



COLONIES

British immigrants often came in bunches, whole communities sponsored by a rich man and transported across the sea.

Col. Thomas Talbot came to Canada from Ireland as an aide-de-camp to Lieutenant Governor Simcoe and returned in 1803 as a colonizer. He opened up a large area to settlement and ruthlessly ejected those who were not industrious.

John Galt, a Scottish novelist, founded the Canada Company, which bought two million acres called the Huron Tract and the Crown Reserve. He opened it up in 1826 but quarreled with the company directors in London and was soon replaced.

THE RICH

Not all the immigrants to the Prairies were poor.

One of the oddest communities was Cannington Manor. In 1882 Captain Edward Mitchell Pierce, an English bankrupt, was allowed to open up virgin land near Moose Mountain in the Northwest Territories. He built a manor house, a church, a smithy, a hotel and a dormitory. He charged some of the British gentry £100 for a course of "agricultural instruction." Among the enrollees were the Beckton brothers, Ernest, Billy and Bertie, who arrived in 1889 and built a massive stone house at Cannington, imported bull terriers and foxhounds, built a race track and held annual hunt balls. They all went broke by the end of the century.

Photo: University of Saskatchewan.

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CANADA
TODAY / D'AUJOURD'HUI

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