

UNIT 2

Our Developing Nation

IN THIS UNIT

This unit helps you investigate these questions.

- Why might people have immigrated to Canada between 1815 and 1867?
- What was the impact of interactions between Aboriginal peoples and European settlers?
- How did responsible government evolve in Canada?
- How and why did Canada become a nation?



First Nations. European settlers disrupted First Nations communities by taking their land. First Nations leaders, such as this Anishinabé man, often signed treaties in order to save some land for future generations. What are the effects of these treaties today?



Colonial life. Daily life for the colonists was challenging by today's standards. People worked long days clearing land, planting and harvesting crops, caring for livestock, and raising their children. How would the hardships of colonial life affect the growth of communities?



Rebellions. In 1837, dissatisfaction with colonial government led to rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada. The British government sent Lord Durham to the colonies to bring about reform. What would be the consequences?



The Charlottetown Conference. In 1864, delegates from the colonies met in Charlottetown to discuss uniting as a dominion. The pro-Confederation party convinced enough delegates that Confederation could work. What might have happened if they had been unsuccessful?

2

The Colonists: Land and Government

Chapter Outcomes

In this chapter, you will study the changes that came with the colonists who arrived in Upper and Lower Canada between 1814 and 1840. By the end of this chapter, you will

- assess the impact of geography on Canada's early development and colonization
- describe significant events and trends affecting immigration to Canada
- compare the roles and daily activities of men and women in colonial society
- evaluate the influence of immigration on Canadian society and identity
- discuss the causes and the consequences of the Rebellions of 1837
- explain the evolution of responsible government in Canada
- describe the factors that contributed to a changing national identity, including the development of Canada as a French and English country



What factors shaped Canada at this time? Land, people, or politics?

Imagine what it would be like to arrive as a colonist in Upper or Lower Canada in the early 1800s. Would you think you were building the foundation of an emerging nation? Would you see the land as a “wilderness” available for the taking? Or would you think that the long-standing presence of First Nations should be acknowledged?

Key Terms

colony	Francophone
Upper Canada	representative government
Lower Canada	responsible government
class system	oligarchy
Family Compact	nationalism
Château Clique	insurrection
land speculators	



The 1845 portrait, shown above, depicts three sisters, all born in York, the capital of Upper Canada. The painting to the left shows settlers with a typical rural cabin. Do you think the people shown in these images would agree with the quotation below? What do you think they might say about using the term “waste land” to describe Upper Canada?

A highly civilized and densely populated state possesses extensive waste lands in the colonies. In a state possessing those waste lands (now Canada), all citizens have equal rights—all have a share in the collective right to these waste lands.

—an editorial in the British newspaper, *The Spectator*, September 18, 1847

The Land of Yesterday

TIMELINE

- 1791** • Constitutional Act creates Upper and Lower Canada
- 1814** • Louis-Joseph Papineau is elected to the Legislative Assembly of Lower Canada
- 1817** • Robert Gourlay is arrested for criticizing land policies in Upper Canada
- 1824** • William Lyon Mackenzie establishes the *Colonial Advocate*
- 1826** • Papineau becomes leader of the Patriotes
- 1828** • Mackenzie is elected to the Legislative Assembly
- 1837** • November: Battle of St. Charles
• December: Battle of Montgomery's Tavern
- 1838** • Lord Durham arrives in Quebec
- 1840** • Act of Union is passed

colony the overseas possession of another country that governs and uses it for its own purposes

Upper Canada British colony “up” the St. Lawrence, mostly English speaking

Lower Canada British colony “down” the St. Lawrence, mostly French speaking

► What was British North America like in the early 19th century?

Imagine what your community might have looked like when it was first settled. Were there thick forests or rocky areas? To the early European colonists, British North America was very challenging compared to their homelands. To many, the environment in which Aboriginal peoples already lived may have seemed like a vast wilderness that had to be conquered.

The eastern part of the country was growing and developing. The War of 1812, in which the United States declared war on Britain and its colonies over trade and other issues, had ended. Newcomers now poured into the **colony of Upper Canada** (now southern and eastern Ontario). Forests were cleared to build farms, small communities, and roads.

At the same time, **Lower Canada** (Quebec and along the St. Lawrence River) was building its economy. Its busy trading capital, Montreal, attracted Scottish and American entrepreneurs.

The Maritime colonies (now New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador), long settled and stable, specialized in fishing, forestry, and shipbuilding. Trade with Britain and the United States kept these industries booming.

In the north and west, the Hudson’s Bay Company held sway. It claimed all lands drained by rivers flowing into Hudson Bay, bringing a huge part of the continent of North America under its control. As a result, the fur trade expanded west. In competition with the HBC, the North West Company, based in Montreal, built its own trading relationships with Aboriginal leaders and explored the west.



FIGURE 2–1 This painting shows the living conditions of some of Canada’s early newcomers. Using this image as a primary source, discuss what living and farming in this area at that point in time might have been like.



However, the growth of the colonies came at the expense of Aboriginal peoples, although they had once been military allies of the British and were still a vital part of the prosperous fur trade. Many died from diseases brought by Europeans, or they starved after losing land and access to traditional food sources. First Nations were often forced to give up their land to make way for European immigrants. Those who grew crops lost their farmlands, while others lost access to traditional fishing and hunting areas. Most newcomers paid little attention to such hardship and injustice, which continued throughout Canada's history, as you will learn in later chapters.

