



### HERE COME THE BRITISH

Generally speaking the French won the wars in North America but the English won in Europe. In the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 France gave up Hudson Bay, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. The Seven Years' War wound up with the fall of Quebec in 1759 and of Montreal in 1760.

Canada was now a British possession, and when the American Revolution ended in 1783, 40,000 United Empire Loyalists went north to Nova Scotia. Many were men of substance, and they took what they could with them but left most of their possessions behind. The migration from below the border would continue. Most would be farmers of northern European and British ancestry, but there would also be more sharply defined groups such as "Pennsylvania Dutch" Mennonites who were actually Germans, and a considerable number of escaped slaves who took the underground railway north.

The British—English, Scots, Irish and Welsh—and the Americans dominated immigration through the nineteenth century, and even today their descendants form the largest single blocks of English speakers.

### Scots

No British group has had greater impact on Canada than the Scots. Many were among those fleeing the American Revolution, and they were followed some decades later by a wave of poor farmers and artisans from the Highlands.

Gordon Donaldson argues in *The Scot Overseas* that the notion that this latter group were reluctant to make the trip is mistaken.

"... by the 1820s the clearance or eviction of tenants for the sake of sheep farming was well underway . . . the notion that scheming landlords, for their own financial profit, shipped to America tenants who were living in plenty, or even comfort, at home, is preposterous. The truth is that people who had experienced the miseries of life in the Highlands in the 1840s clamoured for assistance to enable them to leave the country. . . ."

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**CANADA**  
TODAY / D'AUJOURD'HUI

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