

July 1858: "The House ought to assume the responsibility of occupying that great empire . . . that region ten times as large as the settled heart of Canada, a thousand miles long by seven hundred abroad and capable of sustaining thirty millions of souls . . . otherwise the Americans would certainly go there first. . ."

ALEXANDER TILLOCH GALT, arguing the potential benefits of Confederation before Parliament.

Immigration (North American Style)

The line between Canada and the United States is not a natural barrier. Migrating people and migrating birds have always moved up and down the continent with ease. The original residents were restrained only by mountains, their inclinations and the movements of the buffalo. More recent arrivals have traveled north and south as the spirit or necessity moved them. Some — the Acadians, United Empire Loyalists, Sitting Bull and the draft resisters — were refugees, but most were not. Farmers went looking for land, prospectors for gold, college professors for status, workers for wages, entertainers for audiences and occasionally a great man, like John Kenneth Galbraith, for a place in history.

The shuffling began with the first settlers. New England families moved to Nova Scotia, and the Halifax colonists sailed down to Boston. The American Revolution gave Canada the members of the UEL, but it is easy to overemphasize their importance. Most immigrants were more concerned with cabbages than with kings.

Between 1784 and 1814, about

60,000 farmers left western New York and Pennsylvania and took their wives, children and livestock to Upper Canada.

By mid-nineteenth century, the frontier had moved south; Ontario's good land had been claimed and to the north and west was the inhospitable rock of the Laurentian Shield. On November 12, 1849, forty citizens of Prince Edward Island set sail for San Francisco, arriving on May 28, 1850. Two wagon trains of Métis went over the mountains from the Red River Valley to Oregon in 1841 and 1854.

The southern economy was more inviting; tens of thousands of Quebecers went to the mills of New England. They were not entirely welcome in what was essentially a Protestant country. An 1881 *New York Times* editorial warned that the French Canadians were dangerous, reproducing at an astonishing rate and, instead of becoming loyal citizens, transplanting their own customs and institutions. Time has smoothed things over. Today, signs welcoming travelers to New Hampshire are in French, *Bienvenue*, as well as in English.

40,000
American Citizens Needed
TO HARVEST THE
400,000,000
BUSHEL CROP
IN
WESTERN CANADA

WAGES \$2.00 per day with board \$2.00 per month and board
Fare \$12.00 **FOOD DINE** Fare \$12.00
ST. PAUL, MINNEAPOLIS, DULUTH, SUPERIOR
ESTEVAN, WEYBURN, MOOSE JAW
GOING ON
AUGUST 10, 12, 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29, 31, 1911
One Cent a Mile to any Point to and Including Calgary and Edmonton

40,000 MEN NEEDED **40,000**
WESTERN CANADA
To Harvest 400,000,000 Bushels of Wheat

ST. PAUL, MINNEAPOLIS, DULUTH, SUPERIOR ESTEVAN, WEYBURN, MOOSE JAW
TUESDAY, THURSDAY and SATURDAY
Good Going Only August 10, 12, 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29, 31, 1911

Public Archives of Canada

Other immigrants did not stay. The Métis leader, Louis Riel, went south to Montana between the rebellions of 1869 and 1885, became a US citizen and taught in a Jesuit school for Métis children before returning to Canada.

While some 287,000 Canadians came south between 1871 and 1891, Americans continued to go north, including 1,900 Mormons who took their families, their farm equipment and their religion to the prairies in 1891. By 1900, the flow was beginning to reverse — the western frontier had been pushed past the great Shield, and the fertile soil of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta was beckoning both Americans and Canadians.

Beyond the Rockies, the flow was north and south, and the traffic be-

tween San Francisco, Seattle, Victoria and the goldfields was free, if not always easy. The west coast Canadian or the west coast American was usually a very new arrival from someplace else. As one observer noted, there were among Victoria's 5,000 inhabitants "Greek fishermen, Kanaka sailors, Jewish and Scotch merchants, Chinese washermen, French, German and Yankee restaurant keepers, English and Canadian officeholders and butchers, Negro waiters and sweeps, Australian farmers and other varieties of the race, rubbing against each other, apparently in the most friendly way."

Today the flow is still substantial. In 1974, some 26,541 immigrants moved north while 5,637 went south.

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