FIGURE 2-2 In 1825, British North America consisted of six colonies. In the colonies, community building, farming, and forestry began to radically change the land. In the northwest, the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company encouraged the trade of furs. Which activity might have had more of an impact on Aboriginal societies? Why?



FIGURE 2-3 Anishinabé fishers at Sault Ste. Marie. The Anishinabé traditionally used this area to meet and fish every year. By 1887, Sault Ste. Marie had become a town. How do you think the growth of a town might have changed their way of life?

First Nations ways of life were heavily affected—and in some cases destroyed—by European colonization. Disease, for example, took a heavy toll, sometimes decimating entire First Nations communities.

Loss of land was another factor. European attitudes toward land were alien to the First Nations, who did not “own” land in the European sense, believing rather that they belonged to the land and not the other way around.

Colonial governments and land developers were quick to take advantage of this difference

in attitude. To Europeans, land that had not been surveyed and did not legally belong to anyone was considered free land, waiting to be taken. Although the **Royal Proclamation of 1763** provided some protection for First Nations, the British government expected to gain control of First Nations land through treaties. However, most land set aside for the use of First Nations had, over time, been taken away again. Usually, First Nations were left with a fraction of their former traditional territories. Loss of land led not only to a loss of freedom of movement and

access to resources necessary for survival, but also to a loss of a way of life. Newcomers to Canada made their homes on land that was once the territory of the First Nations.

- Discuss the immediate consequences of loss of land to Aboriginal peoples in North America. What land rights issues still exist today for Aboriginal peoples in Canada?

Royal Proclamation of 1763 a British declaration confirming Aboriginal title to lands west of the Mississippi River

