

PART II.—MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT

Section 1.—The Federal Government

Subsection 1.—The Executive

The Crown.—The British North America Act provides that “the Executive Government and authority of and over Canada is . . . vested in the Queen”. The functions of the Crown, which are substantially the same as those of the Queen in relation to the British Government are discharged in Canada by the Governor General in accordance with established principles of responsible government. The practical executive functions of government are exercised by the Cabinet.

The Queen.—The personal participation of the Queen in the functions of the Crown in Canada has been limited to such occasions as the granting of honours and awards, approval of changes in the Table of Precedence, institution of new military awards, or the periodic appointment of a Governor General. On the occasion of a royal visit, the Queen may participate in those ceremonies that otherwise are carried out in her name, such as the opening and dissolution of Parliament, the assent to Bills, and the granting of a general amnesty.

Apart from her constitutional position in relation to the various governments of the Commonwealth countries, the Queen is Head of the Commonwealth and symbolizes the association of the member countries. Until 1953 the title of the Queen was the same throughout the Commonwealth. Constitutional developments put the title somewhat out of accord with the facts of the position, and in December 1952 it was decided by the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth countries meeting at London, England, that new forms of title for each country should be devised. The title for Canada was approved by Parliament and established by a Royal Proclamation on May 29, 1953. The title of the Queen, so far as Canada is concerned, now is:—

“Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom, Canada and Her other Realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith”.

1.—Sovereigns of Canada since Confederation, 1867

Name	Dynasty	Year of Birth	Date of Accession
Victoria.....	House of Hanover.....	1819	June 20, 1837
Edward VII.....	House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.....	1841	Jan. 22, 1901
George V.....	House of Windsor.....	1865	May 6, 1910
Edward VIII.....	House of Windsor.....	1894	Jan. 20, 1936
George VI.....	House of Windsor.....	1895	Dec. 11, 1936
Elizabeth II.....	House of Windsor.....	1926	Feb. 6, 1952

The Governor General.—The Governor General, appointed by the Queen as her personal representative on the advice of the Prime Minister of Canada, traditionally serves for a term of five years. He exercises the executive authority of the Queen in relation to the Government of Canada under Letters Patent issued under the Great Seal of Canada (revised and re-issued, effective Oct. 1, 1947) and the provisions of the British North America Acts, 1867 to 1952. Acting under the recommendations of his responsible Ministers, in the Queen’s name, he summons, prorogues and dissolves Parliament, assents to Bills, and exercises other executive functions.