

Uneasy sits the Crown?

This month's Canadian tour by Prince Charles and the former Mrs Parker-Bowles who now holds Regan's, that Shakespearean vixen's, title of Duchess of Cornwall, was more important than it seemed. It rekindled the debate about the function and future of the monarchy. Let's hear more about it at the local level.

Canada has always had a non-resident monarch, represented here by a viceroy, ever since Louis XIII of France and Samuel de Champlain. That colony was populated so sparsely, administered so corruptly and defended so ineptly that, like the house built on sand, it fell.

The francophone colonists in the St Lawrence valley retained their distinctive culture under the protection of British monarchs who had for centuries included the *fleur de lys* on their royal escutcheons. English and French destinies, claims and counter-claims had, after all, been intertwined since 1066.

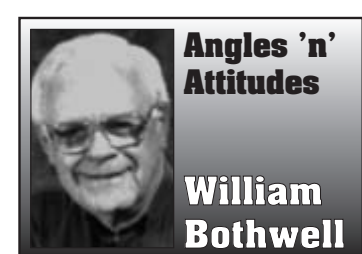
The Quebec Act of 1774 guaranteed the survival of France's language, civil law and its dominant religion in Canada. It was one of the "intolerable acts" condemned by the 1776 Philadelphia Declaration of Independence. The republican rebels would have nothing to do with that toleration.

If the Quebecois had joined the English colonists to the south in their choice of political revolution and centralisation rather than constitutional evolution and devolution, it would have become Louisiana North. All but a vestigial French character would have disappeared. Moreover, one can see what happened to colonies like Haiti that remained under French rule in this hemisphere. British (eventually constitutional) monarchy and parliamentary government is the best thing that ever happened to Quebec.

Loyalty to British institutions was also the foundation of anglophone Canada. United Empire Loyalists escaped from the violence in New England and elsewhere to settle in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the Eastern Townships of Quebec. A generation later, Quakers and others disillusioned with the militarism of the new republic, the centralisation of power under the new 1787 Constitution and the genocide of aboriginals in the United States, moved north to Upper Canada

(now Ontario) and accepted the offer of land grants under the Crown.

The confederation of British North America was accomplished in 1867. Queen Victoria (1837-1910) had chosen Ottawa to be its capital city. In the following decade Canada expanded from sea to sea to sea. A new 'political', rather than 'ethnic' nationality was established. Its bond is the rule of law - law made by an indigenous Parliament, protected and guaranteed by an oath of allegiance by all citizens to the Crown which is



Angles 'n' Attitudes

William Bothwell

beyond party strife and sectional interests.

We have come to think of the British and Canadian Crown as hereditary and as the embodiment of generally accepted 'values'. It was not always so. As recently as 1689 the Parliament at Westminster called Prince William of Orange and his wife Mary to jointly replace King James II on the throne. Two reasons were cited. James was a Roman Catholic and, after the Battle of the Boyne, was "deemed to have fled" the country. It had frequently been the case that "uneasy lies the head that wears the Crown"

and the reason had often been the power of rival claimants.

Neither William nor James were paragons of virtue. James was a notable philanderer. His daughter Mary (of the later royal duet of William and Mary) was the daughter of Anne Hyde, Duchess of York, who was said to have been her husband's chief adviser in all but his infidelities.

'King Billy' whose part in Orange Order parades on the 12th of July used to be played by a man riding a white horse, carried on a long-term affair with Elizabeth Villiers, his wife's lady-in-waiting. There were also insistent rumours of his bisexuality. William and Mary had no child. They were succeeded by Mary's sister, Anne.

Although the role of the monarch is not to be a philosopher-king but to protect the constitution from political manipulation, there

have been, especially since the invention of printing, the rise of the theatre and other means of influencing public opinion, efforts to idealise the wearer of the Crown as the personal repository of virtues beyond reasonable expectation. It is not to be expected that any otherwise qualified candidate will embody every desirable human quality. The monarch is a guardian, not a pastor. The important thing is that a head of state understand the constitutional balance of powers and have the wisdom and honesty to be able to advise, encourage or warn elected power brokers.

