



Recent Publications and Documents

SPEAKERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK 1786-1985, Legislative Assembly, Fredericton, New Brunswick, 1985, 72 p.

The forward to this compendium of biographies quotes an extract from the New Brunswick *Journal of Debates* (February 16, 1939) referring to a statement by former Speaker F.C. Squires describing what this function involved: "The Speaker, more than any other member of the House, represents the will of the people of the country. He is the barrier which any subversive attack on democratic institutions must break. He is the First commoner. The power placed in his hands by the House is great. Without his consent, even the Representative of the King cannot enter this chamber. He represents in no small way the supreme will of the people. . . . His decisions cannot be questioned except by a vote of the House. He maintains decorum in debate and sees to it that each representative of the people has the exercise of freedom of speech within the Rules of the House".

Unfortunately, most of these biographies provide very little information on the careers of the men who held the position of Speaker in New Brunswick. The Honourable Amos Botsford, the first Speaker occupied the position for twenty-six consecutive years, from January 3, 1786 to March 7, 1812. His son, William, and grandson, Bliss Botsford, succeeded him. But their careers as Speakers remain largely unexplored.

As regards James Edward Lynott, the book quotes from an editorial in *The Gleaner* of January 8, 1890 which indicated that, as Speaker of the House, he acted with courtesy and impartiality, and his decisions were never questioned. No events illustrating this statement and no highlights of his career are reported. The same is true with regard to the Honourable George Johnson Clarke. A quotation taken from *The Gleaner* of February 27, 1917 indicates that he fulfilled his role with dignity and won the confidence and respect of members from both sides of the House.

One career which seems to have been rather extraordinary was that of Frederick Charles Squires. Appointed Deputy Speaker of the House during the 1926 session he became Speaker on February 12, 1931, a position he retained until April 4, 1935. On March 5, 1936, he was chosen as parliamentary leader of the opposition and later became head of the Conservative Party. In 1953 he was appointed Clerk of the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly and Law Clerk. He performed these roles until 1959. The *Telegraph Journal* of December 17, 1960 described him as having acquired a reputation as a first-class expert on parliamentary procedure in New Brunswick.

This book is not intended for those interested in the evolution of parliamentary procedure in New Brunswick or Canada as a whole. It does not provide a comprehensive description of the mandates and responsibilities of those who occupied the position of Speaker. It is, however, a very useful reference tool for those who want more information on the major stages in the lives of these politicians. More information would be required concerning their duties and the events which distinguished their careers as Speakers in order to bring these individuals to life. It could then prove to be a most valuable tool for those working in the field of parliamentary procedure.

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LEXIQUE DES TERMES PARLEMENTAIRES EN USAGE EN BELGIQUE, EN FRANCE ET AU QUÉBEC, National Assembly of Quebec, 1986, 55 p.

The purpose of this glossary is to compare certain terms used in three French language Parliaments – Quebec, France and Belgium. The same term may have different or slightly different meanings from one parliament to another. For example the meaning of, "loi constitutionnelle", "ministre

d'État", "projet de loi" and many other terms varies according to the jurisdiction. Conversely terms such as, "trône" and "perchoir", "clôture" and "guillotine"; "mort au feuilleton" and "caducité" mean the same thing according to the Legislature. One can imagine the confusion that could result from misuse of a term.

The glossary includes terms unique to each system, for example, "Conseil de la communauté français" (Belgium), "Congrès du Parlement" (France), "tiers parti" (Quebec). Certain other terms are identified with only one country although it is unclear whether they also exist elsewhere. Among these terms are "orateur" (Belgium, France), "recueil des notices et portraits" (France), "décision" (Quebec), "étude des crédits" (Quebec), "projet de loi d'intérêt privé" (Quebec). Moreover it is not self-evident that other terms such as "favoritisme" or "lobby" are used exclusively in Quebec. Unfortunately the authors did not make a more systematic comparison or at least explain the parameters of their study, particularly in areas where linguistic intuition or a knowledge of parliamentary procedure would suggest there should be corresponding terms.

