

Section 14.—The Indians and Eskimos of Canada

The Indians.*—Entry of native tribes into North America probably began as early as 15,000 years ago, according to the findings of archæologists. It is believed that roving bands of hunters, driven from their lands in northeastern Asia, crossed into North America by way of the Bering Strait. Ethnic origins of the Indians appear to have varied. Differences in language were many and, though they varied somewhat from tribe to tribe, religious background and traditions seemed to stem from practically the same source.

There are ten linguistic groups of Indians in Canada, of which four are east of the Rocky Mountains—Algonkian, Athapaskan, Iroquoian and Siouan—and six are west of the Rockies—Kootenayan, Salishan, Wakashan, Tsimshian, Haida, and Tlinkit. Indians of Algonkian stock are the most numerous and are scattered throughout the area from the Atlantic seaboard to the Rocky Mountains. Included in the Algonkian stock are such tribes as the Micmacs of the Maritimes, the Montagnais of Quebec and the Ojibwas, Crees and Blackfeet who live in the Prairie Provinces. The Iroquoian stock, which includes the Hurons, is found mainly in Ontario and Quebec, while tribes of Sioux are located in the Prairie Provinces. The Northwest and Yukon Territories are the usual homelands of the Athapaskan.

According to the 1951 Census, there were 155,874 persons of Indian origin in Canada, distributed by provinces and sex as follows:—

<u>Province</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Province</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Newfoundland.....	184	174	358	Saskatchewan.....	11,265	10,985	22,250
P. E. Island.....	136	121	257	Alberta.....	10,743	10,420	21,163
Nova Scotia.....	1,379	1,338	2,717	British Columbia.....	14,602	13,876	28,478
New Brunswick.....	1,164	1,091	2,255	Yukon.....	734	799	1,533
Quebec.....	7,556	7,075	14,631	N.W.T.....	1,913	1,925	3,838
Ontario.....	19,025	18,345	37,370				
Manitoba.....	10,642	10,382	21,024	CANADA.....	79,343	76,531	155,874

These figures include all persons with a paternal ancestor of Indian race, many of whom have long been assimilated and have lost their identity as Indians. The number of persons considered as Indians under Indian legislation is placed at 136,407. They are divided into about 600 bands and live on 2,200 or more reserves set aside for their use and benefit.

The Indian Act.—First enunciation of the Crown's policy with regard to Indians was the Proclamation of 1763, which confirmed the practice already being followed of recognizing the title of Indians to the lands they occupied and making compensation for the surrender of their aboriginal interest in the soil. The first office devoted solely to Indian affairs was set up in 1755 under Sir William Johnson and in 1860 Indian administration, formerly under the jurisdiction of the Imperial Government, became the responsibility of the Province of Canada and was placed under the Crown Lands Department.

The administration of Indians and Indian lands was made a federal responsibility by the British North America Act. Immediately following Confederation in 1867, Indian Affairs was attached to the Department of the Secretary of State and in 1873 was transferred to the newly created Department of the Interior. In 1880, under the provisions of the Indian Act, the Indian Affairs Branch became a

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