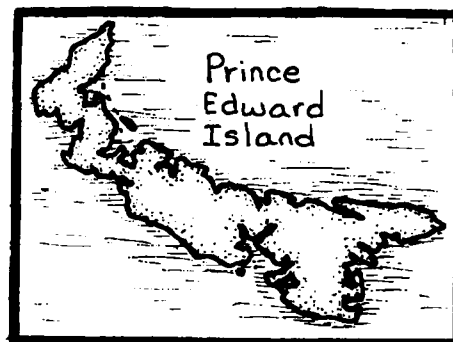


Steps to Confederation

The Charlottetown Conference

By 1864, the Maritime colonies of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island were considering the possibility of uniting. When Canada East and Canada West heard of an upcoming conference of the Maritime colonies, they expressed an interest in participating. It was decided to hold the conference in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, beginning September 1, 1864. Representatives were appointed, although officially the Canadians were only observers at the conference. After a delegation from the Canadas made a presentation on the benefits of Confederation, talk of a Maritime Union disappeared from the conference agenda. John A. Macdonald from Canada West and Georges-Etienne Cartier from Canada East presented the arguments in favour of union. George Brown (Canada West) suggested how the united government might be organized. The conference also featured many social events in which the delegates had the opportunity to get to know each other. When the conference broke up more than a week later, the participants felt that there was enough interest for further discussion and planning. With this in mind, a second conference was planned beginning October 10, 1864 at Quebec City.

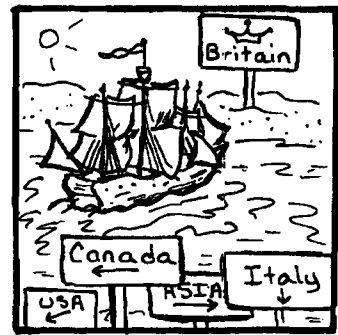


The Quebec Conference

The Quebec Conference took place from October 10 - 27, 1864. The same five colonies attended as well as Newfoundland, who sent observers. John A. Macdonald dominated the conference, pushing forward his vision of confederation. Delegates proposed the foundation of a new country with ties to Great Britain. Ideas such as a Lower House based on **representation by population**, as well as an Upper House with **representation based on regions**, were advocated. Responsible government would exist at both the provincial and federal levels, with each assuming different responsibilities. Following the conference, the delegates drafted a text known as the **Seventy-two Resolutions** or the **Quebec Resolutions**. These were the basis for the third and final conference before Confederation - the *London Conference* of December 1866.

The London Conference

Sixteen delegates from the United Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick sailed for Britain in 1866. At the London Conference, the Maritime delegates received assurances that an intercolonial railway would be built, connecting them with the Canadas. Subsidies to the provincial governments were also increased. On February 12, 1867, the bill containing the modified *Seventy-Two Resolutions*, known as the **British North American Act** was introduced in the British parliament. On May 22, 1867, Queen Victoria proclaimed that the Dominion of Canada would be created.



The British North America Act

The British North America Act (BNA Act) marked the creation of Canada in 1867 and was our first Canadian constitution. This important Act described the powers of both the provincial and federal governments, and protected the rights of minorities. An important point of discussion at the three conferences leading up to Confederation, was whether there would be provincial governments. John A. Macdonald, for one, did not want the creation of provincial governments, but instead wanted one strong federal legislature. The French representatives from Canada East, however, felt that if they didn't have a provincial government, they would lose their identity and their French language. It was decided that a federal government would handle matters which affected Canada as a whole - such as trade and commerce, the armed forces, and currency and banking. Provincial governments would handle matters such as education, health care, and natural resources.



Comprehension Questions

1. What role did George Brown play at the Charlottetown Conference?

2. What was the original purpose of the Charlottetown Conference?

3. How do we know that the Charlottetown Conference was successful?

4. In Macdonald's Quebec Conference proposal, describe the make up of the Lower House and the Upper House.
Lower House: _____
Upper House: _____
5. As a culminating activity, what did the delegates at the Quebec Conference draft?

6. Why do you think the third and final conference was held in London, England, and not a Canadian city?

7. What major promise was made to the Maritime colonies in London?

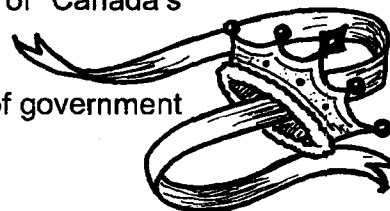
8. Describe Macdonald's view regarding provincial governments.

9. Why did the people of Canada East feel it was important to have a provincial government?

Investigation

a) Research key facts about the life and contributions of **Queen Victoria**, the monarch who ruled the British Commonwealth during the time of Canada's Confederation.

b) Research five responsibilities for each of these forms of government in Canada:



Federal Government	Provincial Government
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____

Art Activity: Imagine you are a citizen of one of the Maritime colonies in the 1860's. Create a poster advertising the benefits of joining the proposed union with Canada East and Canada West. Include an attractive title, two or three advantages to such a union, and a relevant picture.