

WHAT CAUSED THE MASS MIGRATION OF LOYALISTS?

Have you ever moved to a different city or country? It can be very challenging to start a new life somewhere. There are new places to get used to and new friends to make. There is often a feeling of sadness when leaving something behind. The settlers who came to what became Canada from the **Thirteen Colonies**, the 13 British colonies on North America's East Coast, experienced many of the same challenges.

In the early 1770s, the Thirteen Colonies were under British control. Some settlers living there wanted to separate from Britain, while others wanted to remain under British control. The **Loyalists** were settlers who were loyal to Britain and supported British rule. In 1775, the American Revolution broke out between the British and the colonists who opposed their rule. Many Loyalists chose or were forced to leave the Thirteen Colonies and settle elsewhere. This migration increased throughout the war and after the war ended. What might some aspects of the migration have looked like? Examine **Figure 4.1**, which depicts a Loyalist encampment, or campsite, and Loyalist settlers near Prescott, Ontario. Can you predict what challenges the Loyalists would have faced when they first arrived at this encampment?



Thirteen Colonies the 13 British colonies on the east coast of North America, south of Nova Scotia, which eventually joined together to form the United States of America

Loyalist a person living in the Thirteen Colonies who remained loyal to Britain during the American Revolution

FIGURE 4.1 This watercolour entitled *Encampment of the Loyalists in Johnstown*, a new settlement on the banks of the River St. Lawrence in Canada West was originally painted by James Peachey on June 6, 1784. This is a reproduction by J.R. Simpson in 1925. **Analyze:** How do you think these Loyalists felt arriving in this type of settlement?

PRE-LOYALISTS: NEW ENGLAND PLANTERS

New England a region in present-day northeastern United States, made up of the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont

Planter a British settler (colonist) from New England who migrated to Atlantic Canada between 1759 and 1774

Even before the American Revolution, settlers loyal to Britain were migrating north to the land known today as Canada. After the fall of Louisbourg and the Acadian Expulsion, many farms and lands were available in Nova Scotia, which included present-day New Brunswick. In the late autumn of 1758, the British government began posting newspaper ads throughout **New England**, an area located today in the northeastern United States. These ads targeted **Planters**, New England colonists who had “planted” a new England on North America's Atlantic coast. Read the ad in **Figure 4.2**. Why do you think the British government was willing to offer land to the Planters instead of First Nations or Canadiens?

Province of the }
Massachusetts-Bay, } Boston, Octob. 31, 1758,
} **THE** following Proclamation being published in Nova-Scotia, a
transmitted to this Government, was read in Council, and ordered
to be published in this Province. **THO. CLARKE, D. Secy**

By His EXCELLENCY
CHARLES LAWRENCE, Esq;
Captain-General and Governor in Chief in and over His Maje.
Province of Nova-Scotia, or Acadia, in America, Vice Admiral
the same, &c. &c.

A P R O C L A M A T I O N.

WHEREAS by the late Success of His Majesty's Arms in the Reduction
of Cape Breton, and its Dependencies, as also by the Demolition of
entire Destruction of Gaspee, Miramichi, and other French Settle-
ments, situated on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and on St. John's River
the Bay of Fundy, the Enemy, who have formerly disturbed and harass'd
the Province of Nova Scotia, and much obstructed its Progress, have
been compelled to retire and take Refuge in Canada, a favourable Opportunity
now presents for the peopling and cultivating, as well the Lands vacated by
the French, as every other Part of this valuable Province;

I HAVE therefore thought fit, with the Advice of His Majesty's
Council to issue this Proclamation, declaring that I shall be ready
to receive any Proposals that may be hereafter made to me, for effectually
settling the said vacated, or any other Lands, within the Province
aforesaid: A Description whereof, and of the Advantages arising from
their peculiar Nature and Situation, I have ordered to be published
with this Proclamation.

Given at the Council-Chamber at Halifax, this Twelfth Day of October
1758, and in the 32d Year of His Majesty's Reign.

By His Excellency's Command, with
the Advice of His Majesty's Council, **Chas. Lawrence.**
JNO. DUPONT, Sec: Conc:
GOD Save the KING.

... a favourable Opportunity now presents for the peopling and cultivating, as well the Lands vacated by the French, as every other Part of this valuable Province ... upwards of One Hundred Thousand Acres of Internal Plow-Lands, producing Wheat, Rye, Barley, Oats, Hemp, Flax, &c. These have been cultivated for more than a Hundred Years past, and never fail of Crops, nor need manuring...

