



Saint John, New Brunswick

Population Rank: Canada. . . . 32
Province. . . . 2

Proportions: 1:2 (usage)

Adopted: Unknown



DESIGN: The flag of the City of Saint John has a white field with the city's coat of arms in the centre, nearly the full height of the flag. The elaborate shield with scrolled edges is divided into four quarters by thick black lines. The first quarter is red with a fish over a barrel and four smaller fish positioned two on each side of the barrel, all in yellow. The second quarter is blue, with a sun over a line of six stylized evergreens, descending in size from left to right, all in yellow. The third quarter is blue with a 19th-century sailing ship and wavy lines below, all in yellow. The fourth quarter is red with two beavers (*Castor canadensis*) in yellow, the upper one larger. A crown in red and yellow, with black and white details, is above the shield, which is flanked by two moose (*Alces alces*) in yellow, standing upright. On a ribbon at the base, in blue outlined in yellow, appears **O FORTUNATI QUORUM JAM MOENIA SURGUNT** in yellow serified letters outlined in black, two words on each of three sections.

SYMBOLISM: The city's documentation interprets the arms: *St. Edward's Crown: The crown surmounting the crest represents the continued loyalty to the*

monarchy, exhibited by the exile of the United Empire Loyalists in 1783 and the subsequent granting of a Royal Charter to the city [the “exile” refers to those who had lost their homes in the newly-independent United States.] The crown is recognized in the field of heraldry as St. Edward’s Crown and is proper to the time it was used in the design of the official seal of Saint John. *Dexter Supporter:* Saint John’s Corporate Seal originally had an “Elk” as its supporters due to the abundance of elk [*Cervus canadensis*] in this region. Over time the elk in this region have become extinct and our seal has changed accordingly. We have seen the “Deer” make a brief appearance and today the “Moose” has emerged as the predominant figure on our seal. *Dexter Chief:* Fishing was a major export in Saint John—dried and salted fish were sent regularly to the West Indies. The coopering of barrels for local use and the export of staves, heads, and hoops was also an active industry. The Royal Charter by which Saint John was incorporated was very explicit as to the control of the fisheries and the quality inspection for coopers. *Dexter Base:* Saint John was well known as a shipping port and a shipbuilding centre. During the mid-nineteenth century Saint John was the fourth largest port of registry in the British Empire. *Sinister Chief:* This represents the large forests which provided New Brunswick with a resource that even today provides a major part of our economic base. *Sinister Base:* Beaver pelts were a very important trading item at the original founding of the city and many years previously. The beavers were also thought of as allegorical figures to describe the industry and enterprise of the early settlers. *[Latin] Motto Scroll:* O Fortunati Quorum Jam Moenia Surgunt, which has been translated two ways: “O Fortunate Ones Whose Walls Are Now Rising” and “O Happy They, Whose Promised Walls Already Rise”.

HOW SELECTED: According to city documentation concerning the seal, Saint John was the first incorporated city in Canada. The 1785 charter incorporating Saint John made provisions for a seal. At the common council’s second meeting, in May 1785, Mayor Gabriel Ludlow was “requested to report at the next meeting a proper device and inscription for the City Seal”. Three days later, Mayor Ludlow presented a design and inscription for the seal. One year later, on 1 July 1786, the mayor presented “a seal for the common council of the said City” designed by Ward Chipman, Saint John’s first recorder. It cost the city 26 pounds, 16 shillings and has served Saint John as the official corporate seal ever since.

DESIGNER: Unknown. Ward Chipman designed the “seal”.



MORE ABOUT THE FLAG: The city has used several variants of the flag. They vary in their depiction of the crown, the shape of the shield, the number of ships, the colour of the supporters, and the colour of the lettering on the ribbon. One version, used only as a table flag, adds **SAINT JOHN** on the lower left and **NEW BRUNSWICK** on the lower right, in red.

