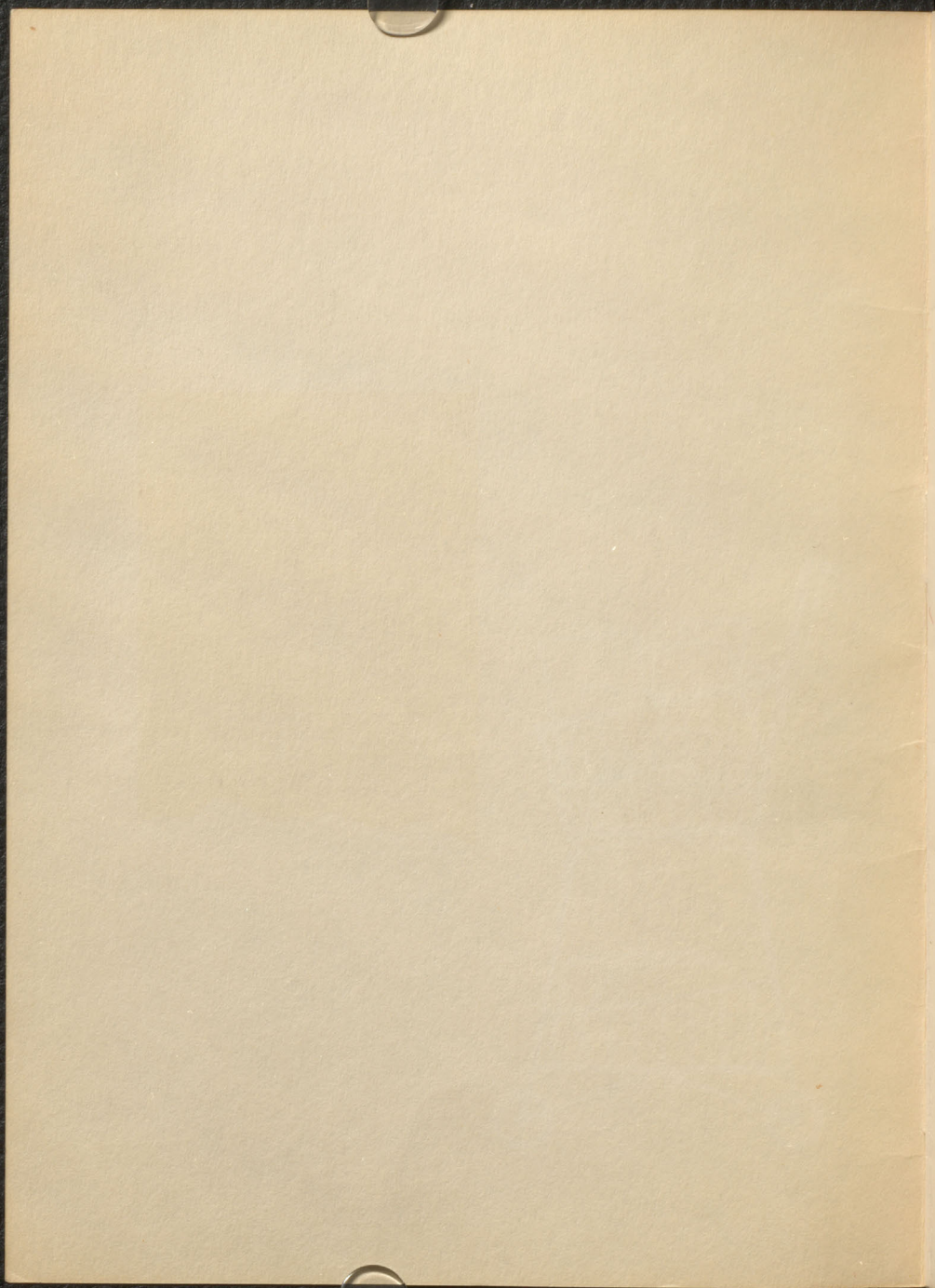


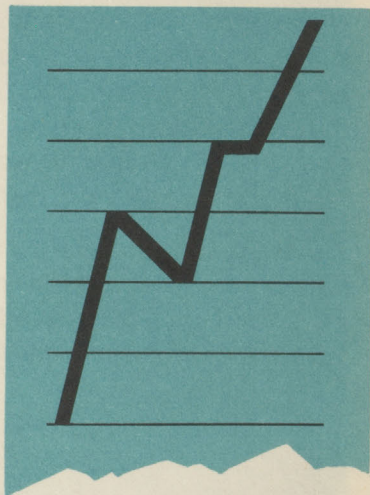
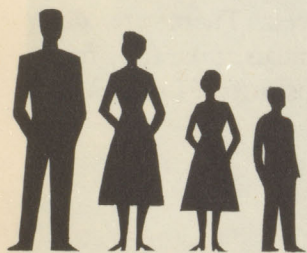
our food

costs



CANADA
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The average Canadian housewife complains about the size of her grocery bill — and with reason. Food prices have more than doubled in the past 20 years. The basket of food illustrated in Figure 1 cost \$25 in 1958. During the 1935-39 period, it would have cost \$10 and in 1948-50 it would have cost \$20.

The basket contains the amount of food a family of four would purchase in one week. There are dairy products, eggs, bakery products, meats, fats, fish, fruits, vegetables and other foods that most urban families buy.

COST OF WEEK'S FOOD FOR FAMILY OF FOUR

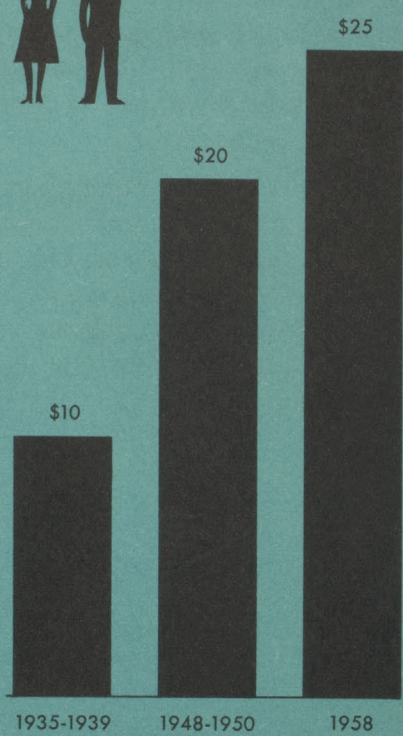
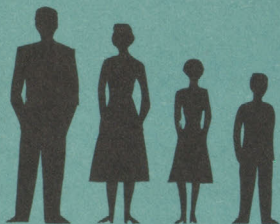


Figure 1

