



# Stamps by Larry McInnis

## Several Prime Ministers Have Appeared On Stamps

There have been 18 different prime ministers of Canada since Confederation. John A. Macdonald, Arthur Meighen, W. L. Mackenzie King and Pierre Trudeau returned as PM after being out of office for varying periods.

Of the 18, four are still living - Pierre Trudeau, Joe Clark, John Turner and Brian Mulroney - and so are not eligible to be portrayed on a Canadian stamp.

John A. Macdonald, the nation's first prime minister, and Wilfrid Laurier, have been shown on stamps more than any others.

On June 29, 1927, Canada issued a five-stamp set to mark the 60th anniversary of Confederation. The 1-cent showed Macdonald (Scott 141) and the 5-cent showed a later PM, Wilfrid Laurier (Scott 144). A 12-cent stamp issued the same day shows them together (Scott 147).

That was it for PMs for more than 20 years. On June 25, 1951, a 3-cent stamp (Scott 303) showed Robert Borden and a 4-cent (Scott 304) showed William Lyon Mackenzie King. Both were to be featured in an issue 22 years later, as you will see.

On Nov. 3, 1952, a 3-cent (Scott 318) showed John Abbott and a 4-cent (Scott 319)

showed Alexander Mackenzie. On Nov. 1, 1954, a 4-cent (Scott 349) showed John Thompson and a 5-cent (Scott 350) showed Mackenzie Bowell.

On Nov. 8, 1955, a 4-cent (Scott 357) showed R. B. Bennett and a 5-cent (Scott 358) showed Charles Tupper. On April 19, 1961, a 5-cent (Scott 393) showed Arthur Meighen.

All those were commemorative stamps, issued in certain numbers and used for a restricted period.

In 1973, on Oct. 17, came a six-stamp set of definitives (continuous printing) honoring prime ministers. They are known as the caricature set because the main design of each is a head-and-shoulders drawing by designer David Ammesley.

The familiars were there: the 1-cent showing Macdonald (Scott 586); the 2-cent showing Laurier (Scott 587); the 3-cent showing Borden (Scott 588); the 4-cent showing Mackenzie King (Scott 589); the 5-cent showing Bennett (Scott 590).

The last stamp in the set was a 6-cent, which showed Lester B. Pearson (Scott 591), the one and only time he has been on a Canadian stamp. A few months later, on April 8, 1974, a 7-cent

was issued showing Louis St. Laurent (Scott 592), his one and only appearance.

The issue was a low-value definitive issue, all of them below the domestic first-class letter rate at the time, which was 8 cents.

On June 20, 1980, a 17-cent stamp (Scott 859) was issued to honor John G. Diefenbaker, who had died in 1979.

When the stamp for Meighen was issued in 1961, it was considerably larger than any in the 1951-55 PM series.

The 1980 Diefenbaker stamp dwarfed them all. It wasn't the largest single stamp ever issued by Canada, but it's right up there.

Even a quick study of Canada's prime ministers turns up interesting information. For example, R. B. Bennett was PM from 1930 to 1935 and is remembered, if at all, as the PM of the depression.

It was during Bennett's tenure, though, that Canada initiated negotiations with the United States for the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Letters are invited. Please send enquiries to the writer at P.O. Box 40, Beauharnois, Quebec, J6N 3C1.



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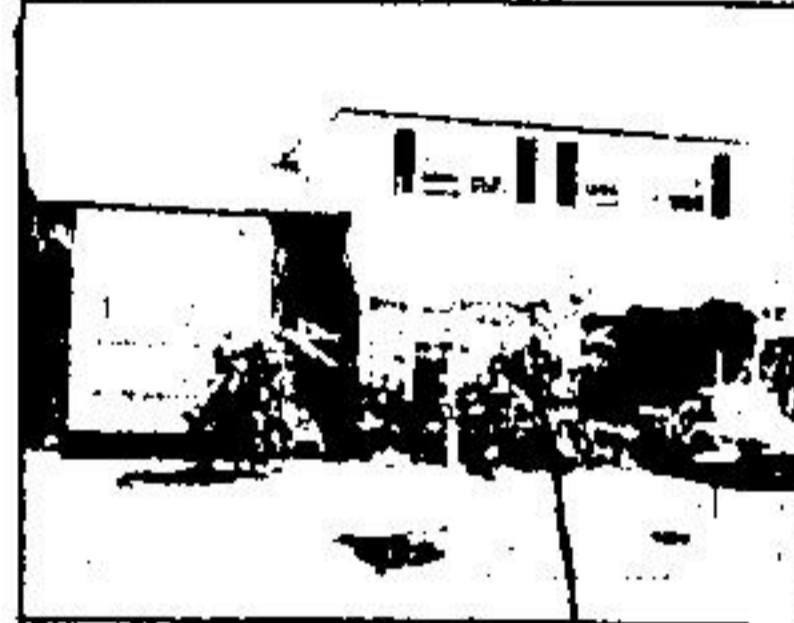
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