A notorious case of posthumous character ameliorisation is Shakespeare's portrayal of England's 15th Century Henry V as the ideal ruler. In fact, he was a Machiavellian, cold-hearted warlord. The story of the roistering Prince Hal who at a dangerous time in England's history became the heroic king was retold on film in Laurence Olivier's 1944 *Henry V*. That was another time of crisis. Like the play, the film de-emphasised the insight to Henry's character given in his address to the governor of Harfleur in Act III, scene 3 or by his order to kill all who are taken prisoner at Agincourt (end of IV:6).

For the French that terrible battle poisoned international relations for centuries. Shakespeare saw it as an exploration of the tension between the real and the ideal in a ruler. Henry V was his only 'historical' play that doesn't show somebody trying to grab the throne of England.

As our constitutional monarchy has evolved, the Crown has acted only with the advice and consent of the houses of Parliament. It also assures that in legislative crises and between the time of the dissolution of a parliament and the meeting of a new one the nation is not without a government.

The Crown has an international and inter-cultural value as a link between the 53 independent members of the Commonwealth. The monarch is neither a 'foreigner' nor a partisan in any of them. The vice-regal dignitary, as in Canada, should be, as was said of the recently deceased Serbian Orthodox Patriarch Pavle, "one of those people who by their very existence bring together the entire nation". No elected prime minister or president can be that.

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Globe not trying as hard as they used to

CBS commentator Andy Rooney, famous for his humorous approach to hard truths, had this to say during his "60 Minutes" commentary on November 7, 2004. "I know a lot of you believe that most people in the news business are liberal. Let me tell you, I know a lot of them, and they were almost evenly divided this time. Half of them liked Senator Kerry; the other half hated President Bush." Things haven't changed much, either in the U.S. or the Canadian media.

Every journalist - including this one for sure - and every news outlet has a bias. That's a given.

And the vast majority of them - media surveys suggest 85 to 90 percent of them - have a bias toward the small "l" liberal side of the ledger.

Even so, a truly professional journalist and/or media outlet, will give its best effort to at least present a relatively balanced picture to its readers/viewers/listeners, even if it tends to be tilted in one direction.

Unfortunately, even some of our most respected journals seem to have stopped trying to be fair, let alone balanced. Or at least they don't try as hard as they once did.

Take a "news" story - more like a propaganda piece - in *The Globe* and *Mail* this week, for example.

Headlined: "Canadians dismayed by Ottawa's record on climate change," it had a smaller sub-headline underneath that declaring that, "Poll finds three quarters of public are embarrassed that country hasn't taken international lead on cutting greenhouse gases."

Well, not exactly. Not once you get into - and past - the propaganda.

It may be that many Canadians think the government should be doing more to cut greenhouse gases. But you couldn't get a clear picture of how deeply held that feeling is by reading this particular *Globe* screed.

It is based, incredibly, on a "poll" conducted by one of the major pro-global warming activists on the planet, a Vancouver-based public relations firm Hoggan & Associates, a man who, as the *National Post* has pointed out, "is also responsible for a website that specializes in smearing climate skeptics..."

He also co-authored a book called *Climate Cover-up*, pushing the demonstrably absurd notion that there is a massive industry-based campaign to discredit the climate "science." The truth is, there is a massive - and highly successful campaign in the

media, academia and yes governments to discredit anyone not worshipping at the self-serving altars of David Suzuki and Al Gore. But there you have it.

Speaking of Suzuki, the *Globe* story did have the decency to point out that Hoggan is also chair of the Suzuki Foundation, quickly followed by his observation - uncontested of course - that the Conservatives "have been out of step with public sentiment on climate change virtually from the moment they took office in 2006."

Judging by the *Globe* pronouncement that 75 percent of us are "embarrassed" by Tory inaction, perhaps Hoggan has a point.

But, alas, there's the rub.

In fact, poll respondents didn't tell Hoggan that they were "embarrassed." His poll asked them if they were "embarrassed," a loaded question that a professional pollster should be ashamed to present as scientific evidence of anything beyond the power of suggestion.

But it gets worse. Hoggan's - as the *Globe* did point out - conducted two polls, one of the great unwashed and another - how convenient - of about 1,000 handpicked people it termed "thought leaders" in business, universities, government and the media.

The general public - which obviously can't be trusted to have an opinion, and isn't worthy of scary headlines - in fact told the pollster that the environment - which includes a lot more than global warming - was a distant third in the "top issues" facing Canada, at a mere 12 percent, miles behind the economy at 39 percent and health care at 22.

