

CLB 7 – October Question

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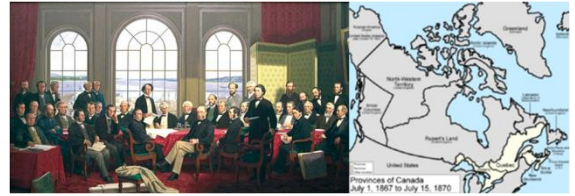
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CLB 7: Confederation

From 1864 to 1867, representatives of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the Province of Canada, with British support, worked together to establish a new country. These men are known as the Fathers of Confederation. They created two levels of government: federal and provincial.

The old Province of Canada was split into two new provinces: Ontario and Quebec, which, together with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, formed the new country called the Dominion of Canada. Each province would elect its own legislature and have control of such areas as education and health.

The British Parliament passed the British North America Act in 1867. The Dominion of Canada was officially born on July 1, 1867. Until 1982, July 1 was celebrated as “Dominion Day” to commemorate the day that Canada became a self-governing Dominion. Today it is officially known as Canada Day.



Dominion from Sea to Sea

Sir Leonard Tilley, an elected official and Father of Confederation from New Brunswick, suggested the term Dominion of Canada in 1864. He was inspired by Psalm 72 in the Bible which refers to “dominion from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.” This phrase embodied the vision of building a powerful, united, wealthy and free country that spanned a continent. The title was written into the Constitution, was used officially for about 100 years, and remains part of our heritage today.

Expansion of the Dominion

1867 - Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick
 1870 - Manitoba, Northwest Territories (N.W.T.)
 1871 - British Columbia
 1873 - Prince Edward Island
 1880 - Transfer of the Arctic Islands (to N.W.T.)

1898 - Yukon Territory
 1905 - Alberta, Saskatchewan
 1949 - Newfoundland and Labrador
 1999 - Nunavut

Did you know?

In the 1920s, some believed that the British West Indies (British territories in the Caribbean Sea) should become part of Canada. This did not occur, though Canada and Commonwealth Caribbean countries and territories enjoy close ties today.

Canada’s First Prime Minister

In 1867, Sir John Alexander Macdonald, a Father of Confederation, became Canada’s first Prime Minister. Born in Scotland on January 11, 1815, he came to Upper Canada as a child. He was a lawyer in Kingston, Ontario, a gifted politician and a colourful personality. Parliament has recognized January 11 as Sir John A. Macdonald Day. His portrait is on the \$10 bill.

Sir George-Étienne Cartier was the key architect of Confederation from Quebec. A railway lawyer, Montrealer, close ally of Macdonald and patriotic Canadian, Cartier led Quebec into Confederation and helped negotiate the entry of the Northwest Territories, Manitoba and British Columbia into Canada.

Review Question:

How did Canada become a country in 1867?

- The Queen declared “Canada is now a country.”
- Canada’s government passed the Dominion Day Act.
- The British Parliament passed the British North America Act.
- Canada’s first Prime Minister was elected.