

# MINNIE H. BOWEN'S

Canada

**Student's Workbook**  
For elementary school



## ACTIVITY 1

### WHO WAS MINNIE H. BOWEN?

1. The work of a historian consists in analyzing certain documents to interpret events that took place in the past. Like a detective, the historian looks for clues in these documents to better understand an event, a society, the life of an individual, etc.

/ **Now, it is your turn to play detective and to try to discover who Minnie H. Bowen was.**

/ **The various documents that you must analyze come from her personal archives.**

*Here are a few steps to follow to help you analyze the documents*

#### STEP 1

Read (observe and identify important information)

/ Who? What? Where? When?

#### STEP 2

Interrogate the document

/ Who was its author? Is this individual an actor of the events that are recounted in the document, or merely a witness to them?

/ To whom was this document destined? Why was it written?

// *What are the main themes covered in this text?*

*What is its main message?*

#### STEP 3

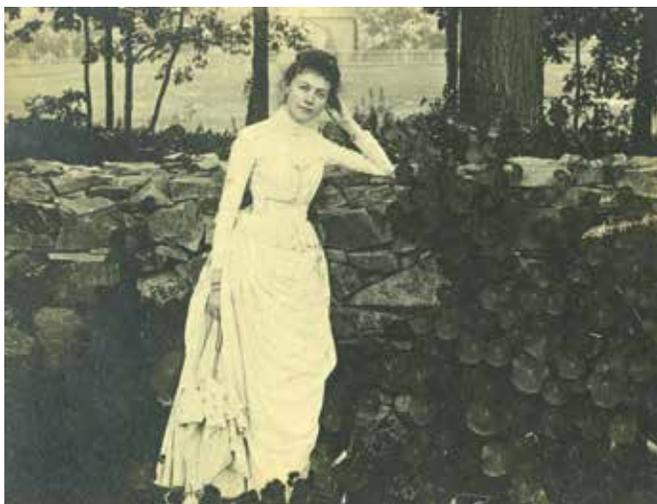
Interpretation

/ What is the meaning of the text's content, of its themes?

// *What is the purpose of this text? What questions does it serve to answer? To which other documents is it related?*

**Minnie H. Bowen,**

Circa 1880



Eastern Townships Resource Centre / Minnie Hollowell Bowen fonds / P006-003-005-002

**Minnie H. Bowen with her daughter, Rose Bowen**

Photographer: H. Blanchard, Sherbrooke

Circa 1894



Eastern Townships Resource Centre / Minnie Hollowell Bowen fonds / P006-003-005-004

Minnie H. Bowen,  
Photographer: S. H. Parsons, St. John's, Newfoundland  
Circa 1880



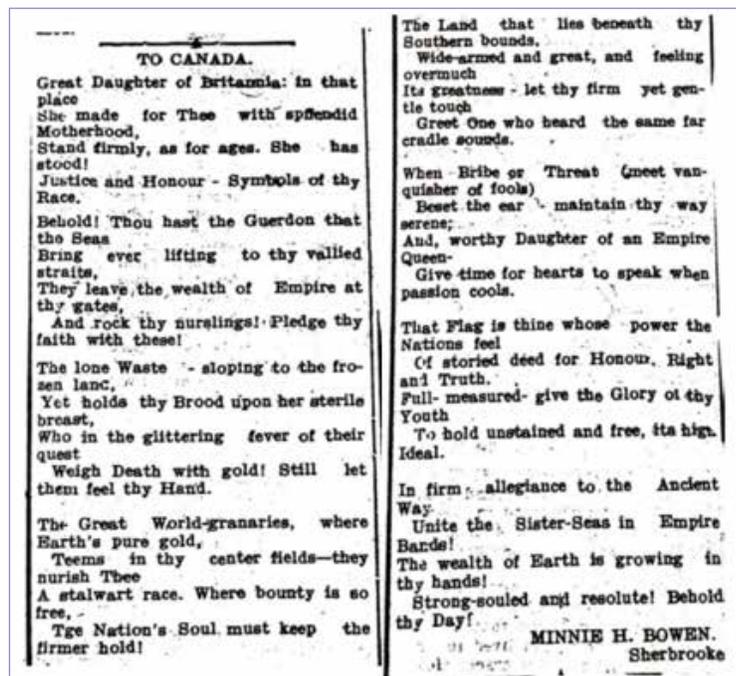
Eastern Townships Resource Centre / Minnie Hallowell Bowen fonds / P006-003-005-001

Minnie H. Bowen  
 Photographer: Gustafson, Sherbrooke  
 Circa 1930



Eastern Townships Resource Centre / Minnie Hallowell  
 Bowen fonds / P006-003-005\_003\_141

Article du Sherbrooke Daily Record



Eastern Townships Resource Centre / CA E001 P006-001

Now that you have decoded the images, try to answer the following questions in order to discover who Minnie H. Bowen was.