And just as Hoggan wouldn't want to focus on such a poor result, the *Globe* too virtually ignored that, focusing instead on the results of the select elites who - surprise, surprise - picked the environment as the number one issue.

This isn't to fault Hoggan and his crowd. If he can get a major newspaper like the *Globe* and *Mail* to swallow his propaganda campaign, why not?

But it speaks poorly of our self-declared "national newspaper" that it would present such a distorted view to its readers.

Ask yourself this: if Shell Oil conducted a survey and passed it along to the *Globe* as evidence that everybody loves the oil companies, do you think the *Globe* would accept it without hesitation?

Not bloody likely. And it's to their shame that their experienced "environment reporter" Martin Mittelstaedt wrote the story he did about Hoggan's public relations effort.



National Affairs

Claire Hoy

The numbers game

How did we get ourselves into such a mess? We live by numbers but different countries speak a different 'number' language. By a change to the decimal system we conformed to world standards but what's the significance of ten?

The more logical system as defined by nature is twelve. The year is divided into 4 seasons each 3 months long. As I sit having my morning coffee, I note that darkness is lasting longer that it was.

Today (the day I'm writing this) is Nov. 21st, or one month to the shortest day of the year, December 21st. The rising sun (assuming clear, cloudless days) will continue to cross the window a few inches farther south on the horizon each decade.

On a trip to Ireland early in the summer many years ago my friend and I toured north from Belfast. At a point in the trip our hosts noted we had to head home even though it was still broad daylight. Ten or eleven o'clock at night was surprisingly still daytime.

Ireland was above the arctic circle, far north of where I used to live in Geraldton and the days were longer. Our hosts recognized that they still needed a night's sleep, the following work day being ominously close. At that time we were approaching June 21st, the longest day of the year, where there was no darkness above the arctic circle, the land of the midnight sun.

Living in the tropics the day-length was more logical. Children could be put to bed at 6.00 o'clock with the expectation they would sleep because it was dark. Numbers in Swahili made sense.

One o'clock [Saa moja] was

the start of the day. Mid day or 12 o'clock was what they called 6 [Saa seta].

On route home we found ourselves farther north in Oxford England in mid summer. I could only maintain a daily schedule by retiring with the children. I of course fell asleep and the kids knew they were in trouble if they woke me up! Eventually they learned that six was sleeping time despite the fact it was still daylight.

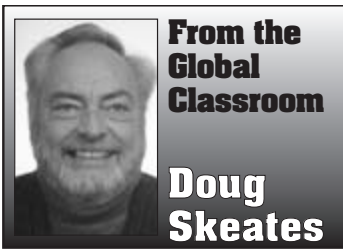
Numbers were confusing in my career as a forester. Cruising (measuring standing timber) was based on chains, twenty chains being one inch on an aerial photo. Keeping track of progress we counted out units of 10 chains, (10 being 660 feet).

Moving to rural Ontario years later these distances made sense. Surveys were based on 10,000 acre units or 10 farms, each 20 chains by 50. Roads were established on a grid of 5 concessions and lines enclosing a mile and a quarter square. Even in a city these are identifiable to this day, i.e. Yonge St. to Bathurst, Bloor to St. Clair.

Our 10 acre property in Loretto is indicative of the old survey system, a piece of land roughly 200 feet by 2000, 10 acres approximating 435,600 sq. ft.

Confusing as the above is, it's simpler than feet and inches. Originally the British foot [12 inches] was the length of the monarch's lower extremity. Every change in monarchy necessitated a change in the measuring system.

Similarly the inch represented the monarch's first knuckle on his thumb, still a useful tool as an approximation. I tend to think in units of 9 inches, the distance



From the Global Classroom

Doug Skeates

from thumb tip to the end of my little finger.

Distance measurements are only the first problem for an old timer.

We as a society have converted to the decimal system. News broadcasts report snowfall in centimeters (or millimeters, each 1/10 cm.) which I have to translate into inches, 10 cms being 4 inches, 30 cms a foot. I face the same dilemma on checking the temperature, reading a double scale.

Below 0 degrees is cold but what does -19 feel like? My background was in northern Ontario where the coldest days were -40 degrees regardless of which scale I read.

This is a confusing era. I envy the younger generation growing up with the decimal system. My daughter living in Los Angeles is faced with American measurements.

I expect it will be one or two generations before Americans smarten up and switch to the world language of centigrades, and kilometers.