FIGURE 4.2 This proclamation was posted in the *Boston Evening Post* in October 1758, shortly after the fall of Louisbourg. **Analyze:** What skills would the Planters need to live successfully on these new lands?

PURSUIING LAND OWNERSHIP

pull factor a social, political, economic, or environmental benefit that draws migrants to an area

push factor a social, political, economic, or environmental force that drives migrants out of an area

land grant an area of land given by the government in exchange for settling the land

The chance to own land was the main **pull factor**, or draw, for the Planters. Land ownership gave people more economic advantages in life. For example, they could pass down land to their children. What was the main **push factor**, or force that drives away, behind the Planter migration? New England had become crowded, and settlers were eager to acquire more land. To take advantage of the available **land grants**, land given to settlers by the government, the Planters had to endure a difficult journey. They also had to resist threats from the French and their First Nations allies. Between 1760 and 1768, approximately 8000 Planters accepted the government's offer of land in Nova Scotia and what would become New Brunswick. The British government was eager to have loyal Protestant settlers take over these lands in order to increase Britain's territory and wealth. The Planters were among the first English-speaking immigrants. They built communities, loyal to Britain, all over the Maritimes.

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

After the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763, tensions grew between some British colonists and the British government. To cover the high costs of supporting the colonies, the British government began to charge colonists taxes on goods from Britain, such as sugar and stamps. Many colonists protested having to pay more taxes.

Some colonists felt that the British government was making decisions that affected their lives without consulting them first. Many colonists refused to obey laws that were created without their input. They wanted their voices and rights to be represented in the British government—they wanted **representation**. Their motto became “no taxation without representation.”

THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

On December 16, 1773, British ships carrying tea from the East India Company arrived in the Boston harbour. A group of protestors, some disguised as First Nations people, seized the ships and dumped all the tea into the water. This event has become known as the Boston Tea Party. Examine **Figure 4.3**. Why do you think the colonists are dumping the tea?

Earlier that year, on April 27, 1773, the British government introduced the Tea Act. The Tea Act allowed only the British tea company, the East India Company, to pay lower taxes on tea. This meant that the company could sell tea to the colonies at lower prices. Colonial tea merchants could not compete with these lower prices. When the British ships arrived in Boston in December, stocked with British tea, the colonists decided to protest. The Boston Tea Party triggered a series of events that led to the start of the American Revolution in 1775.

representation the act of speaking or acting on behalf of an individual or group

How do you think the British government would have reacted to this event?

FIGURE 4.3 This is an 1846 lithograph by Nathaniel Currier entitled *The Destruction of Tea at Boston Harbor*. A lithograph is a print that is a copy of an original painting. **Analyze:** Why do you think the protestors disguised themselves as First Nations people?



LOYALISTS VERSUS PATRIOTS

The settlers in the Thirteen Colonies were deeply divided over their loyalty to Britain. Many were tired of paying taxes to the faraway British King and getting little in return. Some settlers wanted to break free from Britain and create their own country. They called themselves **Patriots**. The British government saw the Patriots as rebels, guilty of **treason**, or betrayal. On the other hand, Loyalists wanted to remain British citizens because they did not believe the Patriots could create a strong country. Some believed that the King was the true leader, while others wanted to keep their business and political ties with Britain. In addition, there were settlers who wanted to stay neutral so that they could avoid conflict. **Figure 4.4A** is a poster that was used to convince people to join the Patriots. **Figure 4.4B** is a poster that was used to recruit colonists for the Loyalists. What elements in each poster were used to catch people's attention?

Patriot a person living in the Thirteen Colonies who supported the rebellion against Britain during the American Revolution