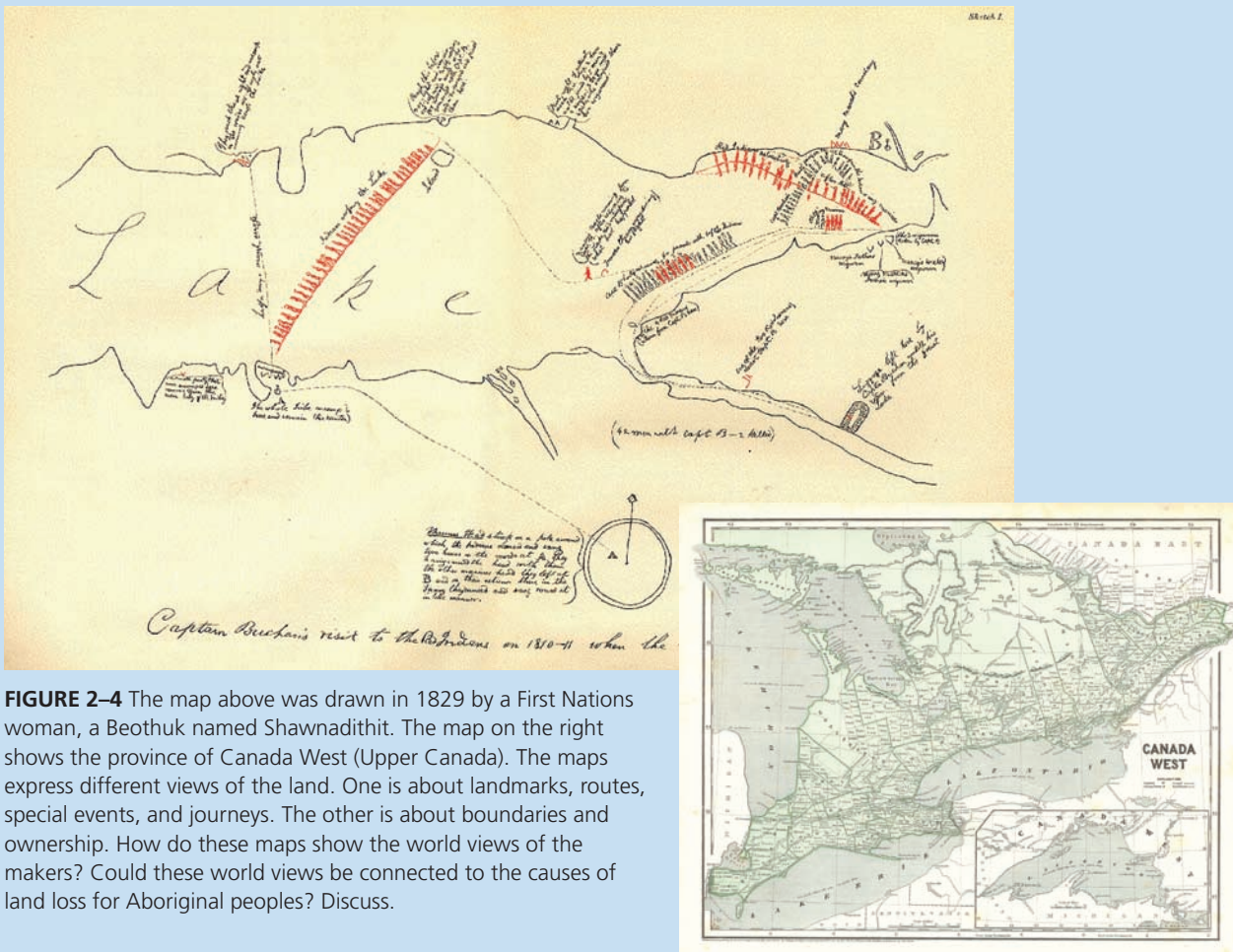


FIGURE 2-4 The map above was drawn in 1829 by a First Nations woman, a Beothuk named Shawnadithit. The map on the right shows the province of Canada West (Upper Canada). The maps express different views of the land. One is about landmarks, routes, special events, and journeys. The other is about boundaries and ownership. How do these maps show the world views of the makers? Could these world views be connected to the causes of land loss for Aboriginal peoples? Discuss.

Many words have **implicit** meanings that can affect how people think, although they might be unaware of it. You may be familiar with insulting names for different groups that are based on religion, ethnicity, or gender, but you could be surprised how subtle some words can be. A look at some words used to describe Aboriginal issues reveals the hidden influence of ordinary words.

For instance, the term “settlement” is commonly used to describe the colonization of North America. This word implies that the land was wild or unoccupied, and it becomes easy to forget that Aboriginal peoples had “settled” the land long before Europeans arrived. From the perspective of the Aboriginal peoples, their land was invaded, not discovered, and they did not think their land needed to be “settled.” It is also worthwhile noting that the word “handout,” often used to describe payments from the government to Aboriginal peoples, is inaccurate. These payments were the result of complex treaty negotiations based on the sale of land, and they were never charity.

Word use can also change through time. An example of this concerns the Métis, who you will study in later chapters of *Horizons*. Recently, the events during which the Métis defended their lands have been called a “resistance” rather than a “rebellion.” Why the change? Resistance implies a struggle

against unfair treatment, while rebellion implies an illegal act against legitimate authority. Changing perspectives on the history of the Métis has led historians and writers to acknowledge that the Métis were more likely to resist unfair treatment rather than rebel against a government that did not recognize them as citizens.

The power of words to shape our perspectives should not be underestimated.

- Using the example of the Métis, discuss other examples of changing word use through time. Why might these words change? What impact do the changes have?

implicit something that is implied, and not openly expressed



FIGURE 2-5 This 1550 engraving of Secota, an Algonquin village, is based on a drawing by John White, an English colonist who lived on the east coast of North America. What does this representation of village life tell you about what he saw? How might it contrast to a typical idea of how First Nations people lived in the past?

Land for the Fur Trade, or for the Colonies?

As European settlement of the British colonies continued, colonists generally accepted that the lands west and north of the Great Lakes were reserved for the fur trade. Most Aboriginal peoples living in that region were involved in the fur trade in some way. By 1820, however, any European immigrants living in the northwest and not involved in the fur trade numbered less than a dozen.

Even if European or American immigrants wanted to farm the northwest, those involved in the fur trade were determined to prevent this. Colonists wanted fixed boundaries, surveys, roads, and most importantly, land they could own. These goals conflicted with the culture, lifestyle, and economy of the fur traders. Fur traders eventually became the natural allies of Aboriginal peoples, particularly the **Métis**. As you will learn in Chapter 4, both fur traders and Aboriginal communities had everything to lose and very little to gain from colonization.

Métis a person of both Aboriginal and European descent



FIGURE 2–6 This painting shows First Nations hunters and fur traders in their camp. Examine the image and theorize what travel, hunting, and daily life must have been like for this group. What might happen if settlements were built in their lands?

ACTIVITIES

1. Summarize your understanding of life in 19th century British North America in one or two sentences. What stands out for you? The land? Exploration? The potential for conflict?
2. Think about the needs of fur traders, Aboriginal hunters, and farmers (for example, land, water, and food). Create an organizer that shows how these and three other needs might come into conflict.
3. Examine the portrait of the three sisters on page 43. What do you think the women want others to see? What are they trying to say about life in Canada?
4. With a partner, discuss how the lives of Aboriginal inhabitants of the northwest might have been affected by the Hudson's Bay Company. For example, how would hunters have reacted to a company that traded in furs?

Upper Canada

► What was life like in Upper Canada?

In the early 19th century, Upper Canada was the newest of the colonies of British North America. There were few roads. Places 30 or 40 km away from the village of York (which later became Toronto) took more than a day to get to on horseback. Most people had to walk. The forest was very dense, and the hardwood trees had massive trunks and root systems. Clearing the land was usually a newcomer's first task, but it was not possible to clear more than a hectare in a year—an area a little larger than a city block.

The War of 1812 ended in 1815. Invasion attempts by the Americans during this war, and again during the American Revolution, served to reinforce Upper Canada colonists' ties with the British Empire. Colony and community leaders were often members of **Loyalist** families, pensioned British army officers, or members of the British **gentry**. This leadership tended to unite the colony under British rule, and with British laws.



FIGURE 2-7 The corner of Yonge and Dundas streets in Toronto today. These streets were once tracks in the bush.

Loyalist Americans who did not support the American Revolution, many of whom moved to the British colonies

gentry the upper class in Britain



FIGURE 2-8 According to this map showing settlement patterns in 1825, where did most colonists choose to live? Examine a physical map of southern Ontario. What geographic features helped determine settlement patterns?

