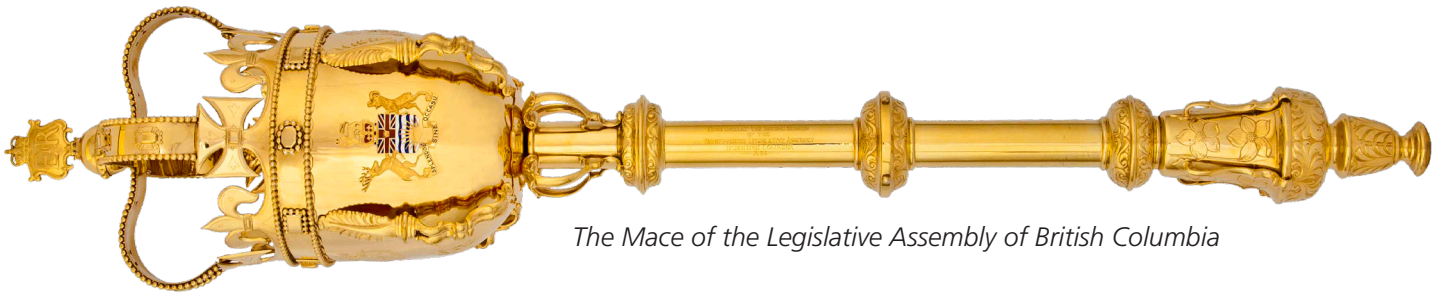


# THE MACE



*The Mace of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia*

Parliamentary maces are now a symbol of the authority of the Legislative Assembly (also known as the House). In 1279, King Edward I formed a bodyguard of 20 Sergeants-at-Arms. These men protected the King and carried an elaborate battle-mace, both as a weapon and as a badge of office and authority, displaying the royal insignia. In an age when most people could not read, the Sergeant-at-Arms could arrest individuals by showing the royal insignia on their mace. In 1415, after repeated requests from the House of Commons, King Charles I appointed Nicholas Maudit to serve as the Sergeant-at-Arms for the House of Commons. By the 17th century, the mace was almost entirely a ceremonial object, and its function influenced its form. The menacing hardware was replaced with a decorated orb or a bowl.

Today, the Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for the care and custody of the Mace and carries it to lead the Speaker in the Speaker's Procession at the opening and closing of each day's sittings of the House. It must be present upon the Clerks' Table for the House to conduct its business.

Since British Columbia became a province of Canada in 1871, there have been three successive maces in the Legislative Assembly. The first was used from 1872 to 1897; it was made by Mr. C. Bunting in gilded, carved wood, with a carved crown and Grecian cross. The second mace was first used on February 10th, 1898, at the opening of the present Parliament Buildings and was made of brass by the Winslow Brothers of Chicago.

The third and current mace of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia was adopted in 1954. It was entirely handmade by Jefferies & Company, Victoria silversmiths, from British Columbia silver, plated with 24 carat gold, weighing five kilograms (11 pounds). The traditional design has a long shaft topped by a deep bowl surmounted by a representation of St. Edward's Crown and the Royal Cypher. The bowl bears the coats of arms of Canada and British Columbia, and four embossed scenes depicting the province's forestry, fishing, farming, and mining industries. These scenes are similar to the paintings in the Upper Rotunda of the Parliament Buildings.



*The Legislative Assembly's first (left) and second (right) maces*

When the Legislative Assembly is sitting, the Sergeant-at-Arms or a deputy is always present in the Legislative Chamber and acts on the instructions of the Speaker in the event of any disorder in the Chamber, the lobbies and corridors, or the public galleries. Under the authority of the Legislative Assembly, the Sergeant-at-Arms may take into custody any person who disrupts the business of the House.

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