But while Mrs. Housewife spends more money shopping, she has more of it available to her. Incomes have more than tripled in the past 20 years. Food is purchased from "take-home pay"—the amount left after deductions are made for income tax, pension and unemployment insurance.

When all Canadian families are considered together, "disposable income" means the same as take-home pay. It includes the baby bonus, old age pension and other such items of income. Figure 2 illustrates what has happened to disposable income per person. Like food prices, it has increased sharply.

DISPOSABLE INCOME PER PERSON PER YEAR
1935-39; 1948-50; and 1957

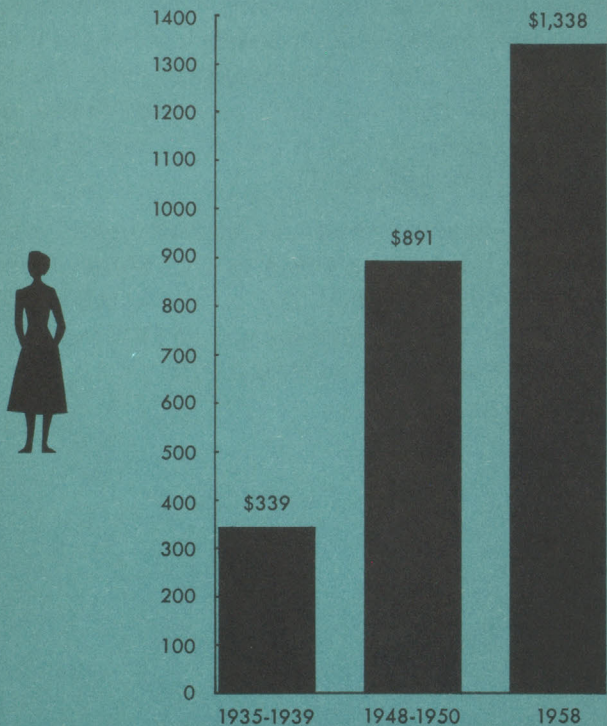


Figure 2

While food prices and incomes have both increased, incomes have led the way. If people had bought the same food in 1935-39 as they do today, a family of four would have received only two-thirds as much for a week's disposable income — or 2.6 baskets, compared with 4.1 baskets in 1958 (Figure 3).