Daily Life for the Colonists

Did You Know...

Candles and oil for lamps were expensive, so people did not light their houses long after dark. This was not an inconvenience because everyone worked from dawn to dusk and went to bed very early.

clergy people ordained for religious service

mortgage to use something as security for a loan

barter economy an economy based on trading services and products instead of using money

What was it like to live in Upper Canada in the 1820s? If you could travel back in time, you might notice the quiet and the darkness. Those of us who live in modern cities and towns are used to constant noise and light. Colonists heard only the noises of the weather, the barnyard, and work. To colonists, a watermill or a smithy might seem loud. Of course, there was always the sound of music at social gatherings. At night, light came from candles, oil lamps, or the moon; there was no constant glow from streetlights or signs.

People depended on each other and formed close communities. They looked forward to going to church or being visited by a travelling member of the **clergy**. Sometimes communities came together to build a small school and hire a teacher, often paying for the service with food and lodging.

Making a living in farming was hard, as it is for many people today. It took years to raise a crop that could be sold. Almost everybody was in debt at one time or another, and many had to **mortgage** next year's crop to buy supplies. Colonists also depended on a **barter economy**. For example, a farmer might pay the local blacksmith with wheat instead of money. Some colonists built a relationship with First Nations people in the area, learning from their knowledge of the land and the seasons.



FIGURE 2-9 Most newcomers in Upper Canada lived in small log cabins that they built themselves. The buildings shown here are part of Upper Canada Village, a recreated colonial village in Ontario. Do you think the village accurately portrays past life in the colonies?

Zoom In ➤ Aboriginal Farming Changes the World

When Europeans first came to North and South America, they did not find Asia's treasures as they had hoped, but they did find enormous wealth. Not only did they profit from fur, gold, and silver, but they also found that plants farmed by Aboriginal peoples were extremely useful. Some of these plants changed the world forever.

Aboriginal farmers in the Americas cultivated more than 300 varieties of plants, which today equal more than half of the crops grown around the world. The potato, introduced to Europe in 1536, proved to be such an easily grown food that it quickly nourished a population boom. The potato also provided a lesson in the importance of crop diversity. Aboriginal peoples in the Andes had developed more than 3000 varieties of potato, but Europeans took back a limited number, leaving the plants open to disease. In Ireland, a combination of a dependency on potatoes as food and the potato **blight** led to devastating famine.

Corn, or maize, was also an unexpected treasure. First cultivated about 9000 years ago in what is now Mexico, it was eventually grown throughout North America. Today, corn is one of the most common crops in the world, and is used in thousands of different products, from plastics to fuel.

The most influential crop to leave the Americas was cotton. The soft fibre of the cotton plant can be spun into thread, which can then be woven into cloth. Aboriginal peoples in South America had been harvesting cotton to make clothing for centuries. They grew long-fibre cotton, suitable for European mass production. Soon millions of bales of cotton were spurring the invention of the Spinning Jenny, the Water Frame, and other machines made to spin and weave cotton quickly and efficiently. By 1850, cloth would make up half of England's exports. The machinery of this booming industry needed

a workforce, and soon thousands of people were working in factories. The industrial revolution had begun.

- What other crops grown in Canada today have been imported from other areas of the world? Why might this still happen?

blight a disease caused by mold, fungus, or bacteria that can kill plants



FIGURE 2-10 Aboriginal peoples grew corn with two other plants—beans and squash. Known as the Three Sisters, the plants provided nutrients and shade for each other, and they were always grown together. This painting of the Three Sisters is by Carson Waterman of the Seneca Nation. What other Aboriginal products and technologies would be adopted by Europeans?



FIGURE 2–11 Colonists from neighbouring farms often worked together. Clearing land was hard, time-consuming work. How are land clearing and construction different today? Explain both the advantages and disadvantages of this work during colonial times and today.

The Importance of Social Class

Most people today tend not to judge others based on who their parents are. This was not the case in Upper Canada, where family background meant a great deal—especially to the upper class. Upper-class people wanted to keep the privileges they enjoyed in Britain when they came to Canada, but life in the colonies had ways of removing some of the barriers between social classes. Many children of British aristocrats, as well as retired British army officers, came to settle in the colony only to discover that they had to do the back-breaking labour of clearing and maintaining a farm. Cheap labour and servants were simply not as readily available as they had been in Britain.

Most colonists, no matter what their background was, needed the cooperation of their neighbours. Some people adapted easily to this new fact of life, but others did not. Many continued to think of Britain, not Upper Canada, as their real home. Educated newcomers were often so interested in what happened in Britain that they even sent their children to England to be educated. They did not see themselves as Canadians, but rather as British people transforming a raw land into part of the British Empire.

The efforts of the ruling classes in both Upper and Lower Canada to become richer and more powerful eventually brought them into conflict with poorer colonists who were attracted to American-style democracy, something that the upper classes feared. To counter this, Britain tried to copy its own society in its Canadian colonies, complete with gentry, large **estates**, and **tenant farmers**. These plans angered immigrants who had hoped to escape the **class system** of their homelands. Unfair land policies and bad government based on privilege would set the stage for violent confrontation between the classes in the colonies.

estate a tract of land often covering thousands of hectares, owned by one person

tenant farmer someone who farms land owned by someone else, keeping part of the produce as payment

class system a society in which those born into privileged groups have rights and advantages that others do not

Get to the Source • The Family Compact

The **Family Compact** was a small group of upper-class officials who made up the Executive Council of Upper Canada after 1812. They had control over the government, over who got government jobs, and over the spending of tax money.