## ACTIVITY 2

- / Where does this woman come from? Are there clues in the photographs?
- / To what social group does she belong?  
In your opinion, is she
  - A. a nun?
  - B. a bourgeois woman?
  - C. a rural citizen?
  - D. a workingclass woman?
- / Do we have any clues pertaining to her mother tongue, her religion, or her culture?
- / What do you think her daily life was like?
- / Do you think this woman had the same rights her husband had?
- / What can we learn about Minnie H. Bowen when reading the poem entitled *To Canada*?



Now that you have tried to understand who Minnie H. Bowen was, read the following text to learn more.

## INVOLVEMENT OF AN ANGLOPHONE WOMAN

Minnie Hallowell Bowen was born in Sherbrooke on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1861. She was the daughter of lawyer John Hallowell and of Helen Maria Clark. In 1890, she married Cecil Hale Bowen, son of George Frederick Bowen. She has written and published six volumes of poetry; she also authored several literary texts that were published in various newspapers and magazines. She died in Quebec City in 1942.

Within the Anglophone communities at this time, there were several movements around which citizens

gathered. Feminine associations were part of these movements. Certain associations fought for women's voting rights, others were meant to help widows, children and the poor, etc. Minnie H. Bowen, a prominent woman of the Anglophone community, was an active participant in several of these associations (Women's Auxiliary Missionary Society, the Sherbrooke Patriotic Association, the Imperial Order Daughter of the Empire, the Women's Conservative Association, the Canadian Authors' Association, and the Sherbrooke Choral Society).

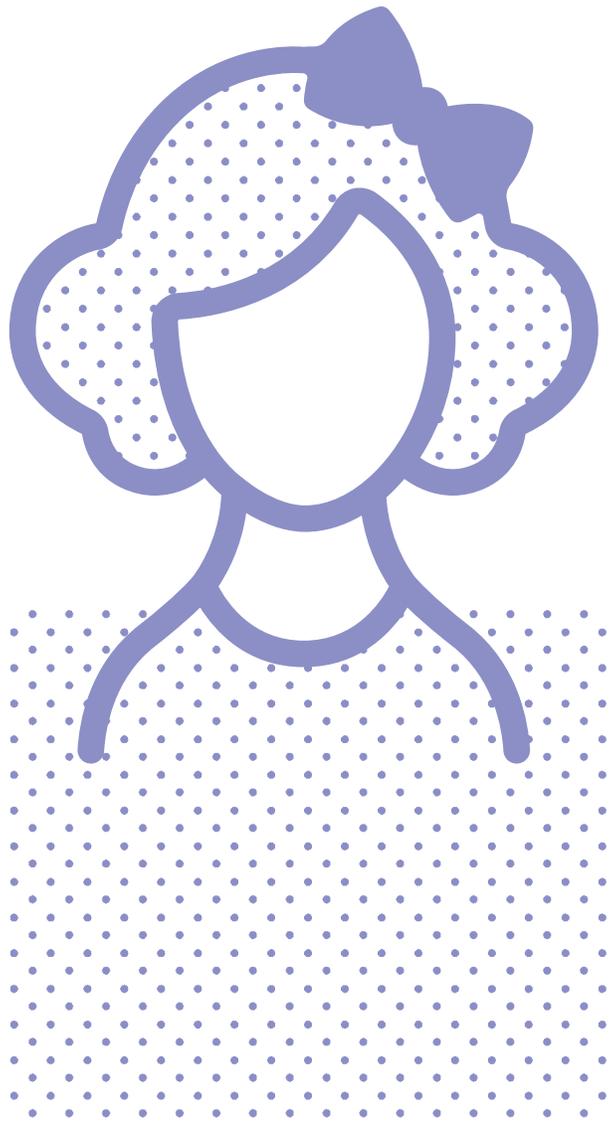
### ACTIVITY 2

## Minnie H. Bowen and the Canadian Flag

Here is an article that Minnie H. Bowen wrote about a flag that she had designed. She hoped it would become Canada's official flag.

"It is a simple, clear design, easily distinguished, not to be mistaken for any other. It does not exalt any section or race, but represents the whole. It is rich in color, striking in effect and in beauty would rank near the white ensign and the Union Jack. It does not go to the animal or vegetable kingdom for appeal, nor to the stars nor to race, with its precious inheritance of ideals, language and blood. These are lesser things. It appeals by the sign, which is the highest revelation of the spiritual world, devoted sacrifice. It would represent the heroic sacrifices by which Canada's history was made. First, those of the French explorers, settlers and missionaries, who, under their white banner, raised the cross in this land, followed by the sacrifices of all our pioneers, English, Scottish and Irish, and other races. By steadfastness, courage and devotion, these men and women gave Canada her soul."

