

HOW DID THE LOYALIST MIGRATION IMPACT BRITISH NORTH AMERICA'S POPULATION?

The end of the American Revolution brought tens of thousands of Loyalist refugees to the doorstep of First Nations, Canadiens, and existing Maritime settlers. How would their arrival affect these communities?

IMPACT ON FIRST NATIONS

Since first contact with European settlers, First Nations peoples in British North America were forced to partner with British or French colonizers. Although First Nations never surrendered their sovereignty, or independence, they had to make alliances with the colonizers to keep as much power and control over their lives as possible. Their decisions and the strength of their alliances would directly affect the survival of First Nations peoples.

As you learned in Chapter 2, First Nations benefited from the rivalry between the British and the French for many years. By creating military and trade alliances with both the British and the French, they maximized the number of gifts, goods, and agreements they received. However, after the French defeat on the Plains of Abraham, First Nations were concerned about the growing British presence and what an increase in British settlers would mean for their future.

ESTABLISHING TREATIES

Now that the British had control over the Maritimes, they wanted to establish more peaceful relationships with First Nations. In the Maritimes, Peace and Friendship treaties were signed between the British government and the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, and Passamaquoddy (pa-zim-a-kwah-dee) First Nations. The largest First Nation in the Maritime region was the Mi'kmaq. **Figure 4.25** is an excerpt from the 1752 Articles of Peace and Friendship. How did the British want to establish peace with the Mi'kmaq? In exchange for land, First Nations were promised money, gifts, and smaller reserve lands to live on.

“That to Cherish a good Harmony & mutual [correspondence] between the said Indians & this Government ... the said Indians shall upon the first day of October Yearly, so long as they shall Continue in Friendship, Receive Presents of Blankets, Tobacco, and some Powder & Shot; and the said Indians promise once every Year, upon the first of October to come by themselves or their Delegates and Receive the said Presents and Renew their Friendship and Submissions.”

— *Articles of Peace and Friendship Treaty (1752)*

FIGURE 4.25 This excerpt is from Section 6 of the 1752 Articles of Peace and Friendship Treaty between the British government and the Mi'kmaq. **Analyze:** What were First Nations required to do in order to receive their gifts?



FIGURE 4.26 This painting of a Mi'kmaq encampment was created by Hibbert Newton Binney in 1791. Binney was a Loyalist landowner and volunteer soldier. **Analyze:** What aspects of Mi'kmaq life does Binney show in this painting?

Although the Mi'kmaq were British allies, the massive growth in the Loyalist population was overwhelming. The Loyalist migration to Nova Scotia alone added over 35 000 British inhabitants to the existing population of 12 000. The Loyalists wanted land to settle and clear for farms. Despite existing First Nations encampments, like the one shown in **Figure 4.26**, the Loyalists began to take over First Nations lands for themselves.

Between 1783 and 1812, a number of land surrender treaties affecting First Nations land were signed, officially turning over First Nations land to the British. These land surrender treaties went beyond the Maritimes. For example, one land surrender treaty, signed in 1790 between the British government and a group of First Nations, surrendered land that included a large part of present-day southwestern Ontario, north of Lake Erie. The First Nations involved in the treaty included the Odawa, Chippewa, Potawatomi, and Huron (Wyandot).

The land treaty process was often hurried and unfair. Sometimes, the British gave verbal promises to First Nations, instead of creating a written document. This was done to rush through the process so that First Nations land could be handed over quickly to waiting Loyalists. Often, these verbal promises were never kept. This pattern of treatment by the government carried on well after the Loyalist migration. Today, First Nations groups continue to campaign for their land rights.

FIRST NATIONS POPULATION DECLINE

The Loyalist migration was one of the causes of the Mi'kmaq population decline. In 1986, the Grand Council of the Mi'kmaq Nation submitted a report to the United Nations about Canada's treatment of the Mi'kmaq. What does the quote in **Figure 4.27** tell you about how the Loyalist expansion affected the Mi'kmaq?

