

Arising out of the first census of the Dominion in 1871, a readjustment of representation took place in 1872 (c. 15 of 1872) increasing the representation of Ontario from 82 to 88, of Nova Scotia from 19 to 21, and of New Brunswick from 15 to 16 members, the 9 additional members bringing the total number of representatives up to 200. To these were added in 1874, as a result of the agreement under which Prince Edward Island entered Confederation (ratified by Imperial Order in Council of June 26, 1873), 6 members representing that province—bringing the membership of the House of Commons to 206.

Results of the second census, that of 1881, necessitated the passage of a new Representation Act (45 Vict., c. 3), increasing the representation of Ontario from 88 to 92 and that of Manitoba from 4 to 5, thus bringing the membership of the House of Commons to 211 members. To these were added, under the provisions of 49 Vict., c. 24, passed in 1886, 4 members for the Northwest Territories (2 for the then provisional district of Assiniboia and 1 each for the then provisional districts of Alberta and Saskatchewan), bringing the total membership to 215.

The third census, of 1891, was followed by another readjustment of representation, reducing the representation of Nova Scotia from 21 to 20, of New Brunswick from 16 to 14, of Prince Edward Island from 6 to 5, and increasing the representation of Manitoba from 5 to 7, the representation of the other provinces remaining as before. The net result was a reduction in the number of members of the House from 215 to 213.

The fourth census, of 1901, resulted in a readjustment in 1903, reducing the representation of Ontario from 92 to 86, of Nova Scotia from 20 to 18, of New Brunswick from 14 to 13, of Prince Edward Island from 5 to 4. On the other hand, the representation of Manitoba was increased from 7 to 10, of British Columbia from 6 to 7, of the Northwest Territories from 4 to 10. By c. 37 of the Statutes of 1902, a member was added for the Yukon Territory, so that the net effect of the changes was to keep the membership at 214 in the early years of the present century. The extremely rapid growth of the Northwest Territories, however, led to their division and the admission to Confederation in 1905 of the Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. In the Acts admitting them—the Alberta Act (4-5 Edw. VII, c. 3) and the Saskatchewan Act (4-5 Edw. VII, c. 42)—it was provided that their representation should be readjusted on the basis of the results of the Quinquennial Census of 1906. The Representation Act of 1907, implementing this pledge, increased the representation of Saskatchewan from 6 to 10 and of Alberta from 4 to 7 members, thus raising the total membership of the House of Commons to 221.

The Census of 1911, with its very large but very unevenly distributed increase of population, led to considerable changes in representation, enacted by the Representation Act of 1914. The representation of Ontario was reduced from 86 to 82, of Nova Scotia from 18 to 16, of New Brunswick from 13 to 11, of Prince Edward Island from 4 to 3. On the other hand, the representation of Manitoba was raised from 10 to 15, of Saskatchewan from 10 to 16, of Alberta from 7 to 12 and of British Columbia from 7 to 13. The net result was an increase of 13 members in the total membership of the House of Commons, bringing the figure to 234. However, in the following session the amendment to the British North America Act, already referred to, resulted in the retention by Prince Edward Island of her fourth member (since she had 4 senators). (See also 5 Geo. V, c. 19.) The total membership, therefore, of the House of Commons in the thirteenth and fourteenth Parliaments (elected in 1917 and 1921, respectively) was 235.