

NEW ENGRAVINGS

IN THE PARLIAMENT
BUILDING'S WOODWORK

Engravings

NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY
OF QUÉBEC



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The motto “Je me souviens” (I remember) invites us to take a closer look at prominent figures who have marked our history. To highlight the 225th anniversary of Québec's first elections and the inauguration of the first House of Assembly in Québec City, the National Assembly is proud to renew with a tradition established by Eugène-Étienne Taché, the Parliament Building's designer.

Four new names have been engraved in the Parliament Building's woodwork: William Grant, Augustin-Norbert Morin, Thomas Dunn and Joseph-Octave Plessis. Each of these Quebecers, in his own way, helped shape political and parliamentary life in Lower Canada.

Enjoy visiting your Parliament!

Jacques Chagnon
President, National Assembly of Québec

NAMES OF POLITICIANS FROM LOWER CANADA ENGRAVED IN THE WOODWORK

When Eugène-Étienne Taché (1836–1912) designed the Parliament Building, he made it a veritable history book. On the ground floor, the coats of arms commemorate key individuals from the French regime, and the period under British rule is featured at the Chamber level.

Of the men whose names were engraved in the woodwork, 29 significantly affected the political life of Lower Canada. These historical figures were not randomly selected: Members who sat in the House of Assembly of Lower Canada are featured in the National Assembly Chamber (Blue Room), while the names of illustrious members of the Legislative Council adorn the Red Room.



BAnQ
CALL NUMBER: P560,S2,D1,P1290
Title: Eugène-Étienne Taché / Livernois Québec – [circa 1890]

BIOGRAPHIES OF POLITICAL FIGURES AT THE TIME OF LOWER CANADA

* MEMBERS OF THE FIRST PARLIAMENT, IN 1792

At the foot of the ground floor staircase

GEORGE III (1738–1820)

King of Great Britain and Ireland, and the first monarch of the Hanoverian dynasty whose mother tongue was English, his reign was marked by the Seven Years' War (1756–1763) and the American War of Independence (1776–1783). He gave royal assent to the *Constitutional Act* on June 10, 1791.



WILLIAM PITT (1759–1806)

A Member of Parliament in the British House of Commons in 1781, he became a Minister the following year and was Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1783 to 1801. In keeping with his liberal views, the *Constitutional Act* was adopted under his government in 1791.



Chamber level (Legislative Council Room)

JULES-MAURICE QUESNEL (1786–1842)



The son of merchant, musician and poet Joseph Quesnel, Jules-Maurice was a successful businessman. Before 1833, and again from 1836 to 1840, he worked in Montréal's municipal administration. In 1838, when the Constitution was suspended, he became a member of the

Special Council but voted against the union of Upper and Lower Canada. His brother Frédéric-Auguste was a moderate Member of the Parti Patriote of Lower Canada, an anti-union Member in the Parliament of the Province of Canada from 1841 to 1844 and a legislative councillor from 1848 to 1866.



JONATHAN SEWELL (1766–1839)

A great lawyer and the son of a Loyalist, Sewell was the very embodiment of a Parti Bureaucrate member who profoundly mistrusted democratic institutions. A strong proponent of the colony's anglicization, he served as interim Attor-

ney General for the Province of Québec in 1790, was appointed Solicitor General of Lower Canada and Inspector of the King's Domain in 1793 and officially became Attorney General on May 9, 1795. He was elected Member for William-Henry in 1796, 1804 and 1808. After his appointment as Chief Justice in 1808, he sat on the Legislative Council until the Constitution was suspended in 1838.

FRANÇOIS BABY (1733–1820)*

This wealthy businessman took part in the defence of Québec City against the British in 1759 and against the Americans in 1775–1776. Four years after the *Quebec Act* of 1774, he was sworn in as a legislative councillor of the Province of Québec. In 1792, he was appointed to the Legislative Council of Lower Canada, where he served as Acting Speaker in 1794, 1802, 1803, 1806 and 1807. An active member of the French Party at the beginning of his political career, he drew closer to the Parti Bureaucrate after the Constitution of 1792.

JEAN-ANTOINE PANET (1751–1815)*

A trained notary and lawyer, he took part in the defence of Québec City during the attempted American invasion in 1775–1776. Elected Member for Upper Town Québec City in 1792, he was chosen by his peers to become the first Speaker (President) of the House of Assembly of Lower Canada. An active member of the Parti Canadien, he co-founded the newspaper *Le Canadien*, the country's only opposition paper, in 1810. His Member's seat fell vacant after he was appointed to the Legislative Council in January 1815.





