal. Whether the issue was railway building or the powers of Ottawa, there was a lot of opposition. Powerful speakers such as A.A. Dorion of Quebec and Joseph Howe spoke against Confederation. Others, such as Thomas D'Arcy McGee, who was later assassinated, were for it.

Although all the delegates to the conference were men, they were accompanied by their families. Unofficial activities included banquets and balls (see page 83). Only recently have historians discussed the influence of the women present at these events. Although they were relegated to the background, they certainly played a role. As one historian wrote, they helped build a “sense of communal solidarity” among participants who were otherwise divided by language and politics.

New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Canada agreed to Confederation, but needed the agreement of the British government. In 1867, the British Parliament passed the British North America Act, which created the new Dominion of Canada.

On July 1, 1867, Canadians celebrated their new Dominion in style. Communities all across the new provinces had parties, concerts, and fireworks. Plans were already being made to bring the Northwest and British Columbia into Confederation, and it was hoped that Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island would join too.

### Did You Know...

While Newfoundland and Labrador was the last colony of that time to join Confederation in 1949, the creation of Nunavut in 1999 made that territory the last region of Canada to officially join the country.



FIGURE 3-33 Canada at Confederation, 1867



**FIGURE 3–34** Amor De Cosmos pushed for union of the colonies. Why would the promise of a railway link to central Canada be attractive to some people in British Columbia?

The new nation still had some old problems. Aboriginal peoples, particularly the Métis, strongly opposed plans that deprived them of their rights and land. Transcontinental railways were extremely expensive. Long-standing disputes between the French and the English did not suddenly go away—many remain unresolved to this day. And yet, Canadians had embarked on a new and exciting enterprise based on compromise. Most believed that all the new country’s problems could be solved, a belief in keeping with Victorian optimism.

## British Columbia and Union

While British Columbia was not an official participant in the Charlottetown and Quebec Conferences, people in that colony were very interested in what was going on. Western supporters of Confederation, such as Amor de Cosmos, publisher of the *British Colonist*, attended the events. He and others believed that a railway link to central Canada would foster growth and development of the West.

The first step in extending Canada took place in the West, when Canada bought Rupert’s Land from the Hudson’s Bay Company. The history, rights, and interests of the First Nations and the Métis, who lived in the Northwest, were not considered. You will learn more about the consequences in later chapters of *Horizons*.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Construct three-point arguments for and against Confederation from the point of view of the Canadas, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. Consider political, economic, social, and identity issues.
2. Was Confederation something to celebrate, or something to mourn? Explore the question from different perspectives, including the French, the British, Aboriginal peoples, and others. Present your learning in an essay, a dramatization, or an illustration.
3. In what ways did the conferences reflect Victorian values and beliefs? Describe what a constitutional conference would look like today, and who would be included.

### Perspectives

4. Aboriginal leaders were not invited to Confederation conferences. How might they have viewed Confederation?
  - a) Outline major points you think Aboriginal leaders would have wanted discussed at the conferences.
  - b) Prepare a protest petition demanding Aboriginal representation.

### Cause and Consequence

5. What compromises did Macdonald make at the conferences? How do you think Canada would have been different if Macdonald had succeeded in forming the strong national government he desired instead of a federation with strong provincial governments?

# The British North America Act

## ► What was the foundation of Canada's constitution?

The British North America (BNA) Act, which was passed by the Parliament of Britain, created the country of Canada. Canada's birth as a nation was different from that of the United States, which had independently declared itself a nation, fought a revolution, and formulated its own rules for government. Although the BNA Act—which has evolved over time into Canada's **constitution**—was written mainly by Canadians and was based on the Quebec Act, it still recognized the supreme authority of the monarch.

Because Canada came about as a result of negotiations between equal partners, the BNA Act is full of compromise. You can almost imagine the delegates sitting around the table until dawn, thrashing out details such as who was responsible for ferry services, or who looked after education and schools. These responsibilities were then divided or shared between the provincial governments and the national, or federal, government.

## Canada's Federal Government

The structure of Canada's federal government is set out in the constitution. It has been divided into three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial.

Executive branch	<b>Prime Minister:</b> the leader of the political party with the majority of elected seats <b>Cabinet:</b> a council of ministers chosen and led by the Prime Minister <b>Civil service:</b> civilian employees of the government <b>Governor General:</b> the head of state in Canada, appointed by the monarch as his or her representative
Legislative branch	<b>Senate:</b> called the "Upper House," its members are chosen by the Prime Minister <b>House of Commons:</b> called the "Lower House," its members are elected by the people of Canada <b>Political parties:</b> organizations based on common views, with specific goals; these parties make up the majority of elected officials (some are independent of any party)
Judicial branch	<b>Supreme Court:</b> the highest court in Canada <b>Federal court:</b> a trial court that hears cases under Federal law

As you read the following selections from the BNA Act, discuss how each section might be served by a branch or branches of the federal government. Why would other responsibilities be given to the provincial governments?

