

The Royal Tour of King George VI

👑 In 1939 King George VI and his wife Queen Elizabeth (the parents of Queen Elizabeth II) toured Newfoundland, Canada, and visited the United States. George VI became the first reigning monarch to visit both countries. **Since this visit occurred after the Statute of Westminster (1931) it is very important to emphasize that George VI toured the country as King of Canada, and not the British monarch.**



👑 Their Majesties toured Canada for 29 days by train (over a distance of 8,600 miles), and millions gathered to catch a glimpse of the Royal Train and its occupants.



"This is Canada calling!" From shore to shore, Canadians record their greetings of deep affection and loyalty to the Crown in this CBC Radio special. Alec Brady, an elevator operator in Toronto, describes the thrill of meeting the amiable royal couple. Mrs. R.W. McKinnon, a farmer's wife in Saskatchewan, expresses her pride in being part of a family of nations. As King George VI and Queen Elizabeth head into the second week of their month-long tour, the country revels in a majestic mayhem.

-- from the CBC archives

Facts about the tour:



- 👑 Began in Quebec City (the Plains of Abraham) and headed across the nation before ending in Halifax 29 days later (May 17th to June 15th).
- 👑 The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation donated over 100 staff to cover the event.
- 👑 Prime Minister Mackenzie King was always there to greet the king and queen at each stop (to their amusement).
- 👑 While in Canada the king performed duties as the King of Canada – granting Royal Assent, accepting the credentials of the Ambassador of the United States, dedicated the National War Memorial in Ottawa, etc.

👑 War was declared the following September – Britain declared war on September 3rd, and Canadian prime minister Mackenzie King advised King George VI to proclaim a state of war between Canada and the German Reich for September 10th.

Visiting the United States

👑 George VI was the first monarch to visit the United States. Since he traveled to the US as the King of Canada, he was attended by Prime Minister Mackenzie King.

👑 A friendship between the king and American President Franklin D. Roosevelt developed during this visit that would persist through the Second World War.



Prime minister Mackenzie King developed a strong attachment to Queen Elizabeth (consort to King George VI). Some of his personal pictures were altered to reflect his attachment.



 **Craig Baird - Canadian History Ehx** 
@CraigBaird

When King George VI and Queen Elizabeth arrived in Winnipeg on May 24, 1939, they were joined by Prime Minister WLM King, and met Mayor John Queen.

All those similar names created this confusing segment of the radio broadcast on CBC:
“Oh, there's the King -- he's stepping out, followed by her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, nattily attired in a silver coat.
Mr. King is now shaking hands with the King and introducing Mr. Queen to the King and Queen and then Mrs. Queen to the Queen and King.
They are now proceeding up the steps to the well-decorated City Hall, the King and Mr. King together with the Queen being escorted by Mrs. Queen. The King has now stopped and said something to Mrs. Queen and goes to Mrs. Queen and the Queen and Mr. King and the Queen laughed jovially. The King leaves Mr. King and goes to Mrs. Queen, and the Queen and Mr. King follow behind....”