This estimate is based on the assumption that the disposable income for a family of four is four times that of the average individual. To arrive at the per capita figure, the total disposable income of all Canadians was divided by the total population.

**BASKETS OF FOOD WHICH COULD BE BOUGHT WITH ONE WEEK'S INCOME
FOR AN AVERAGE FAMILY**

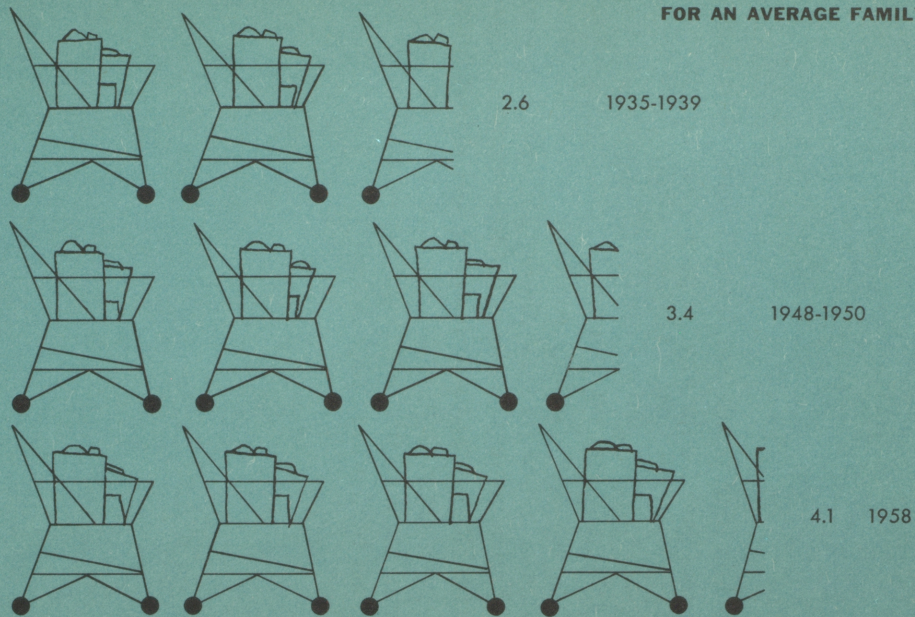


Figure 3

Actually, the food basket has changed considerably. Canadians spent about a quarter of their income on food in 1935 and still do (Figure 4). As income increased, there was more money available for food. Of every dollar of added income, almost 25 cents has gone for food. Part of this has been used for higher prices, part for better food, and part for more services with food.

