

Scenes from the Bad Old Days

ILLUSTRATED BY AVERY HELM
WRITTEN BY NANCY PAYNE

ELECTIONS IN CANADA WEREN'T ALWAYS AS
PEACEFUL AND ORDERLY AS THEY ARE NOW...



YOUR
CANDIDATE
ISN'T FIT FOR
OFFICE!

WELL,
YOURS IS
A PIG IN A
SUIT!



SAINT JOHN COUNTY, N.B., 1858



ALL THIS LAND IN ONE MAN'S HANDS MEANS JUST ONE VOTE.

BUT WHEN I DIVIDE IT INTO 250 PARCELS...



...THAT'S 250 NEW LANDOWNERS!

AND 250 NEW VOTES!

NEW BRUNSWICK, NOVA SCOTIA, ONTARIO AND QUEBEC FORMED CANADA IN 1867. THE FIRST NATIONAL ELECTIONS OPERATED USING EACH PROVINCE'S RULES, SO THINGS WEREN'T MUCH BETTER.



TOO BAD YOU LOST.



GET ME TO THE NEXT RIDING FAST ENOUGH AND MAYBE I CAN WIN THERE!

VOTERS HAD TO MAKE THEIR CHOICE BY STATING IT IN PUBLIC.



WAIT!



I CHANGED MY MIND...

I THINK...

IN 1855, NEW BRUNSWICK BECAME THE FIRST PLACE
IN NORTH AMERICA TO SWITCH TO VOTING IN PRIVATE.



FINALLY, THE VOTE
WILL BE FAIR!



THIS SECRET BALLOT
IS A TERRIBLE IDEA.



A MAN SHOULD BE WILLING
TO STAND UP FOR WHAT HE
BELIEVES IN, NOT SNEAK OFF
TO SHOVE A PAPER INTO A BOX.



EVEN AFTER CANADA STARTED USING SECRET BALLOTS
IN 1874, PRESSURES AND PRIZES INTERFERED.



THERE IS ONLY ONE
PROPER CHOICE!

IF YOU VOTE ANOTHER WAY,
I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU
IN THIS CHURCH!

THE OWNERS ADVISED
ME TO BE VERY CLEAR.

IF YOU VOTE FOR A
CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT,
THEY CANNOT
GUARANTEE YOUR PAY
WILL STAY THE SAME.

INDEED, THEY CANNOT
GUARANTEE THIS
FACTORY WILL EVEN BE
ABLE TO STAY OPEN.

THINK LONG AND HARD
BEFORE YOU MARK
YOUR BALLOT.



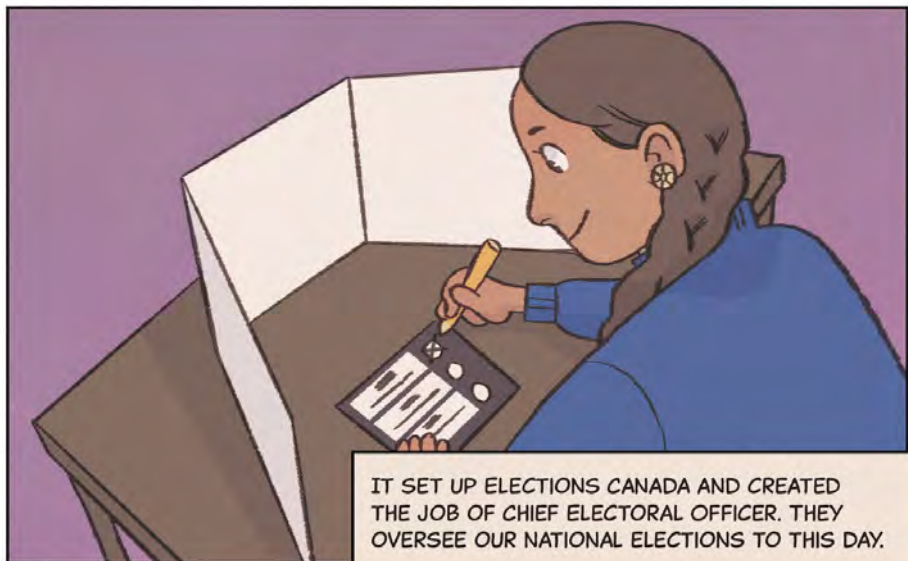




WE'RE NOT MAKING ANY OF THIS UP. LYING, FIGHTING, BRIBES, PRESSURE IN CHURCH AND AT WORK – IT WAS ALL COMMON FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY. ABOUT 20 PEOPLE DIED IN ELECTION-RELATED VIOLENCE BEFORE 1867.



IN THE 1874 FEDERAL ELECTION, NEARLY ONE-THIRD OF THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS WERE FOUND TO HAVE CHEATED AND HAD TO QUIT. THINGS FINALLY STARTED TO CHANGE IN 1920, WHEN THE GOVERNMENT PASSED THE *DOMINION ELECTIONS ACT*.



IT SET UP ELECTIONS CANADA AND CREATED THE JOB OF CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER. THEY OVERSEE OUR NATIONAL ELECTIONS TO THIS DAY.