Your Weekly Chuckle . . .

By KEITH HUNTER

Perhaps the most notorious drunk of all was the man who saw the billboard that read, "Drink Canada Dry." He came here to try.

Dipping Into the Past

Editor complained of 'cow nuisance' in Shelburne



members and spent the evening with them, remarking in the conversation that took place on the continued good health that had been his. But during the night he was heard coughing and this is supposed to have caused a rupture in a blood vessel in his brain.

When found at about 2 p.m. he was lying in his bed and had evidently been dead since early morning. The public funeral, which followed a Masonic service, took place Tuesday in Shelburne Methodist Church, with burial in Shelburne cemetery. Dr. Barr was born in Elizabethtown, near Brockville, on March 4, 1843. It is pointed out as a strange coincidence

that Dr. Fred Lewis, of Orangeville, who in 1905 succeeded Dr. Barr in the Ontario Legislature, was found dead in his bed in the Queen's Hotel, Toronto, on May 25, 1907.

Sunday next, November 28th, will be Temperance Sunday in practically all the churches in Ontario. In Toronto, "Banish the Bar-room, Destroy the Treating System," will be sounded forth in six Congregational, 12 Salvation Army, 22 Baptist, 28 Anglican, 31 Presbyterian, 34 Methodist and 13 other churches. However, in Shelburne, the Methodist church has found it necessary to postpone Temperance Sunday one week,

to December 5.

75 YEARS AGO

Wednesday, November 29, 1934

A cloudburst visited the Orangeville area the middle of last week during as severe lightning and thunderstorm. For a time it was feared the new sewage disposal plant in the east ward would be carried away with the onrush of surface water, only the work of Superintendent William Marshall and a crew having saved the structure. On East Broadway, large catchbasins were shooting water five to 10 feet in the air. The Credit River went on a rampage and for a time water was running over the bridge on Highway No. 10.

In the only civil case at the Dufferin Fall Assizes, a jury has awarded damages of \$500 to plaintiff Mary Matthews of Dundalk, who with her husband John sued George Carr of Carr Transport System, Owen Sound after Mrs. Matthews was injured in a collision on Highway 10

two miles south of Orangeville last Jan. 27. The jurors found the plaintiffs 25 per cent negligent.

50 YEARS AGO

Wednesday, November 25, 1959

The board of Orangeville District Secondary School is proposing to add a \$350,000 four-room addition to the high school building. A delegation from Shelburne has asked Dufferin County Council for assistance in financing a new building for Shelburne District Hospital, cost of which is estimated at \$120,000.

25 YEARS AGO

Wednesday, November 28, 1894

Judge Kechin Wang has decided against closing the Young Offenders' Court trial of the Orangeville boy charged with two counts of first-degree murder of Daniel and Monique Babinneau. Perrin Beatty, MP for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe, is Canada's new Revenue Minister.

125 YEARS AGO

Thursday, November 27, 1884

The supper given by Warden Gillespie to the members of Dufferin County Council and friends in Shelburne on Wednesday evening of last week was one of the greatest social events of the season. The company that sat down to partake of the good things provided by the popular host and hostesses of the Mansion House was a large one.

The patrons of the Shelburne cheese factory have held their annual meeting. The following gratifying results of the season's work are shown: The amount of cheese manufactured during the season was 52,886 pounds, for which the sum of \$5,282 was received. The average quantity of milk used in the manufacture of a pound of cheese was 10 1/4 pounds. The enterprising proprietors, Messrs. Rice & Scott, have made some commendable improvements in the factory and hope to do a much larger business next year.

Writes editor W. J. Smith in the

ECONOMIST: We would like to see some action taken in regard to the cow nuisance in Shelburne. On Sunday last there were several specimens of the bovine tribe promenading our streets and decorating the sidewalks with cowslips. The yards and gardens of residents who were so unfortunate as to have open gates were also visited in turn. Some time ago Constable Canning asked us to speak to this matter. We think he should arrest all stray cows and run them in.

100 YEARS AGO

Thursday, November 25, 1909

Great indeed was the shock to the community when word was flashed over the wires at 3:30 p.m. last Friday that Dr. John Barr, M.P. for Dufferin, had been found dead in his hotel room at Ottawa. He was apparently in his usual good health on Thursday, was in his seat in the House of Commons, and asked a question in the course of the proceedings. He had supper with fellow