PERCENTAGE OF DISPOSABLE INCOME SPENT ON FOOD 1935-1957

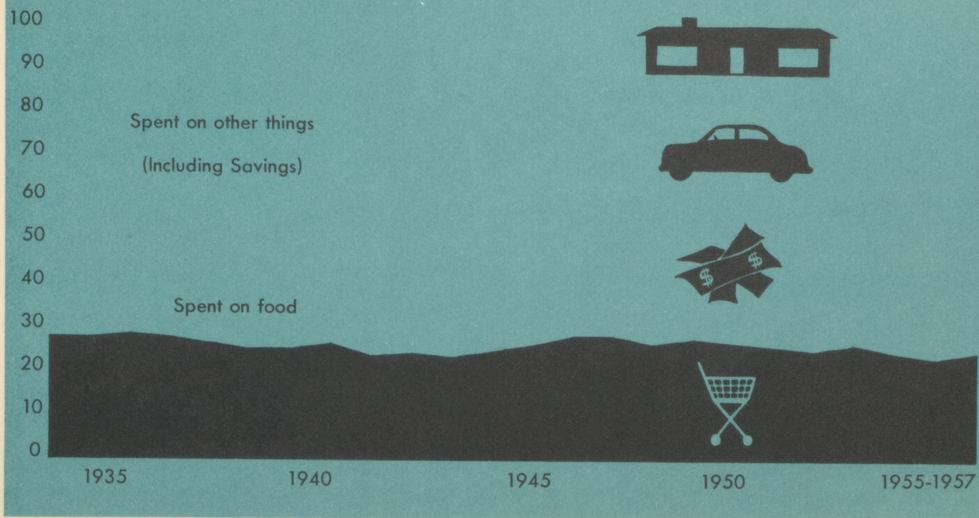


Figure 4

The Canadian diet has changed considerably since 1935-39 (Figure 5). Per capita consumption of fruits, tomatoes, most vegetables, meats and poultry has shown a marked increase. Decline in consumption of grain products and potatoes has been equally sharp. Changes involving other major foods like butter and margarine, fluid whole milk, eggs and sugar, have been less noticeable.

Tastes have taken an *expensive turn*. Fruits, vegetables and meat cost more than grain products and potatoes relative to the amount of food energy. The diet has improved in nutritive value, and more fruit, vegetables and meat mean more appealing, attractive meals.

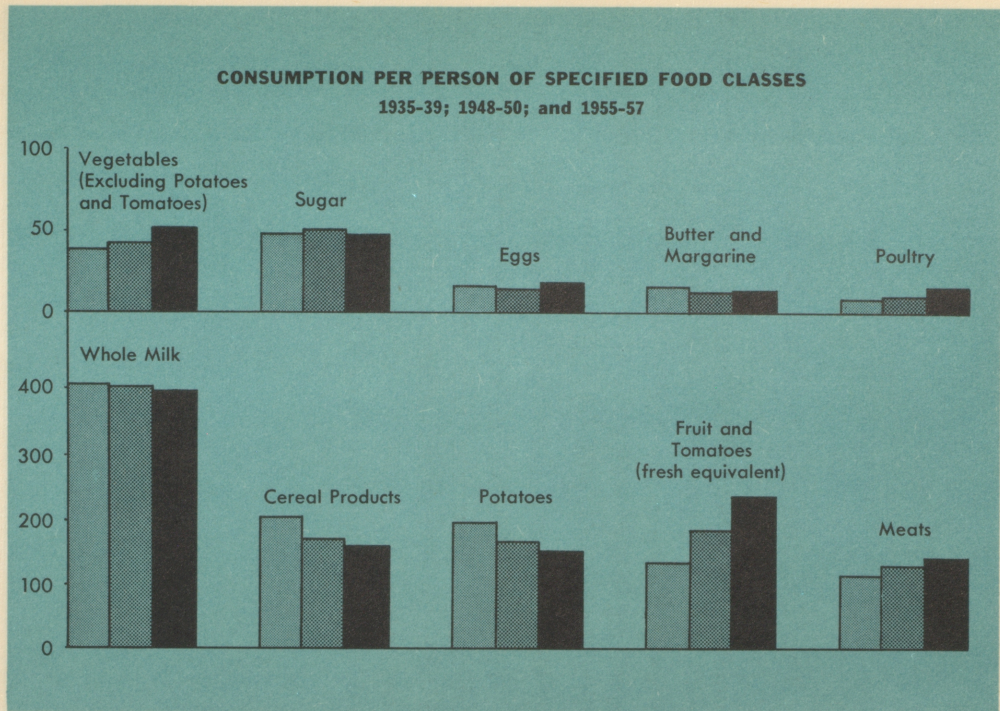


Figure 5

The worker may still ask: "Can I buy as much food with an hour's work now as I could 10 years ago". In Figures 6 and 7, the quantities of various foods which could be bought with an hour's wages in manufacturing industries in 1949 and 1958 are illustrated.