“To strengthen their strategic position, and to accommodate the many loyalists who moved north from the thirteen colonies, the British intensified their colonization of [Mi'kmaq]. This activity disrupted our economies and began to severely restrict our people's access to the land and resources that were so essential to their survival. By the 1790s, many of our communities were starving ...”

— *Grand Council of the Mi'kmaq Nation*

FIGURE 4.27 This excerpt is from a 1986 report submitted by the Grand Council of the Mi'kmaq Nation, detailing their people's lack of political rights in British North America. **Analyze:** Why do you think people were discussing the impact of the Loyalist migration on the Mi'kmaq nearly 200 years after the event?

IMPACT ON CANADIENS

The 8000 Loyalists who landed along the St. Lawrence River in southern Québec were not happy in their new homes. Canadiens made up the majority of the population in Québec. Québec was still governed by the *Québec Act of 1774*. This meant Canadiens spoke mostly French, followed Catholicism, and lived under a system of French civil law. What would be the consequences of a growing Loyalist population in Québec?

As more Loyalists moved into the area, political tensions between the two groups increased. Loyalists did not like the seigneurial system of leasing land. They demanded to have access to land that they could own, like other Loyalist settlers. They began to build their own Protestant schools and churches. The Loyalists also did not want to obey French law and wanted a House of Assembly that followed British law. A British-style House of Assembly was a government made up of both elected and appointed members. Officials, like the governor general, were appointed. Read **Figure 4.28**, which is an excerpt from a letter written by Lord Sydney in 1787. What is Lord Sydney's opinion on how the growing Loyalist population could change the government?

Was the Québec Act of 1774 significant? Why, or why not?

“No plan of [a House of] Assembly has been suggested by any one ... but I foresee, as well as your Lordship, that in proportion as the number of British and Loyalists increases in the Province, the applications for one will grow more frequent and pressing.”

— Lord Sydney, British politician

FIGURE 4.28 This excerpt is from a letter from Lord Sydney, written on September 20, 1787. **Analyze:** Why would having an English-controlled House of Assembly be important for Loyalists?

Instead of an English-controlled House of Assembly, the Canadiens petitioned for their own elected assembly. They wanted to keep the type of government they were used to, which included following French civil law. The Canadiens also wanted all officials to be elected, not appointed.

CHANGING BORDERS

To keep the peace, the British government established new Loyalist settlements beyond the Ottawa Valley, which freed the Loyalists from French seigneurial law. The creation of the Eastern Townships began the division of Québec. The British government then passed the *Constitutional Act, 1791* to formally split Québec into two colonies: **Upper Canada**, the area around the upper St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes, and **Lower Canada**, the area around the lower St. Lawrence River and the Gulf of the St. Lawrence.

Upper Canada created by the *Constitutional Act, 1791*, a region of the upper St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes (roughly the region of southern Ontario today) that was part of the former colony of the Province of Québec

Lower Canada created by the *Constitutional Act, 1791*, a region of the lower St. Lawrence River and the Gulf of the St. Lawrence (roughly the region of southern Québec today) that was part of the former colony of the Province of Québec



Each colony would have its own elected assembly, but would be led by appointed officials from Britain. **Figure 4.29** shows the first elected House of Assembly of Upper Canada. The British majority in Upper Canada were able to have Protestant churches and schools, British law, and could own land. The Canadiens in Lower Canada were able to keep their language, religion, and seigneurial land-use practices. How did the Canadiens and English of British North America react to the split? **Figure 4.30** is a quote from Québec sculptor François Baillairgé. Compare this quote with **Figure 4.31**, an excerpt of a letter from John Graves Simcoe. Do the speakers have the same or different perspectives?

FIGURE 4.29 The first Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada met in 1792, in present-day Niagara-on-the-Lake. This painting was completed in 1955 by F.S. Challerer. John Graves Simcoe, lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, is the man addressing the crowd. **Analyze:** What clues does the artist give you about the mood in this scene?

“1792 is the first year of freedom in this country.”
— François Baillairgé, Québec sculptor

FIGURE 4.30 Baillairgé wrote these words in his personal diary on January 1, 1792. **Analyze:** What could have influenced Baillairgé's perspective on the division of Québec?