Article published in *The Ottawa Evening Journal*, September 25, 1930



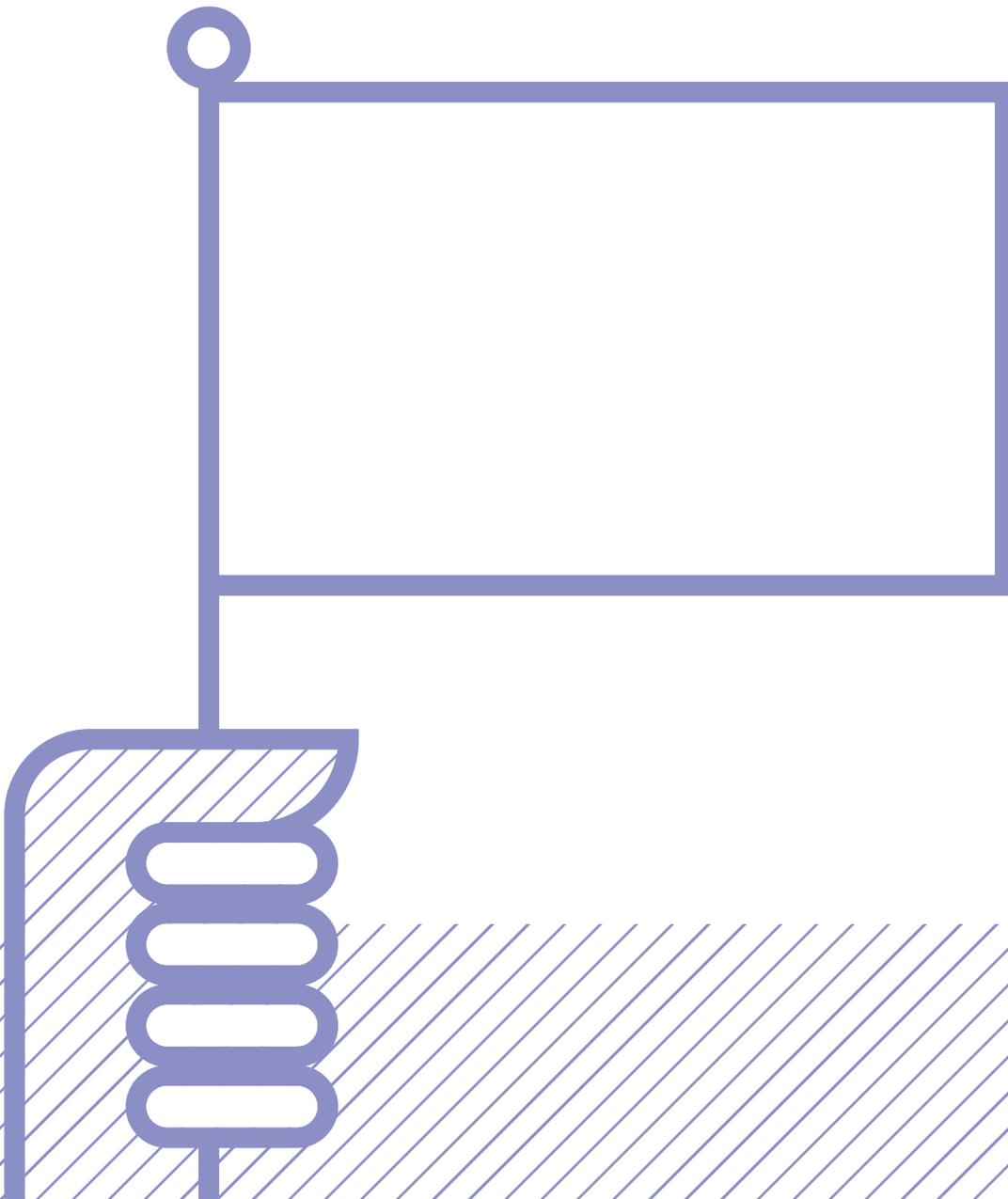
### ACTIVITY 3

## YOUR OWN CANADIAN FLAG

Minnie H. Bowen died in 1942, years before the issue of the Canadian flag was finally settled. Even though her flag was not chosen to become Canada's emblem, it flew throughout the 1930s at the building that housed the Sherbrooke Daily Record, where the public was invited to comment and share its opinions on the flag.

**It is now your turn to design your own Canadian flag. You must use symbols (images, colours, shapes) that best represent, in your opinion, nineteenth-century Canada.**

1. Include two cultural elements (associated with a particular group or with the population as a whole)
2. Include one territorial element (resources, topography, hydrography)
3. Explain why you chose the elements that adorn your flag.





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