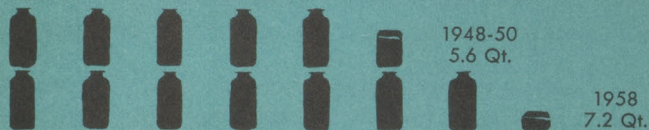
Manufacturing industries were used for this comparison because they employ a large percentage of wage earners in big cities, where data are available on food prices. In small urban centers, mining and lumbering

QUANTITIES OF SPECIFIC FOOD WHICH COULD BE BOUGHT WITH ONE HOUR'S WAGES IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, 1948-50 and 1957

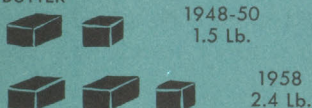
BREAD



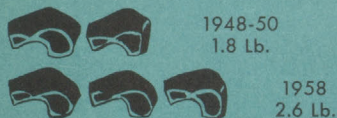
MILK



BUTTER



PORK



BEEF



Figure 6

communities, food prices probably have followed the same trend, but may be at lower or higher levels depending on transportation costs and other circumstances.

The foods in Figure 6 and 7 were selected as representative in the food budget. It will be noted that the quantity which an hour's wage will buy has increased for all of them. Similar results would be obtained for most other foods.

**QUANTITIES OF SPECIFIC FOOD WHICH COULD BE
BOUGHT WITH ONE HOUR'S WAGES IN MANUFACTURING
INDUSTRIES, 1948-50 and 1957**