MICHEL-EUSTACHE-GASPARD-ALAIN CHARTIER DE LOTBINIÈRE (1748–1822)*

An army officer, seigneur and justice of the peace, he was elected Member for York in 1792. His famous speech in favour of the French language was immortalized in Charles Huot's painting *The Language Debate*. Elected Speaker of the Assembly in 1794, he held this office until 1796. Appointed a legislative councillor in 1796, he took his seat in 1797.

GASPARD-JOSEPH CHAUSSEGROS DE LÉRY (1721–1797)*

A military engineer, seigneur and chief road commissioner (grand voyer), he was awarded the Cross of Saint-Louis in 1759. He took part in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. A member of the first Legislative Council in 1775, he was appointed a legislative councillor of Lower Canada in 1792. His son Louis-René was also a legislative councillor of Lower Canada from 1818 to 1832; his other son, Charles-Étienne, was a member of the Special Council of Lower Canada from 1838 to 1841; and his grandson Alexandre-René was also a legislative councillor of the Province of Québec from 1867 to 1880.

RENÉ-AMABLE BOUCHER DE BOUCHERVILLE (1735–1812)*

Injured and taken prisoner during the Seven Years' War, he later took part in the defence of Québec City during the American invasion of 1775–1776. He was appointed a legislative councillor in 1786 and again in 1792. His son Pierre-Amable was a legislative councillor of the Province of Canada from 1843 to 1857, and his grandson Charles-Eugène was a legislative councillor of the Province of Québec from 1867 to 1915 and Premier of Québec from 1874 to 1878 and 1891 to 1892.



CHARLES-LOUIS TARIEU DE LANAUDIÈRE (1743–1811)*

Wounded in the Battle of Sainte-Foy in 1760, he left, after the British Conquest, to serve in the French army. He returned to Québec in 1768 and became aide-de-camp to Governor Guy Carleton. He was appointed a legislative councillor in 1786 and 1792. His half-brother Charles-Gaspard was elected Member for Warwick in 1796 and, as he was close to the Parti Bureaucrate, was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1811.



PAUL-ROCH DE SAINT-OURS (1747–1814)*

An officer in the French army, he left New France after the British Conquest to return in 1771. He was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1777 to replace his father, Pierre-Roch, who had been named in 1775. He was re-appointed a legislative councillor for Lower Canada in 1792, and his brother Charles was appointed to the Legislative Council of Lower Canada in 1808. Charles's son François-Roch was elected Member for Richelieu in 1824. He supported the Parti Patriote and was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1832.

Chamber level (National Assembly Chamber)



JOSEPH-RÉMI VALLIÈRES DE SAINT-RÉAL (1787–1847)

A lawyer, he was Member for Saint-Maurice in 1814 and Member for Upper Town Québec City in 1820. Elected Speaker of the House of Assembly in 1823, in the absence of Louis-Joseph Papineau, he presided over the deliberations of the House until 1825. He was a moderate member of the Parti Canadien and later of the Parti Patriote. In 1829, he was appointed a judge in Trois-Rivières. At the time, he was considered the best lawyer in Lower Canada. After the Constitution was suspended, Lord Durham named him to the Executive Council, where he sat from June to November 1838.

JAMES STUART (1780–1853)

A brilliant orator, he became Member for Montreal East in 1808. He supported the Parti Canadien and, three years later, became leader of the parliamentary majority in the Legislative Assembly. In 1817, he broke with the party and, in 1825, was appointed Attorney General of Lower Canada. Later elected Member for William-Henry in a by-election, he became one of the pillars of the Parti Bureaucrate. Appointed to the Special Council in 1838, he presided over its deliberations as Chief Justice of Lower Canada until the *Union Act* came into force in 1841.



GABRIEL-ELZÉAR TASCHEREAU (1745–1809)*

He took part in the defence of Québec City against the British in 1759 and against the Americans in winter 1775–1776. Elected Member for Dorchester in 1792, he was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1798. His sons Antoine-Charles and Jean-Thomas were elected to the House of Assembly and his son Thomas-Pierre-Joseph was appointed to the Legislative Council. Gabriel-Elzéar was the great-grandfather of Louis-Alexandre Taschereau, Premier of Québec from 1920 to 1936.