“The utmost attention should be paid that British Customs, Manners and Principles in the most trivial as well as serious matters should be promoted.”
— John Graves Simcoe, Upper Canada's first lieutenant-governor

FIGURE 4.31 This is an excerpt from a letter Simcoe wrote to a British government official on June 30, 1791. Simcoe wanted to recreate Britain in Upper Canada. **Analyze:** Based on this quote, do you think Simcoe welcomed Loyalists and Canadiens to Upper Canada?

ANALYZING AND CONTEXTUALIZING IMAGES

Doing a close reading of, or analyzing, an image (such as a painting, drawing, photograph, or cartoon) is very similar to doing a close reading of a document. However, you need to take some extra steps at the beginning.

In this activity, you will do a close reading of **Figure 4.26** on page 121. You will consider how the painting might help you answer the following question: How did the Loyalist migration impact the Mi'kmaq?

When you begin to analyze an image, you need to start by trying to see the image as the artist intended. This will help you understand its meaning and message. **Figure 4.32** provides you with key questions that you should ask when you begin your analysis.

FIGURE 4.32 These questions will help you to analyze different images.

Questions to Ask When Analyzing an Image	
About	Examples
Creation of the image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What type of image is it? For example, is it a painting, a photograph, or an illustration? When and where was the image created? Who created it? Who for? What for? Did the artist portray his or her own experiences, or those of others? Was the image created at the time of the events portrayed, or later?
Content of the image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do I see? For example, do I see people, places, objects, activities, or events? Who or what is the most important part of the image? Why do I think this? What is the artist's perspective on the subject? How can I tell? Who or what did the artist leave out?
Creative choices of the artist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did the artist want viewers to feel as they look at the image? How do the decisions made by the artist create this feeling? Why might the artist have chosen the medium and style used?
Audience's response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What effect did the image have on its viewers? How might a different audience have responded?

Understanding an image also involves exploring the relationship between the content of the image, its meaning, and the world in which it was created and viewed. You need to look for information about the historical **context** in reliable secondary sources, such as other images or written documents. You can also contextualize an image by asking questions like the following: What else was going on at the time? How was the world in which the image was created different from ours? These questions and others are listed in **Figure 4.33**.

Consider the context in which **Figure 4.26** was created. The painting shows one of the last surviving Mi'kmaq communities in the Halifax area. Mi'kmaq bands moved between winter settlements in the forests and summer camps on the shores. Shorelines were claimed first by Loyalists because the land was the most fertile. Think about how the events and tensions at the time might have affected the artist's choices and how people likely understood the painting at the time.

Questions to Ask When Contextualizing an Image	
About	Examples
Events and conditions at the time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What else was going on at the time when the image was created, in this community, region, or country, or in the world? How might this context help me interpret the image?
Life at the time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was it like to be alive in that place, at that time? What things were different then? What things were the same? How might this context help me understand the image?
Position of artist in society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How was the artist involved in events of the time? What was his or her position or role in society? How might this context have influenced the artist's motivation? How might it have shaped the artist's message?
Worldviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did people's beliefs and customs at the time differ from ours today? How might this context have affected the content of the image? How might it have influenced how the audience responded to the image?

FIGURE 4.33 Asking contextual questions can help you understand the artist's intended message.

HOW TO ANALYZE AN IMAGE

Observe **Figure 4.26** closely for about a minute. List the things you see. Use only your eyes, not your historical knowledge. For example, look at the people stepping out of a canoe. Notice that one is a child, and one of the two adults has a gun. Several people are sitting together on the ground talking with each other, while other people are standing around the tents. What do you think the artist is trying to tell us about Mi'kmaq life through this scene?

Describe how you feel as you look at the painting. Can you work out what the artist has done to make you feel this way?

STEP 1

STEP 2

STEP 3

STEP 4

Where in the painting did your eyes go first? How did your eyes move through the painting? What does this tell you about what the artist wanted you to notice?