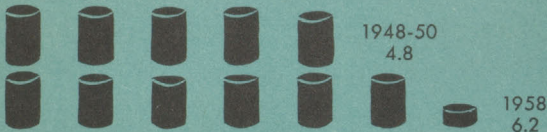
PEACHES



PEAS



TOMATOES



EGGS



POTATOES

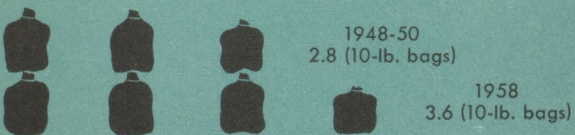
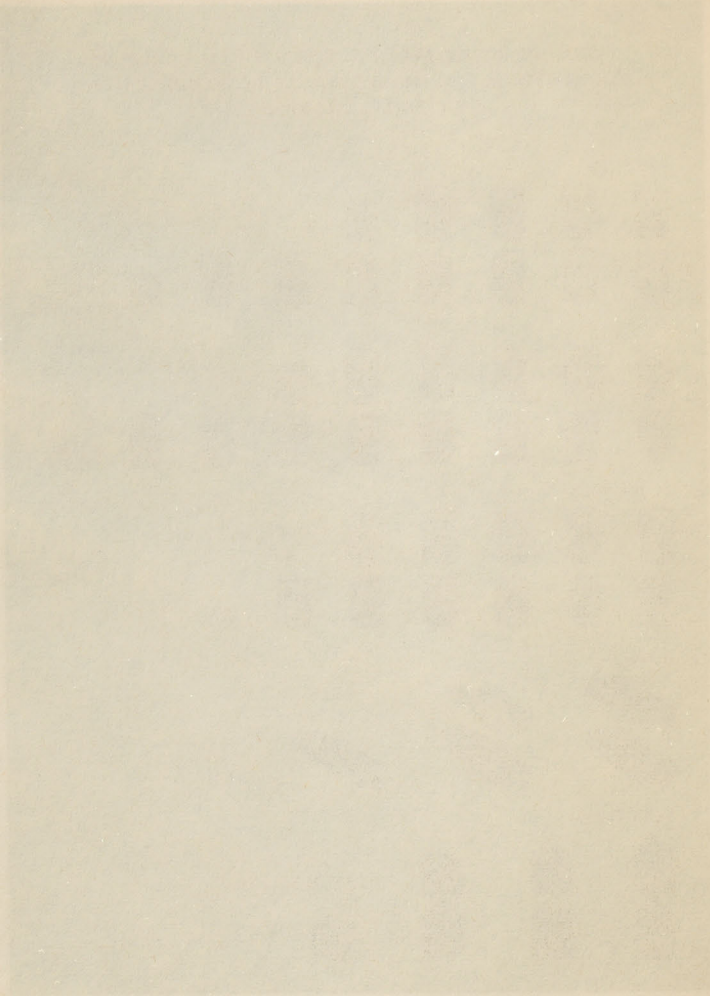
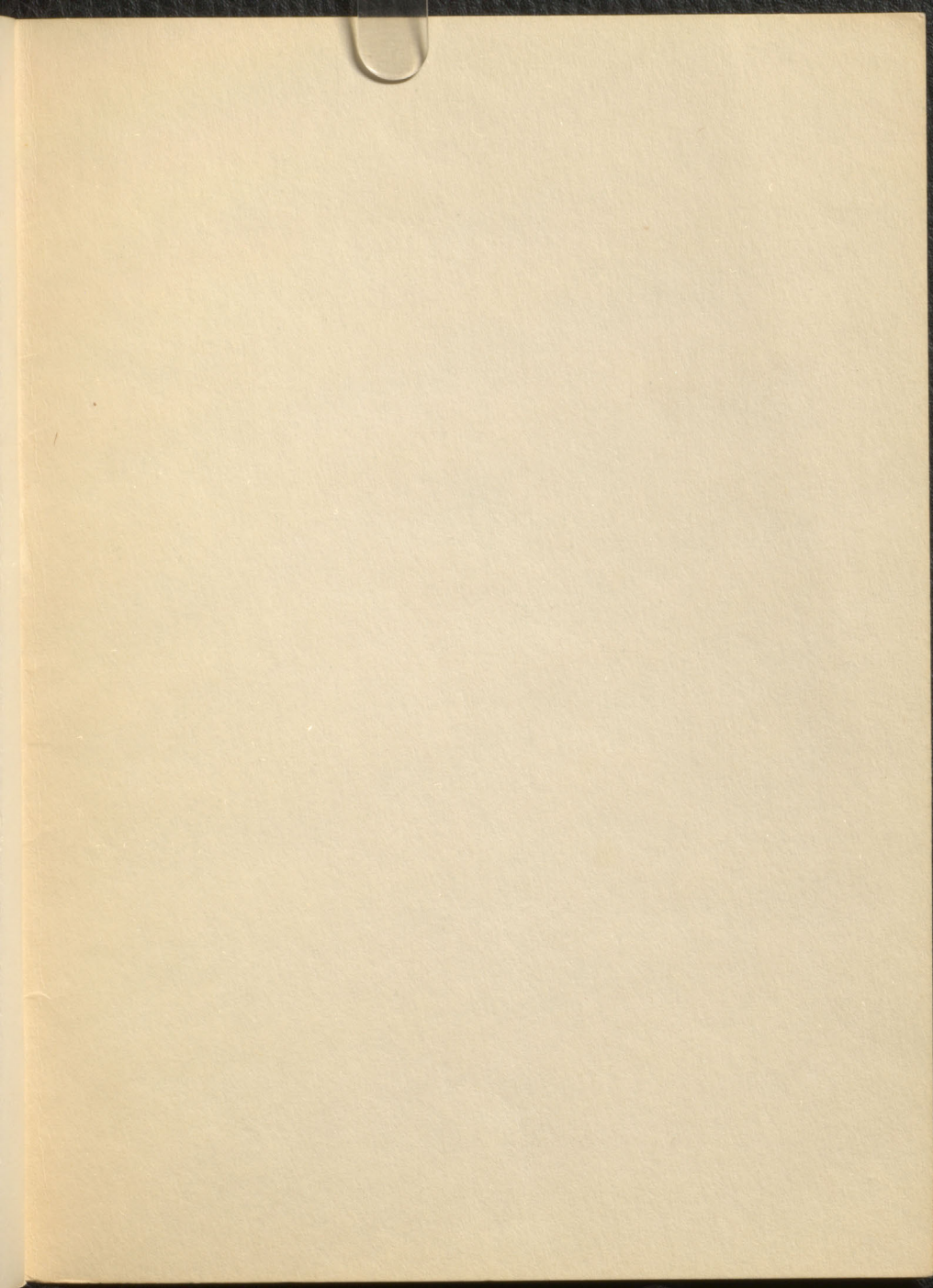


Figure 7



THE QUEEN'S PRINTER AND CONTROLLER OF STATIONERY
OTTAWA, 1959
CAT. No. A22-3259



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