

EIGHT: THE FORE-ORDAINED ATTACHMENT OF ZENA PEPPERLEIGH AND PETER PUPKIN

DEEPER UNDERSTANDING

"WITH ALL THE HARDIHOOD OF THE UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS": CANADA'S FIRST REFUGEES

Nearly a quarter of a million residents of the thirteen American colonies did not support the American Revolution. For various reasons, they remained loyal to the British Crown. About 100,000 of these people fled the colonies, mainly moving to the Maritimes. Called "United Empire Loyalists," they had diverse backgrounds: African Americans (mostly of western African descent), Europeans (mostly from England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Denmark, and Germany), and even about 2,000 Six Nations Iroquois from New York State.

The first waves of Loyalists arrived in 1783 and 1784, swelling the Maritime population. They arrived with few possessions and suffered many hardships and deaths in their first winter here. Those who survived persevered and contributed much to the character of Canada today. According to the Canadian Encyclopedia, "Modern Canada has inherited much from the Loyalists, including a certain conservatism, a preference for 'evolution' rather than 'revolution' in matters of government, and tendencies towards a pluralistic and multi-ethnic society"¹⁶.

1. A plaque at Loyalist House, a National Historic Site in Saint John New Brunswick, refers to the Loyalists as our first refugees. What does the Loyalist influx tell us about the importance of refugees to Canada?
2. Loyalist House sits on what was traditionally Welastekwewiyik land. Welastekwewiyik origin stories tell of a Creator without assigning a gender to that creator.
 - a) How does the Welastekwewiyik belief about gender and Creator differ from the gendered Creator of Western belief systems?
 - b) Mariposa reflects small-town Canada of its time. Almost everyone in a leadership role in Mariposa is male. If Western religions had a creator with no assigned gender, would our society have developed differently? How?

16

"Loyalists." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/loyalists/