On a social level, they were snobs. Others were simply not welcome into their clique—you may have seen this kind of behaviour happen in your school. Even aristocrats newly arrived from Britain had a hard time breaking into the Family Compact. All members knew each other, and they were often related. They even dressed alike.

- Why do you think the Family Compact operated as a clique? How does a clique maintain control? Discuss these questions with a classmate.
- Examine the quotation and the image shown here. What do they tell about how the upper class was seen in the past?

- Are there modern-day equivalents to the upper class? Do they still have political power? Explain.

Family Compact the small group of wealthy elite who controlled government in Upper Canada

Château Clique the wealthy elite who controlled Lower Canada, mostly made up of English-speaking merchants

They dress well and expensively, and are very particular to have their clothes cut in the newest fashion. Men and women adopt the reigning mode so universally that they look all dressed alike... if green was the prevailing colour, every lady would adopt it, whether it suited her complexion or not...

—Susanna Moodie, colonist and author



FIGURE 2–12 Members of the ruling class were known as the Family Compact in Upper Canada and the **Château Clique** in Lower Canada. In this painting, some of the Château Clique watch the launching of the steamship *Royal William*. Compact and Clique members invested in ships and canals with government money. Why do you think they would do so?

The Problem of Land

Almost everybody who came to Upper Canada wanted to own and farm land. Those who chose not to farm worked in industries that supported agriculture, such as selling seed, blacksmithing, and making wagons. But many colonists arrived to find that much of the good land was already owned by **absentee landlords** and **land speculators**. This was not what immigrants had expected. Advertising campaigns led people to believe that they could get good, cheap farmland close to towns and markets.

absentee landlord a person who owns and rents out a property, but does not live in the region

land speculators those who buy property at a low price and sell it at a higher price, usually without spending much of their own money

Those who held the best land in Upper Canada were members of the Family Compact. Other colonists resented the money the Compact members made at the expense of others. Speculators took ownership of large areas of prime land in Upper Canada and kept much of it off the market. The land they did sell went for high prices. Many colonists had no option but to go to remote areas that had inferior land, which was all they could afford. They often suffered great hardship as they struggled to raise crops on poor soil.

Even members of the gentry were duped by land speculators. The problem of land was at the root of the anger people felt toward the Family Compact and the colonial government of Upper Canada. This issue would become one of the major causes of the Rebellions of 1837.

Crown and Clergy Reserves

Crown and clergy reserves were blocks of land set aside to provide income (through sale or rent) for the government and for the Anglican Church—in total, two-sevenths of all the land in Upper Canada. For the most part, these lands stayed uncleared and unoccupied. Since colonists had to build their own roads, no roads existed within the reserves. When travelling, farmers had to journey around these blocks of land—a waste of time and a source of irritation. Moreover, the reserves often tied up prime farmland, causing the value of available land to rise even higher. Remember—to a colonist, land was everything.

The Role of the British Government

Upper Canada's land problems were mainly the result of attitudes in the British government and the desire to duplicate the English model of land ownership in Canada. England was divided into large estates controlled by aristocrats, so the British government believed that aristocrats would be the best rulers for the colonies. Privileged owners of large blocks of land were also more likely, in the government's view, to maintain strong ties with Britain and its institutions.

This view was contrary to the views of many immigrants, especially those from the United States. They thought that people should succeed on their own merits and efforts, and that many principles of British policy were discriminatory and anti-democratic.

The last thing Britain wanted was to allow colonists to adopt American attitudes and values, which had previously led to the American Revolution and the loss of the Thirteen American Colonies. One upper-class British colonist wrote the following excerpt:



FIGURE 2–13 Colonel Thomas Talbot controlled a huge tract of land in Upper Canada. More than 30 000 people lived on his lands, and Talbot interviewed all of them. Those he did not like were refused. Why might he have had that kind of power?

These immigrants, having generally been of the lowest class of society in their respective countries... as soon as they arrive in Canada, begin to assume an appearance of importance... they are [tireless] in acquiring a knowledge of the Rights of Man, The Just Principles of Equality, and The True Nature of Independence and, in a word, of everything which characterizes an American; and they quickly become divested of common manners and common civility... indeed this latter virtuous quality is rather uncommon on this side of the Western Ocean.

Britain's plans for Upper Canada were first implemented in the late 1700s, continuing even after the War of 1812. It was difficult to attract important aristocrats to Upper Canada, but many junior members of such families were interested. Usually, younger sons could not hope to inherit land in Britain, so the promise of their own estate in the colonies was very tempting.

In Upper and Lower Canada the government allowed speculators such as the Canada Land Company to buy huge tracts of land at low prices in order to sell it to the British gentry. By 1815, almost half of the good farmland in Upper Canada was owned by speculators, who were also part of the Family Compact.