PIERRE-STANISLAS BÉDARD (1762–1829)*

A trained lawyer, he was elected Member for Northumberland in 1792. Leader of the Parti Canadien, he co-founded the newspaper *Le Canadien* in 1806. In 1810, with Jean-Thomas Taschereau and other collaborators at *Le Canadien*, he was imprisoned without trial by Governor James Craig and released after 13 months. His sons Joseph-Isidore and Elzéar were elected Member for Saguenay in 1830 and Member for Montmorency in 1831, respectively. Elzéar was among the writers of the 92 Resolutions and was the first Mayor of Québec City from 1833 to 1834.



ÉTIENNE PARENT (1802–1874)

Trained in law, he was the editor of the newspaper *Le Canadien*. Although not a member of the Parliament of Lower Canada, he was one of the leaders of the Parti Patriote in Québec City. After the Union, he was elected an anti-unionist Member for Saguenay in 1841 and appointed Clerk of the Executive Council in 1842. Étienne Parent's thinking was dominated by the idea of defending the French Canadian nation. He became his friend Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine's mentor when the latter fought to obtain ministerial responsibility.

JOHN NEILSON (1776–1848)

The printer and publisher of the newspaper *La Gazette de Québec*, he was elected a Member in 1818. He supported the Parti Canadien and later the Parti Patriote. In 1823, he travelled to London with Louis-Joseph Papineau to oppose the proposed union with Upper Canada. In 1828, he was one of the three delegates sent to Great Britain to request political reforms. A moderate reformer, he voted against the 92 Resolutions. Appointed to the Legislative Council in 1837 and to the Special Council in 1838, he voted against the Union. After the *Union Act*, he was elected an anti-unionist Member for Québec City in 1841 and was briefly part of the Groupe canadien-français with Étienne Parent. Defeated in the 1844 election, he was appointed to the Legislative Council that same year.

DENIS-BENJAMIN VIGER (1774–1861)

A lawyer, journalist and essayist, he was elected to the House of Assembly in 1808. In 1828, he was sent to Great Britain with John Neilson and Augustin Cuvillier to request political reforms. Appointed to the Legislative Council in 1829, he was designated an agent of the Assembly in

London in 1831. Back in Lower Canada in 1834, he defended the Parti Patriote's ideas. As one of the party's leaders at the time of the 1837 rebellion, he was imprisoned from 1838 to 1840. In 1841, under the Union, he was elected Member for Richelieu. An anti-unionist leader, he belonged to the Groupe canadien-français. From 1843 to 1846, he was Joint Premier with William Henry Draper. Appointed a legislative councillor in 1843, he lost his seat in 1858 due to non-attendance.



AUGUSTIN (AUSTIN) CUVILLIER (1779–1849)

A merchant and major land owner, he was elected Member for Huntingdon in 1814 and was the Parti Canadien's financial expert. He was sent to Great Britain as a delegate to denounce Governor Dalhousie's conduct in 1828 and began distancing himself from Louis-Joseph Papineau as of 1829. Elected in Laprairie in 1830, he did not support the 92 Resolutions. He lost the 1834 election and went to work in municipal administration in Montréal. Elected in Huntingdon in 1841, he started out as an anti-unionist. He was the first Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada from 1841 to 1844.



LOUIS BOURDAGES (1764–1835)

A seafarer, merchant, farmer, notary and militia officer, he was elected Member of the House of Assembly in 1804. A skillful tactician and eloquent orator, he

helped found the newspaper *Le Canadien*. He played an important role in the Parti Canadien, and later in the radical wing of the Parti Patriote, and was a member of the parliamentary committee that prepared the 92 Resolutions in 1834. His son Rémi-Séraphin was elected Member for Rouville in 1830.

Flag Room



FRANÇOIS BLANCHET (1776–1830)

Author, physician, surgeon, teacher, militia officer, businessman, seigneur and justice of the peace, he was one of the

founding owners of the newspaper *Le Canadien*. In 1809, he was elected Member of the House of Assembly. A pillar of the Parti Canadien, he was imprisoned in 1810, with Bédard and Taschereau, during the parliamentary crisis opposing prominent members of the Parti Canadien against Governor James Craig. A man of science, he became a proponent, in the Assembly, of a genuine health and public hygiene policy. He also took a keen interest in education.