treason the act of betraying one's country

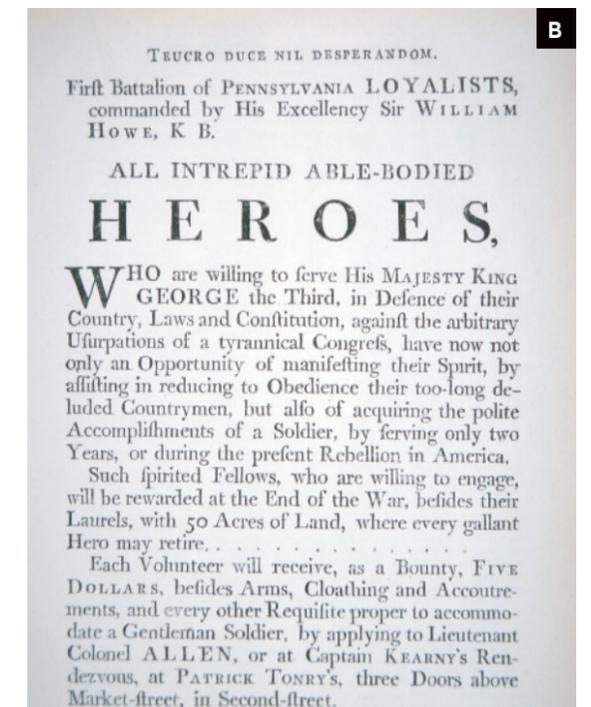
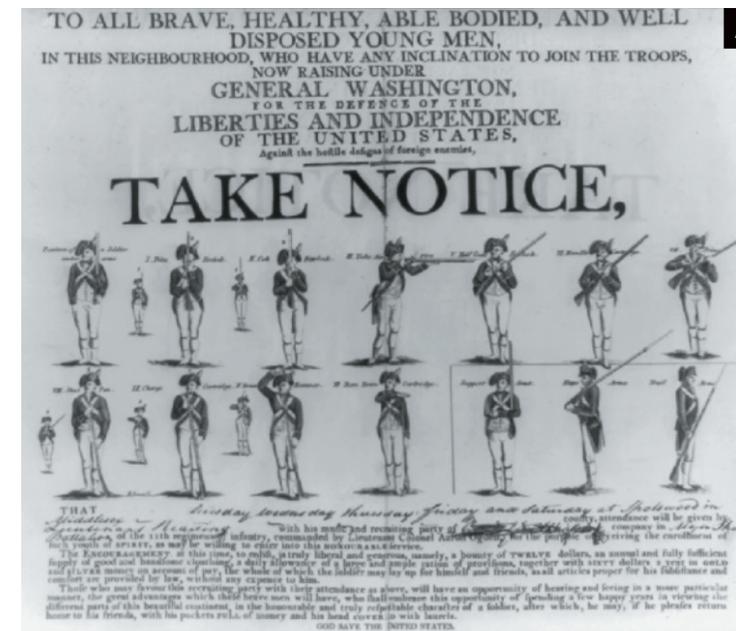


FIGURE 4.4 These posters were used to recruit soldiers for the Patriot cause (A) and the Loyalist cause (B) in 1775. **Analyze:** Which poster do you think is more convincing, and why?

British North America the remaining British colonies in North America, north of the United States in what is known as Canada today, after the American Revolution ended in 1783

The American Revolution began in 1775, when tensions between the Patriots and the Loyalists reached a tipping point. Battles raged throughout the Thirteen Colonies for six years, until the Patriots won a decisive victory at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1781. In 1783, the war officially ended with the Treaty of Paris, in which the British gave up their control of the Thirteen Colonies to the Patriot forces. This is how the United States of America became an independent country and the lands to the north of the United States became known as **British North America**.

LOYALISTS LIVING IN FEAR

The American Revolution divided the continent and pitted neighbour against neighbour. After Britain's defeat, life in the Thirteen Colonies became even more difficult for Loyalists. Their loyalty to Britain was challenged by the Patriot victors, who harassed and attacked them. The Loyalists also risked having their property taken away even before the war officially broke out. Loyalists who spoke publicly about their loyalty to the King risked public humiliation. A popular way of attacking Loyalists was tarring and feathering—pouring hot tar over them and then covering them in feathers. Examine **Figure 4.5**, which is a political cartoon published by a British newspaper. In the cartoon, a tax collector is being tarred and feathered by Bostonian Patriots, and also forced to drink tea, all under a copy of the *Stamp Act* (a tax on printed paper) tacked to a tree. Why do you think public humiliation was a popular way to harass Loyalists?



FIGURE 4.5 This political cartoon was published in a British newspaper in 1774. **Analyze:** What does this cartoon suggest Britain's opinion of the Patriots was at this time?

How did John Munro's beliefs and values influence his decisions?

WOMEN LEFT BEHIND

Despite living in such hostile conditions, Loyalists still had to provide for and protect their families. Consider the perspective of Loyalist women. Many were left behind when their Loyalist husbands fled the Thirteen Colonies during the war. One of these women was Mary Munro, who lived in Vermont. Her husband, John, had been recruiting for the Loyalists. The Patriots had sentenced him to death, so John had to flee Vermont. Mary and her eight children were left behind, vulnerable to violence and the risk of having their home seized by Patriots. Read **Figure 4.6**, which is an excerpt from a letter written by Mary to John. How was she feeling in this situation?