At the same time, some First Nations leaders, such as leaders of the Mohawks in Upper Canada, worried that their lands would be sold off by Britain. Other First Nations signed treaties in attempts to secure land for their people. These attempts were not completely successful.



FIGURE 2–14 York (left) was the capital of Upper Canada. It grew rapidly in the 1830s, with new buildings designed by English architects. The same area today is downtown Toronto (right). Use these images to assess continuity and change in downtown Toronto. How are things the same? How are they different?

British colonies also existed in Asia, Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, where colonists displaced Aboriginal peoples and disrupted or destroyed their cultures. In New Zealand, the Maori resisted British colonizers in the New Zealand Wars, a series of conflicts fought between 1843 and 1872.

In 1840, when New Zealand was made a British colony by royal proclamation, the new governor negotiated a treaty between the Maori and the British government. Called the Treaty of Waitangi, it promised to protect Maori land rights if the Maori became British citizens. Not all Maori liked the treaty, and neither did many colonists, who felt that they had a right to own the land. Conflicts arose when the government began to break the treaty, gradually selling Maori land to colonists.

The Maori, who had settled in New Zealand after travelling from Polynesia centuries before, were numerous, well organized, and used to fighting. However, internal conflict among the Maori ensured that the fighting would last for years. By the end of the wars, the Maori lost huge tracts of land—more than 16 000 km²

were confiscated by the government as punishment for the “rebellion.” Although about half was eventually paid for, the loss of the land deeply affected Maori society. To this day, struggle for land rights and compensation continues in the courts.

Did You Know...

The Maori see land as being important not only to their survival, but to their identity. This feeling of belonging is called *turangawaewae*, “a place to stand.”



FIGURE 2–15 In 2008, demonstrators in New Zealand commemorate the signing of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi. Give reasons why the government was able to ignore and break this treaty.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. How is the experience of the Maori in New Zealand similar to that of Aboriginal peoples in Canada? How is it different? What were the consequences in both countries?
2. Research the New Zealand Wars or the treatment by colonists of Australia’s Aboriginal peoples. Create an organizer on colonialism that shows its goals and its effects on Aboriginal societies.

ACTIVITIES

1. Colonists hoped to find land in Upper Canada. Identify three barriers they faced, ranking them in importance.
2. Identify one or two early signs of conflict in the colonies. Who was involved, and why was there unrest?

The Immigrant Experience

► Why did so many people immigrate to British North America?

No one who lived in the colonies could have been prepared for the waves of immigrants that arrived after the War of 1812. They settled in both Upper and Lower Canada. Many English-speaking immigrants settled in the Eastern Townships. Elsewhere in Lower Canada, French culture prevailed and life based on the **seigneurial system** continued as it had for generations. Soon, however, the lack of farmland would become a problem.

Most immigrants came from Britain, the United States, and Europe. Attracted by promises, immigrants soon learned the realities involved in leaving home. For many the first rude awakening was the journey across the Atlantic Ocean, which was expensive and dangerous.

Leaving home was highly emotional. Immigrants knew that they would likely never again see those they left behind. Such separation is difficult to imagine today, when it takes only hours to travel by plane between Canada and Europe. At that time, it took more than a month to travel by ship to the colonies—a journey some immigrants did not survive, especially the poorest people, who had to endure passage in the infamous **coffin ships**.

seigneurial system the system of landholding in New France; seigneurs were given estates and responsibilities to settle the land and oversee its administration

coffin ship a death ship; disease and death were common on cargo vessels used to carry passengers at this time