Staircase and gallery level

FRANÇOIS DAMBOURGÈS (1741–1798)*



He served with distinction in the siege of Québec City during the American invasion of 1775–1776. In 1776, he became a lieutenant in the 1st Battalion of the 84th Regiment of Foot (Royal Highland Emigrants) and was elevated to the rank

of colonel in 1790. He was elected Member for Devon in 1792. As a rule, he supported the British Members. He became a captain in the Grenadiers Company of the 1st Battalion of the Royal Canadian Volunteer Regiment in 1795. He did not run again in the election of 1796.



ANTOINE JUCHEREAU DUCHESNAY (1740–1806)*

In 1775, during the American invasion, he took part in the defence of Fort Saint-Jean, on the Richelieu river. He was taken

prisoner and released in 1777. He became a colonel in the militia and a justice of the peace. Elected Member for Buckingham in 1792, he did not run again in the general election of 1796. He was a member of the Executive Council from 1794 until his death. He was the father of Antoine-Louis, elected Member of the House of Assembly of Lower Canada in 1804 and appointed to the Legislative Council in 1810, and of Jean-Baptiste, appointed a legislative councillor in 1832.

PIERRE-IGNACE AUBERT DE GASPÉ (1758–1823)

During the American invasion of 1775–1776, he took part in the defence of Québec City. He became a justice of the peace around 1787. In the War of 1812, he served in the militia and became a colonel in 1814. A Royalist, he was appointed to the Legislative Council of Lower Canada in 1812 on the recommendation of Jonathan Sewell. He was the uncle of Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, the author of *Les Anciens Canadiens*.



ROBERT CHRISTIE (1787–1856)

A lawyer, he founded the newspaper *Quebec Telegraph* in 1816. The following year, he became the Law Clerk in the House of Assembly of Lower Canada. Elected Member for Gaspé in 1827, he supported the Parti Bureaucrate. Sanctioned by the parliamentary majority for prompting non-renewal of the magistrate's salary of several Members opposed to Governor George Ramsay, he was expelled by the House in 1827, 1829, 1830, 1831 and 1832, but was re-elected each time in a by-election. After the Union, he was re-elected in Gaspé and sat as an anti-unionist until 1854. His name is engraved in the woodwork primarily for the quality of his historical works, compiled and published in six volumes under the title *A History of the Late Province of Lower Canada*.



FOUR NEW FIGURES

When the names of new historical figures are to be engraved in the Parliament Building's woodwork, it is essential that the individuals chosen be in line with those originally designated by Eugène-Étienne Taché.

On the first floor of the Parliament Building, a series of figures reflect the different political views opposing the members of the Parti Patriote and those of the Parti Bureaucrate at the time of Lower Canada. Moderate reformers do, however, stand out. Many of the men commemorated were loyal to British parliamentary institutions and others favoured the growth of the French Canadian nation. Members William Grant and Augustin-Norbert Morin as well as legislative councillors Thomas Dunn and Joseph-Octave Plessis were such men.

Taché's choices reflected his father's political values: Étienne-Pascal Taché was a Patriote who defended the French Canadians within the political institutions of his time. Also, as a backdrop, in response to Lord Durham, who advocated uniting Upper and Lower Canada, most of the political figures whose names Taché chose to have engraved in the woodwork opposed this constitutional formula.



BAnQ
CALL NUMBER: P560,S2,D1,P1539
Title: Étienne-Paschal Taché - [circa 1865]

WILLIAM GRANT (1744–1805)*

Born in Scotland, but fluent in French, he arrived in Québec City in 1759 at age 15 to deal in wholesale trade. He acquired land in and around Québec City, Montréal and the Lower St. Lawrence and married a Canadian woman in 1770. During the American invasion of 1775–1776, he took part in the defence of Québec City. Appointed to the Legislative Council in 1777, he supported the creation of an elective assembly. He was also Deputy Receiver General from 1777 to 1784. When the *Constitutional Act* of 1791 was passed, he became the principal organizer and president of the Constitutional Club, which promoted knowledge of the British constitution. He was elected Member for Upper Town Québec City in 1792, with the energetic support of Charles-Louis Tarieu de Lanaudière. Re-elected in 1796, he was defeated in 1800, then re-elected again in 1804. He always voted according to his convictions, generally siding with the British minority. Joseph Papineau, Member for Montréal, called Grant the strongest man in the Assembly, saying that his books and insight were extremely useful to his colleagues. When Lieutenant-Governor Alured Clarke requested that the Members adopt the first Standing Orders of the House of Assembly, Grant and Papineau were part of the special committee formed for that purpose. On February 22, 1805, during consideration of the prisons bill, which would ultimately divide the members of the Parti Canadien and those of the Parti Bureaucrate, Grant was the only British Member to vote with the Canadian parliamentary majority. He died in office in Québec City on October 5, 1805 at age 61 years and 3 months.