Use the questions in **Figure 4.32** to complete your close reading of the painting. Record your observations and inferences.

HOW TO CONTEXTUALIZE AN IMAGE

By 1791, colonists had pushed the Mi'kmaq off almost all their land. Why might the artist have painted the shores in **Figure 4.26** to look like they had not been settled?

The artist, Hibbert Newton Binney, was a member of a prominent Halifax family. Would he likely be more sympathetic to the Loyalist settlers or the Mi'kmaq?

STEP 1

STEP 2

STEP 3

STEP 4

By the time the painting was created, most of the Mi'kmaq had died from disease and starvation. Do the people in the painting look happy or sad? Do they look healthy? Why might the artist have painted them in this way?

What beliefs did European settlers at the time have about First Nations and ownership of North American land? How might these beliefs have affected the content of the painting?

Were the geographic changes that resulted from the Loyalist migration significant? Why, or why not?

IMPACT ON EXISTING MARITIME SETTLERS

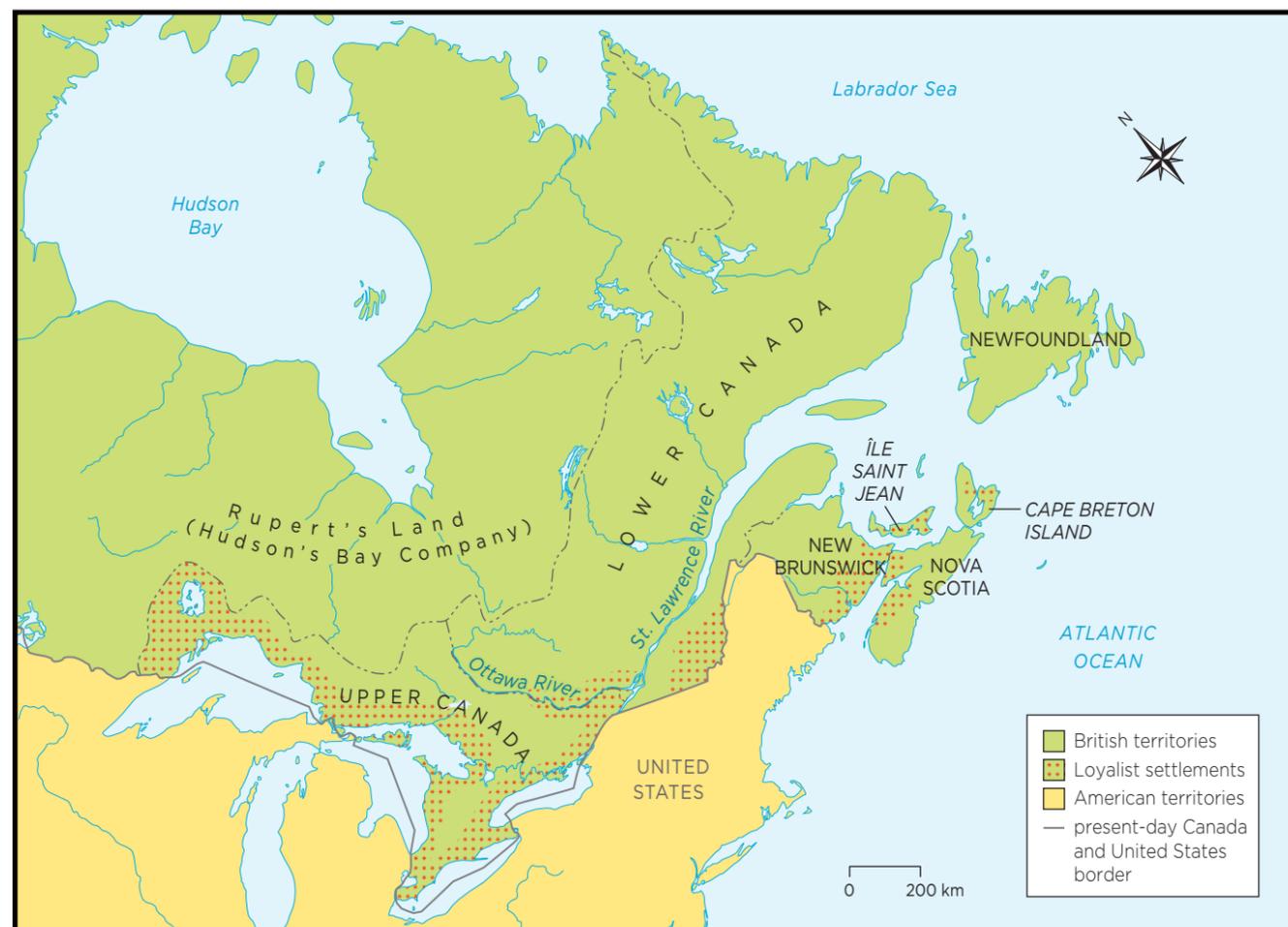
The Loyalists' arrival also affected how geographic borders were drawn in the Maritime region. Many Loyalist refugees did not trust the existing settlers in Nova Scotia, since they had remained neutral during the American Revolution. The Maritime Loyalists demanded that the government create separate Loyalist settlements. This resulted in dividing Nova Scotia into three separate colonies: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Cape Breton Island. The area's remaining 8500 Acadians were dispersed across these colonies, as well.