Aside from these shortcomings, the glossary covers the essential terms in the parliamentary process. The organization and arrangement of the data is well done and easy to use. It includes some 372 entries arranged in alphabetical order followed by an index of all terms mentioned in the text. Each entry is accompanied by a clear and concise definition including an indication of the different meanings for each country where the term is used. These are often followed by relevant explanatory notes and cross references.

Mistakes in usage are indicated giving the glossary a normative dimension. Certain terms and entries in the index are in quotation marks but the use of quotes is not always consistent. For example they are used differently in the case of "trombinoscope", "simple député", "Haute assemblée" and "redistribution des sièges". Perhaps the authors could have clarified their practice.

Publication of this glossary was a

joint parliamentary project. The authors, Jean-Pierre Bloch (Paris), Claude Remy (Bruxelles) and Gaston Deschênes (Quebec), are members of the legislative staff in their respective parliaments. Perhaps this type of project could be extended to other parliaments where French is an official language.

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**THE PARLIAMENTARIANS:
THE HISTORY OF THE
COMMONWEALTH
PARLIAMENTARY
ASSOCIATION, 1911-1985, Ian
Grey, Gower Publishing Company
Limited, Hants, England, 319 p.**

In September 1986 the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association marked its 75th anniversary with publication of an official history by Ian Grey.

A first draft of this book was completed in 1974 by the British parliamentarian and historian Patrick Gordon Walker. The Executive Committee of CPA felt it gave inadequate coverage to more recent events. The Committee prevailed upon the Association's Editor of Publications to finish the job. Mr. Grey, author of several highly readable histories, mostly on Tsarist Russia, agreed but waited until retirement in 1983 to take on the job.

The twenty-three chapters each cover a distinct period in the life of the CPA. The organization of the material leaves no doubt as to Mr. Grey's mastery of the subject but the analysis is less successful. The post 1970 period is still unsatisfactory. It now reads much like a series of extracts from annual conferences or minutes of Executive Committee meetings. Indeed many paragraphs are recognizable from various reports and documents prepared over the past fifteen years.

The early period is somewhat more interesting. It is essentially a biography of Howard d'Egville. This rather remarkable character – a mixture of Machiavelli and Rasputin – wrote the original constitution of the Association in 1911, served as Secretary of the United Kingdom Branch until 1947 and was Secretary General of the Association until he retired, somewhat against his will, in 1959 at age 84. D'Egville's entire life and energy was devoted to the Association. We can only hope that some history student or professor will latch upon Howard d'Egville and complete the biography which Ian Grey has begun.

Howard d'Egville even spent the war years in Canada and was seriously thinking of emigrating. He realized the importance of Canadian-American relations and organized a number of exchanges with American Congressmen. When he finally decided to return to London no further Canada-United States parliamentary meetings were held for many years.

A book like this should have

interested Canadian parliamentarians for a number of other reasons. Canada was one of the six original members of the Association and has played a leading role in transforming the organization from an Empire to a Commonwealth body after the War. Indeed Canada is now the only single country to form one of the Association's seven Regions. This has given Canadians a significant role in shaping the organization and has helped to give the Canadian Region (which consists of the federal, provincial and territorial legislatures) a fairly high profile among parliamentarians and non parliamentarians.

While Grey devotes considerable space to d'Egville and other members of the British secretariat he tends to ignore the influence of officials in other countries in the development of the Association. Arthur Beaubesne, for example, had a prominent role in Canada and no doubt there were other individuals in other countries. More significantly the whole book is written from a British perspective. One cannot help but think that the author would have benefitted by doing more of his research outside the CPA Secretariat in London.

The most important thing about an official history is to get it done. Having accomplished this perhaps it is now up to others to analyze and reflect upon the relative importance of CPA in the overall national and international political context.

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