

1812. There were whole settlements of "Pennsylvania Dutch" (properly called German), adherents of the Mennonite and Tunker faiths, whose descendants to this day make up a large part of the population of Welland, Lincoln, Waterloo and York Counties. There were also large settlements of Quakers, particularly in the vicinity of Font Hill, near St. Catharines, and along the Bay of Quinte, who, like the Mennonites, left the States, fearing the Government might insist on their bearing arms. The feeling against British sympathizers being so strong, there was some talk of compelling all, irrespective of their religious belief, to take part in military affairs. Many of the Mennonites and Quakers, having been granted the religious freedom they desired under British rule, were not in sympathy with the Revolutionary party. This brought down the wrath of the new Government upon them, and, although they threatened to enact measures that would curtail the freedom of these sects, they never carried their threats into execution. There were also a few settlers from the British Isles and from Germany, but the larger number of this class came later on. Many of the British soldiers who had taken part in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, having been given free grants of land by the Government, after receiving their discharge, settled in the country.