“For heavens sake, my dear Mr. Munro, send me some relief by the first safe hand. Is there no possibility of your sending for us? If there is no method fallen upon we shall perish [die], for you can have no idea of our sufferings here; Let me once more intreat [beg] you to try every method to save your family; my heart is so full it is ready to break; adieu my Dearest John, may God Almighty bless preserve and protect you, that we may live to see each other is the constant prayer of your affectionate tho' afflicted [distressed] wife ...”

— Mary Munro, Loyalist

FIGURE 4.6 This excerpt is from an undated letter written sometime between 1777 and 1778 by Munro to her husband John. **Analyze:** What does Mary say will happen to her and the children if they stay in Vermont?

Now read **Figure 4.7**, an excerpt from the diary of a Scottish woman named Janet Schaw who was visiting her brother in North Carolina during the same period. Compare this excerpt with **Figure 4.6**. What do these two excerpts suggest about how Loyalists were being treated? If you were a Loyalist at that time, would you have stayed in the Thirteen Colonies and become a Patriot? Or would you have left everything behind for the chance of a better life elsewhere?

“At present the martial law stands thus: An officer or committeeman enters a plantation with his posse. The alternative is proposed. Agree to join us [Patriots] and your persons and properties are safe ... if you refuse, we are directly to cut up your corn, shoot your pigs, burn your houses, seize your Negroes and perhaps tar and feather yourself. Not to choose the first requires more courage than they are possessed of, and I believe this method has seldom failed with the lower sort.”

— Janet Schaw, Scottish woman

FIGURE 4.7 This is an entry from the diary of Schaw in June 1775. *Martial law* refers to when ordinary law is suspended and the military takes control of the government. The quote uses the term *Negroes*, which was common at that time. Today, some people find it offensive so a preferred and more commonly used term is *Black people*. **Analyze:** To whom do you think Schaw is referring when she says “the lower sort”?

REWARDING LOYALTY

Loyalists had many strong reasons for wanting to leave their land. British North America had many pull factors that attracted the Loyalists. Since the British government still had control over British North America, Loyalists were invited to find safety there. Most Loyalists, especially those who had fought for the British, were offered free land, tools, and seeds to grow crops. Britain even provided transportation for many Loyalists, evacuating large groups by ships out of places such as the New York harbour.

Of the over 70 000 Loyalists who fled the Thirteen Colonies, about 50 000 travelled north to British North America. More than half of these Loyalists went to Nova Scotia. Why do you think so many Loyalists fled to Nova Scotia? The decision to leave was often made very quickly, sometimes just ahead of Patriots arriving at their door. One such scene is depicted in **Figure 4.8**. Like many, these Loyalists left their home to find safety in British North America. The rest of the American Loyalists either fled south or returned to Britain.

BLACK LOYALISTS

During the American Revolution, the British promised freedom for enslaved Black people. They also promised them land and equal rights if they deserted their Patriot masters and joined the Loyalists. About 3000 Black Loyalists moved to Nova Scotia on the strength of this promise. Look at **Figure 4.9**, which shows a family of Black Loyalists travelling by wagon cart in Nova Scotia. What hopes and expectations might this family have had when they left the Thirteen Colonies for Nova Scotia? Later in this chapter, you will examine whether or not Black Loyalists were rewarded fairly for their loyalty.

FIGURE 4.9 This 1835 painting, entitled *Bedford Basin* by Robert Petley, portrays a family of Black Loyalists travelling to settle in Nova Scotia after the American Revolution. **Analyze:** What challenges do you think this family of Black Loyalists may have faced during their migration?