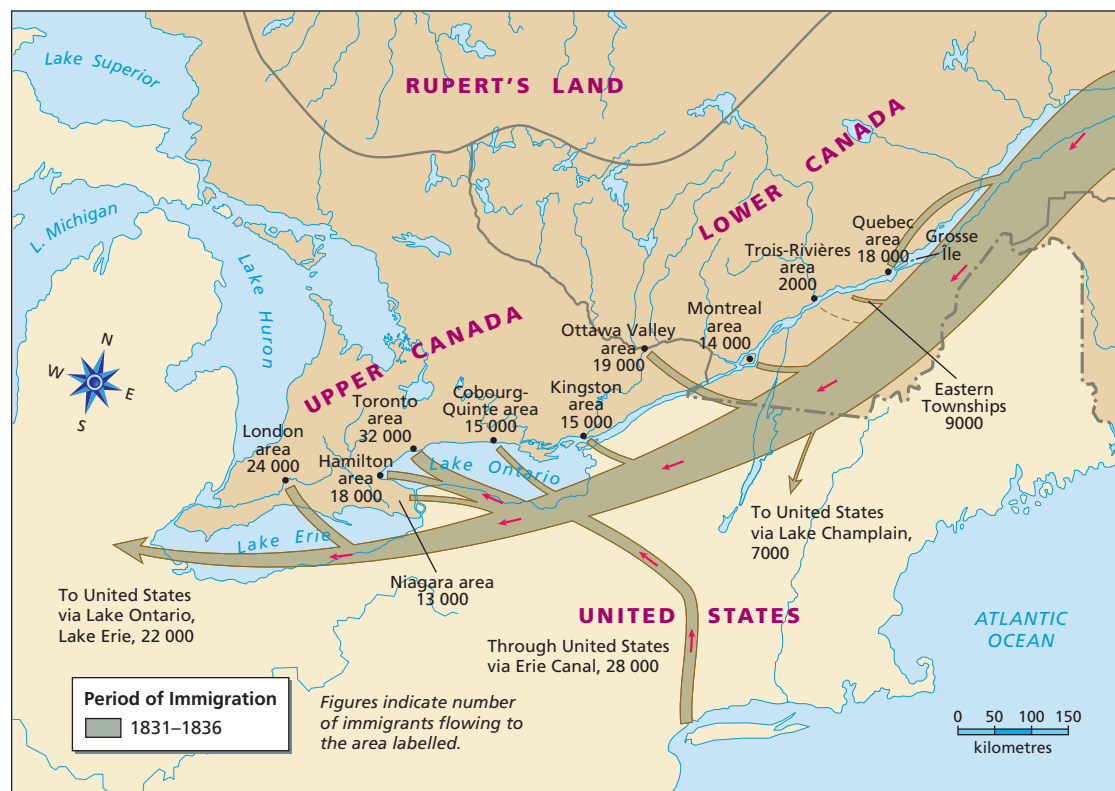


FIGURE 2-16 This map shows the movement of immigrants to Upper and Lower Canada between 1831 and 1836. By 1831, Quebec City was 45 percent English speaking. How do you think the French-speaking population perceived this trend?

Deadly Journeys

Britain's overpopulated cities and countryside provided Canada with many new immigrants. Poor farmers from Ireland and Scotland were motivated by the chance to own land, but few could afford to travel in above-deck cabins on good ships. Instead they travelled in **steerage** in filthy, overcrowded cargo vessels.

The owners of cargo ships realized that they could make money if they converted their ships to carry passengers when they were sailing without cargo. Steerage holds were equipped with bunks, but there were no bathrooms. Poor food, bad hygiene, and crowded conditions made disease inevitable. Cholera, smallpox, and other diseases killed thousands of immigrants. Entire ships would be quarantined when they reached North America. In 1832, half of all immigrants who made it to the colonies were seriously ill.

steerage the area below decks on a ship, used to store cargo

WEB LINK

Learn more about the immigrant journey to Upper and Lower Canada on the Pearson Web site.



FIGURE 2–17 Those hopeful for a new life in British North America pay for their passage at a busy emigration agent's office in London. Why might an artist choose to depict this scene? What else might illustrate the immigrant experience of that time?

Did You Know...

Immigrants were expected to feed themselves during the voyage, which could take weeks. They would starve if they did not bring enough food for the journey.

Immigration into Canada from Great Britain 1815–1850

1815	680	1824	8774	1833	28 808	1842	54 123
1816	370	1825	8741	1834	40 060	1843	23 518
1817	797	1826	12 818	1835	15 573	1844	22 924
1818	5136	1827	12 648	1836	34 226	1845	31 803
1819	23 534	1828	12 084	1837	29 844	1846	43 439
1820	17 921	1829	13 307	1838	4577	1847	109 680
1821	12 955	1830	30 574	1839	12 658	1848	31 065
1822	16 013	1831	58 067	1840	32 293	1849	41 367
1823	11 355	1832	66 339	1841	38 164	1850	32 961

Cultural Diversity in Colonial Canada

How is history written, and who tells it? The most popular journals and accounts of life in the colonies of British North America were written by relatively well-to-do English-speaking people. However, many colonists in Upper Canada did not consider themselves to be English—they were American, Irish, or Scottish. They brought their language, culture, music, values, and traditions with them.

In Lower Canada, which had previously been the French colony of New France, the population was mostly **Francophone**, with a distinct culture and history. Their desire to remain distinct from English-speaking groups often led to conflict, as you will read in this chapter and later in *Horizons*.

In the past, historians often ignored the achievements and histories of Aboriginal peoples and non-English immigrants. The contributions of women were not discussed, which tells us a great deal about how history is recorded. If the contributions of some groups are highlighted and others are ignored, how accurate can our knowledge of the past be? By detecting this kind of discrimination, we learn to pay more attention to those who have been ignored. We also learn about peoples' values and attitudes in colonial times, especially their belief that Europeans had a duty to “civilize” the world. Ideas like these were taught in schools and churches for many years, even well into the 1950s. The contributions of other cultural groups and of women were neglected, and few history books even acknowledged them.

Francophone a French-speaking person

Did You Know...

Celtic music, mostly from Scotland and Ireland, is one of the roots of today's popular music, particularly rock and roll and country music.