Unlike Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Cape Breton Island had a very small Loyalist population. Only about 100 Loyalists moved to Cape Breton. As a result, this colony of Loyalists did not prosper. Cape Breton did not grow until the arrival of Scottish immigrants in the 1800s.

Do you think that separating the Maritimes and Québec into smaller colonies was the right decision? Examine the map in **Figure 4.34**. What other options might the government have considered, instead of splitting them? Think about the different groups of Loyalists who arrived in British North America. What consequences do you think these decisions might have?

FIGURE 4.34 This map shows how the Loyalist migration created geographic change in Canada. **Analyze:** What would have been some negative and positive consequences of these geographic changes?

British North America, 1791–1792



HISTORY AT WORK

GENEALOGIST

In 2002, Kathryn Lake Hogan began taking online courses with the National Institute for Genealogical Studies to learn about her family history. She soon realized that she could work professionally in the field of genealogical studies. She went on to complete a certificate in genealogical studies.

Today, Hogan is the Dominion Genealogist for the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada (UELAC), an organization that is dedicated to preserving Loyalist history and traditions. She has been a member of the UELAC since 2007.

Most of Hogan's work with the UELAC involves helping people research their family's Loyalist history. Hogan herself is a descendant of Loyalist Johannes Ryckman of Barton Township in Ontario. She finds "researching in this early time period of Canada ... frustrating, challenging, and rewarding." Hogan believes that her interest in and knowledge of Canadian history is essential to her genealogical work: "Understanding how our country came into being, and knowing about the people who shaped our nation, can help us understand why and how our ancestors came to Canada, where they emigrated from, and where in Canada they immigrated, and migrated."

Hogan also participates in public appearances and outreach for the genealogy community. This work includes speaking at international, national, and local events, as you see in **Figure 4.35**. She also provides webinars and presentations for historians around the world. Hogan's career shows how understanding Canadian history can help us uncover fascinating personal stories.



FIGURE 4.35 Hogan speaking at the North American Black Historical Museum in November 2013

MAKING CONNECTIONS

1. What skills do you think a genealogist needs to have? Create a list. Then, compare it with a classmate's list.
2. How could online tools benefit genealogists?

CHECK-IN

1. **CONTINUITY AND CHANGE** Do you think the arrival of Loyalists improved life for people already living in British North America at the time? Use evidence to support your answer.
2. **CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE** What do you think were some positive and negative consequences of splitting Québec into Upper Canada and Lower Canada?
3. **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE** How do you think the First Nations, Canadiens, and existing settlers felt upon seeing so many Loyalists move into their communities? Use evidence to support your answer.
4. **INTERPRET AND ANALYZE** What were the key challenges for First Nations when the Loyalists arrived?