

Subsection 2.—Dissolutions of Marriage (Divorces)

For many years after Confederation, the number of divorces in Canada was very small. It was less than 20 in every year before 1900. There were 23 divorces in 1903, 51 in 1909 and 60 in 1913. These numbers were less than 1 per 1,000 of the yearly number of marriages.

One effect of the First World War was to increase the number of divorces. The generally unsettled conditions and the long separation between men on Active Service and their wives contributed to this increase. Changes in law and procedure which made it easier to obtain divorce was a further factor. At present, Quebec is the only province in which applicants for divorce must secure a private Act of Parliament.

There were 114 divorces in Canada in 1918 and 608 in 1926; the number had increased to 700 by 1931, 1,570 by 1936 and 2,369 by 1940. In every year since then the number has been higher than in the year before. The figures for the most part cover only final decrees of dissolution of marriage which alone constitute divorces; annulments and legal separations are excluded.

The statistics of dissolutions of marriage were revised in 1941 with the co-operation of the provincial authorities and the Clerk of the Divorce Committee of the Senate of Canada.

38.—Dissolutions of Marriage (Divorces), by Provinces, 1944-46, with Five-Year Averages, 1936-45

Item	Granted by Parliament of Canada		Granted by the Courts								Canada ¹
	P.E.I.	Que.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	
Numbers—											
Av. 1936-40	1	56	—	50	44	723	194	116	259	570	2,013
Av. 1941-45	2	99	—	92	104	1,358	305	207	432	937	3,535
1944	3	108	—	93	78	1,471	316	226	484	1,009	3,788
1945	2	177	—	158	171	1,940	405	282	575	1,366	5,076
1946	2	290	4	260	382	2,639	636	505	962	2,005	7,683
Percentages—											
Av. 1936-40	3	2.8	—	2.5	2.2	35.9	9.6	5.8	12.9	28.3	100.0
Av. 1941-45	0.1	2.8	—	2.6	2.9	38.4	8.6	5.9	12.2	26.5	100.0
1944	0.1	2.8	—	2.5	2.1	38.8	8.3	6.0	12.8	26.6	100.0
1945	3	3.5	—	3.1	3.4	38.2	8.0	5.6	11.3	26.9	100.0
1946	2	3.8	0.1	3.4	5.0	34.4	8.3	6.6	12.5	26.1	100.0

¹ Exclusive of the Territories.

² A Divorce Court was established in Prince Edward Island in 1945 and figures for 1946 are shown to the right.

³ Less than one-tenth of one per cent.

Section 7.—Vital Statistics of Yukon and the Northwest Territories

The vital statistics of Yukon and the Northwest Territories have been collected since 1924. These statistics are not presented with those of the nine provinces in the tables of this Chapter, because the figures are not considered complete. The details are in many cases not available, and the small and varying population of each year is not accurately known.