AUGUSTIN-NORBERT MORIN (1803–1865)

A journalist at *Le Canadien*, he began studying law in 1823 with Denis-Benjamin Viger in Montréal, where he founded the newspaper *La Minerve* in 1826. He was called to the bar in 1828. Elected Member for Bellechasse in 1830, he was a Parti Patriote supporter. In 1834, he travelled with Viger to Great Britain to present and defend the 92 Resolutions, which he had helped draft. At first a moderate, then a radical (although by nature he preferred negotiation to confrontation), he led the 1837 uprising in Québec City. Imprisoned for high treason on October 28, 1839, he was released shortly thereafter. After the Union, in 1841, he was elected Member for Nicolet. An anti-unionist, he was part of the Groupe canadien-français with Étienne Parent and John Neilson. He resigned in 1842 to be appointed a judge and was re-elected the same year, becoming a member of the Baldwin-LaFontaine ministry. The place names Val-Morin, Sainte-Adèle (Adèle was his wife's name) and Morin-Heights remind us that, as Commissioner of Crown Lands, he was actively involved in founding new villages. A reformer, he was elected Speaker of the House in 1848. Shortly after he was elected, Governor James Bruce, Earl of Elgin, recognized responsible government. From 1851 to 1854, he formed a first ministry with Francis Hincks and, from 1854 to 1855, a second one with Allan Napier MacNab. After retiring, he sat on the commission created to codify the civil laws of Lower Canada, from 1859 until his death.



THOMAS DUNN (1729–1818)*

Born in England, he settled in Québec City in 1760 and married a Canadian woman in 1783. He and William Grant were partners in the fur trade and he invested in fisheries and land. Appointed a justice of the peace in 1764, he was also a member of the Quebec Council from 1764 to 1775 and Acting Receiver General from 1770 to 1777. After the *Quebec Act* was passed, he was a member of the Executive Council and Legislative Council of the Province of Québec, from 1775 to 1791. A level-headed man, Dunn never adopted a partisan position in the struggles opposing the French Party and the British Party. The eldest to sit on the Executive Council and Legislative Council of Lower Canada, he served from 1792 until his death. He was Deputy President of the Legislative Council five times: in 1793–1794, 1794–1802, 1805–1806, 1808–1809 and 1811–1814. From 1805 to 1807 and in 1811, as civil administrator of Lower Canada in the absence of the Governor, he was head of the colonial executive, the highest position a resident of the colony could aspire to. As always, he avoided dramatic gestures and remained above the fray when intense conflict opposed the *Parti Canadien* and the *Parti Bureaucrate* in the House of Assembly. In 1806, still as civil administrator, he took the initiative to swear in Monseigneur Joseph-Octave Plessis as Bishop of Québec City, thus avoiding putting the Catholic Church under Royal authority.



JOSEPH-OCTAVE PLESSIS (1763-1825)

The son of a Montréal blacksmith, he studied at the Petit Séminaire de Québec from 1778 to 1780. Ordained in 1786, he was appointed a parish priest in Québec City in 1792. True to the Loyalist views of Monseigneur Jean-Olivier Briand, he learned to deal and negotiate with the British political powers that be and, playing the loyalty card, negotiated respect of religious rights and freedoms in return. A skilled diplomat, he convinced the British authorities that the stability of civil authorities required the support of the Catholic Church at a time when the executive branch was worried about the Church's paltry influence over the Canadian people. In 1805, he received advice from William Grant in his negotiations with Jonathan Sewell and Governor Robert Shore Milnes regarding legal recognition of the title and office of Catholic Bishop of Québec. With the complicity of Thomas Dunn, then civil administrator of Lower Canada, in 1806, he was sworn in, unconditionally, as Québec City's Catholic Bishop. During the parliamentary crisis of 1810, Monseigneur Plessis remained true to the Loyalists. In the face of Governor James Craig's intransigence, the Bishop's strategy was again one of passive resistance: while he supported the Government, he refused to give it a hold over the Church. He was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1817, where he was sworn in the following year. In the face of the political polarization of the times, he showed independence as a member of the Council but declared that he opposed the planned union in 1822. In 1819, he rose to the rank of Archbishop of Québec and was made a count and assistant to the papal throne.



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