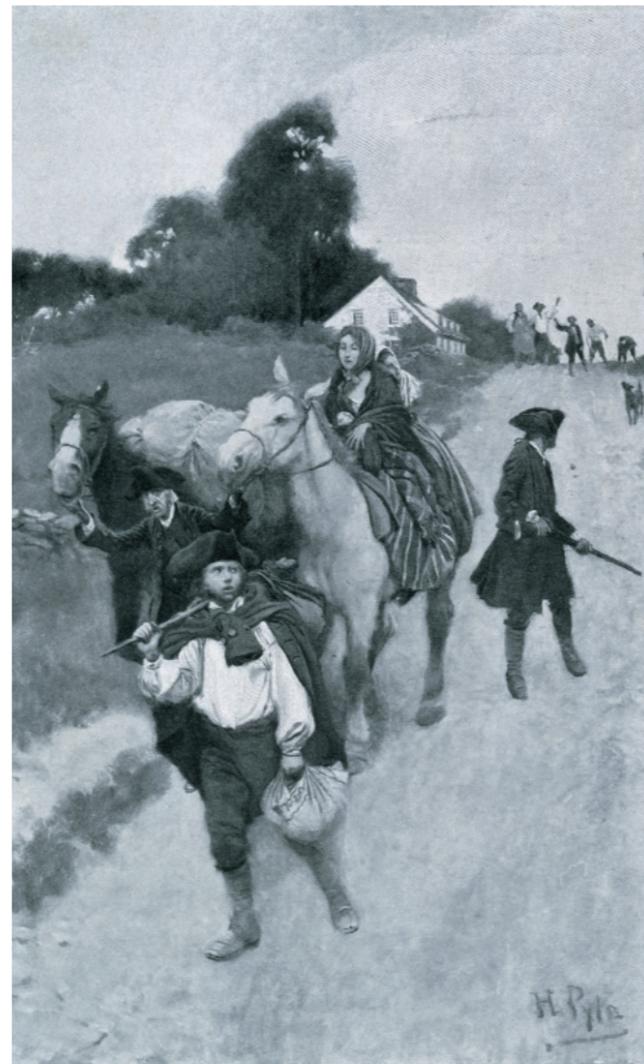


FIGURE 4.8 This painting, entitled *Tory Refugees on Their Way to Canada* by Howard Pyle, was created in 1901, long after the actual event. Loyalists were often called “Tories” by the Patriots. **Analyze:** Look closely at the foreground and background. What story is told by the details in each?



FIGURE 4.10 This 1786 portrait by Gilbert Stuart depicts Thayendanegea, also known as Joseph Brant. **Analyze:** Based on this portrait, what characteristics do you think Thayendanegea had?

FIGURE 4.11 This excerpt is from the 1784 Haldimand Proclamation, which granted land to the Haudenosaunee refugees. **Analyze:** What do you think is the British government’s perspective of the Haudenosaunee?

HAUDENOSAUNEE LOYALISTS

The Haudenosaunee Six Nations were divided by the war. Most of the Haudenosaunee were British allies, but some had sided with the Patriots. When the British government gave up all of its land in the Thirteen Colonies, this included the Haudenosaunee territory south of the Great Lakes. Mohawk leaders John Deseronto and Thayendanegea, also known as Joseph Brant, met with Governor-in-Chief Frederick Haldimand to discuss their territory losses. **Figure 4.10** shows a portrait of Thayendanegea.

Read the quote in **Figure 4.11** from Haldimand in 1784, addressing the issue of lost land. Based on Haldimand’s words, what kind of relationship do you think he had with the Haudenosaunee? To reward the Haudenosaunee’s loyalty, the British government purchased a tract, or a large area of land, from the Mississauga and Ojibwe peoples. Many First Nations families settled on this land, which is often called the Haldimand tract.



“I have at the earnest desire of many of these His Majesty’s faithful Allies purchased a tract of land from the Indians situated between the Lakes Ontario, Erie and Huron and I do hereby in His Majesty’s name authorize and permit the said Mohawk Nation and such others of the Six Nation Indians as wish to settle in that quarter to take possession of and settle upon the Banks of the River commonly called Ours [Ouse] or Grand River, running into Lake Erie, allotting to them for that purpose six miles deep from each side of the river beginning at Lake Erie and extending in that proportion to the head of the said river, which them and their posterity are to enjoy for ever.”

— *Haldimand Proclamation*

CHECK-IN

- HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE** The Loyalists were a diverse group of individuals from the Thirteen Colonies. Explain possible reasons why they remained loyal to Britain.
- INTERPRET AND ANALYZE** Examine the evidence for the push and pull factors that drove the Loyalists to British North America. Which factors do you think had a greater impact?
- EVALUATE AND DRAW CONCLUSIONS** Based on the evidence in this section, do you think the Loyalists who moved to British North America made the right decision? Explain why, or why not.
- COMMUNICATE** Design an advertisement to attract Loyalist settlers to British North America. What text and design elements will you use to appeal to Loyalists?