**The Powers of the Federal Government (Section 91)**

Clause	Item	Excerpt from the Act
3	Taxation	<i>The raising of money on the public credit.</i>
7	National defence	<i>Militia, military and Naval Service.</i>
14–21	Regulation of banks, currency, and other economic necessities	<i>Currency and Coinage; Banking, Incorporation of Banks, and the Issue of Paper Money; Savings Banks; Weights and Measures; Bills of Exchange and Promissory Notes; Interest; Legal Tender; Bankruptcy and Insolvency.</i>
24	Aboriginal affairs	<i>Indians, and Land reserved for the Indians.</i>
27, 28	Criminal law and jails	<i>The criminal Law, except the Constitution of Courts of Criminal Jurisdiction, but including the Procedure in Criminal Matters. The Establishment, Maintenance, and Management of Penitentiaries.</i>

**The Powers of the Provincial Government (Section 92)**

Clause	Item	Excerpt from the Act
2	Limited powers of taxation	<i>Direct Taxation within the Province in order to the raising of a Revenue for Provincial Purposes.</i>
5	Lands	<i>The Management and Sale of the Public Lands belonging to the Province and of the Timber and Wood thereon.</i>
7	Health care	<i>The Establishment, Maintenance, and Management of Hospitals, Asylums, Charities and Eleemosynary Institutions in and for the Province, other than Marine Hospitals.</i>
8	Local government	<i>Municipal Institutions in the Province.</i>
10	Roads and bridges	<i>Lines of Steam or other Ships, Railways, Canals, telegraphs, and other Works and Undertakings connecting the Province with any other or others of the Provinces, or extending beyond the limits of the Province.</i>
14	Provincial courts	<i>The Administration of Justice in the Province, including the Constitution, Maintenance, and Organization of Provincial Courts, both of Civil and Criminal Jurisdiction, and including procedure in Civil Matters in those Courts.</i>

Note: Education is exclusively given to the provincial legislatures in Section 93.

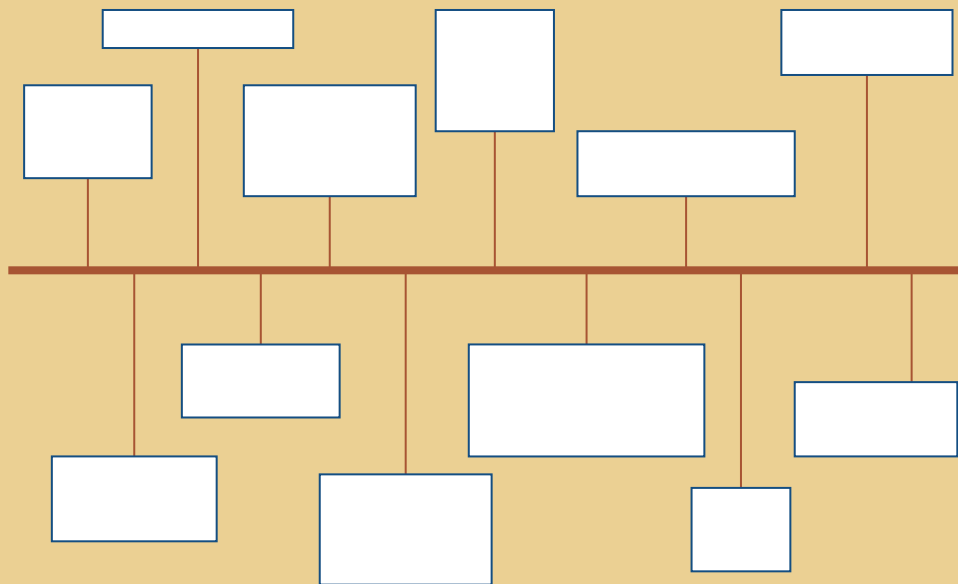
## ACTIVITIES

1. Prepare a PMI (Plus/Minus/Interesting) chart on the sections of the British North America Act featured in this chapter.
2. If the BNA Act was drawn up today, would it be different? Would there be similarities? Explain.

# Explore the Big Ideas

In this chapter, you learned about society in the British colonies of North America during the years before Confederation. People's beliefs and values and their concerns about the future played a part in the process of building a nation. Geography and feelings of regional differences were also factors.

1. Who or what is responsible for the creation of Canada? What social, economic, and geographical factors led to Confederation? Could Confederation have happened without Macdonald? What were the roles of Cartier, Brown, the Fenians, and the railway? Create a timeline like the one below to outline the participants, events, and major factors leading to Confederation. Add notes or images to illustrate the influences of values, concerns, geography, and economics on the events of that time. Explain the historical significance of each item you include.



2. Continue your research on Canadian history from 1837 to 1867. Based on what you discover, build a portrait gallery of selected people from the period, with captions explaining their importance. In your gallery, include blank portraits to acknowledge those left out of the process, and explain the significance of these people's contributions to the nation.
3. For Aboriginal peoples, what were the consequences of the growth of Canada and the development of Confederation?
4. Debate the pros and cons of Confederation from the perspectives of the different colonies.
5. In a small group, develop an advertising campaign to influence the delegates to the Charlottetown Conference. Present either a pro or con campaign with posters, slogans, a song, or other materials. Explain why you think Canada retained its ties to the British Empire.
6. Describe the structure of the Canadian federal government today. How does the modern government deal with the same issues present during Confederation—politics, identity, culture, and economic differences?