

# TEN: THE GREAT ELECTION IN MISSINABA COUNTY

## DEEPER UNDERSTANDING

### **“KING GEORGE HAD SENT OUT A WRIT”: WHEN AN ELECTION IS CALLED IN CANADA**

When a federal election is called, it is often said that the writ is dropped. “Writ” refers to the formal written order specifying the candidate nomination deadline and the day of the election. Writs are signed by the Governor General and sent to the returning officer of every constituency in the country. After the election, the returning officer writes the name of the winning candidate on the back of the writ and returns it to the Chief Electoral Officer. So unlike the saying, no writs are actually dropped when an election is called. This makes “drop the writ” an idiom. Its origin is believed to come from the statement “draw up the writ.”

1. Writs offer no reason for an election other than saying that a new parliament is to be elected. Why would it say in *Sunshine Sketches* that King George “sent out a writ or command for Missinaba County to elect for him some other person than John Henry Bagshaw because he no longer had confidence in him” (158)?