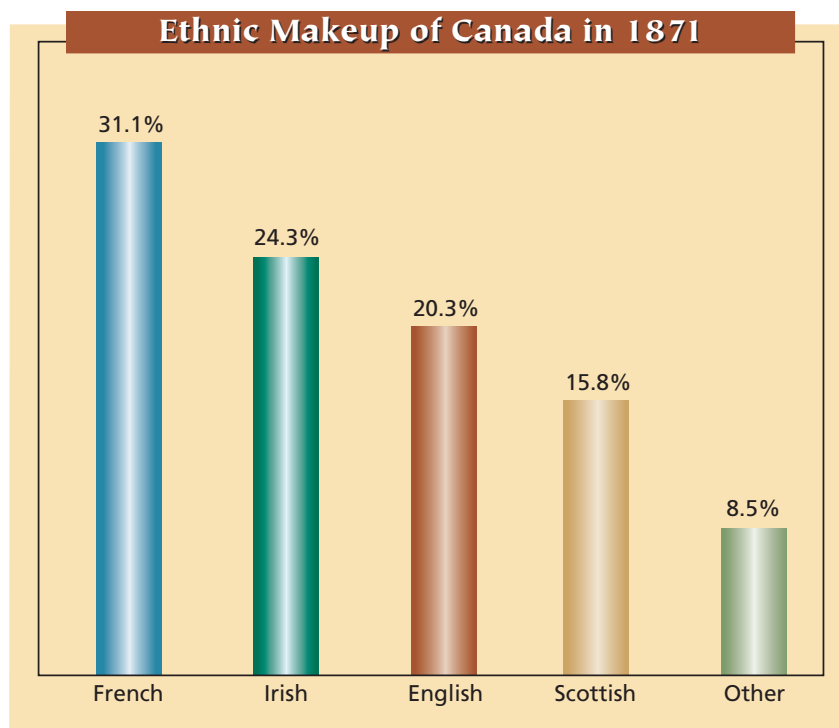


FIGURE 2-18 In this graph, “Other” refers to Black people, Aboriginal peoples, other Europeans, and Asians. What is the majority group shown here? What challenges did minorities face in colonial Canada?

TIMELINE

A Partial History of Black Canadians

- 1606** ● Mathieu Da Costa, Champlain's interpreter, aids in exploration of the east coast
- 1776–1783** ● Black Loyalists immigrate to Canada
- 1793** ● Chloe Cooley is forcibly taken to America to be sold
● Governor Simcoe passes an Act to limit and then abolish slavery in Upper Canada
- 1812** ● Black Militia fight in the War of 1812
- 1837** ● Black Militia units fight against rebels
- 1851** ● The North American Convention of Coloured Freemen is held in Toronto
- 1853** ● *Provincial Freeman* newspaper is founded in Windsor, Ontario
● Mary Ann Shadd becomes the first woman editor in Canada

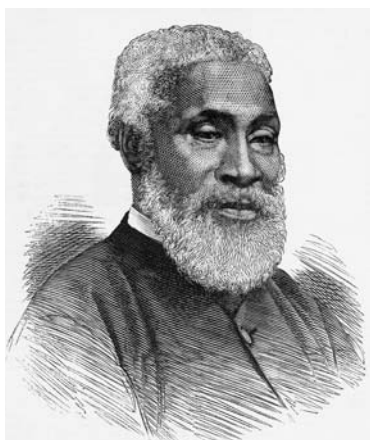


FIGURE 2–19 Find out more about Josiah Henson and the Dawn Settlement. What were the contributions of Henson and other Black immigrants to the development of Upper Canada?

Black Canadians

The deep wound that slavery inflicted on North American society would not be easily healed. Slavery existed in New France from the mid-1600s to the 1700s, and many loyalists brought slaves with them into Canada during the American Revolution. Although slavery was abolished everywhere in the British Empire in 1833, courts in Upper and Lower Canada refused to support slavery well before that date. In fact, slavery came to an end in Upper and Lower Canada long before it did anywhere else in North America. In 1793, Chloe Cooley, an enslaved Black woman, was forcibly taken from Upper Canada to the United States to be sold. Governor John Simcoe added this incident to his arguments against slavery in Upper Canada. By July of that year, an Act was passed to prevent the slave trade in Upper Canada.

One major factor in the abolishment of slavery in Upper and Lower Canada was that most Black Canadians living there were free. In fact, many were refugees from the slave states in America. Also, during the Loyalist wave of immigration, many free Black Americans came to the British colonies as Loyalists and were promised land in return. The Black Militia fought against rebels led by William Lyon Mackenzie in the Rebellions of 1837, when most Black colonists believed that a victory for the rebels would result in American domination of Canada and a return to slavery.

The Underground Railway

Upper Canada became a refuge for Black Americans escaping slavery. They used a network of secret routes and safe houses called the “Underground Railway.” The fugitives usually travelled hundreds of kilometres on foot. Those who supported them often belonged to the Quaker and Methodist churches. They believed that slavery was a sin against God and humankind. Harriet Tubman, a Black activist, helped hundreds of slaves escape through the Railway. Travelling the Underground Railway was risky. If caught, escaped slaves were severely punished.

While Upper Canada offered hope to slaves and a chance for a new and free life, it was not completely free of racial discrimination. Many Black immigrants were not fully accepted, nor did their descendants find a place in government for more than a hundred years. As a result of racism, they lived in communities within communities, sometimes just a few families in a small town. Some independent settlements were also developed, like the one led by Josiah Henson.

Yet there were Black immigrants in every colony of British North America. Those who came during the Loyalist migration tended to settle in the Maritimes, where many of their descendants still live today. In British Columbia, Black colonists were invited to settle by Governor James Douglas. They took up land on Salt Spring Island and elsewhere.



FIGURE 2–20 The Underground Railway was a network of “safe houses” along travel routes that led from the slave-holding American states to the free northern states and to Canada. How do you think slaves might have heard about the Railway?

In the early years, some Black immigrants remembered their lives before slavery and wanted to see their homelands again. Richard Pierpoint, a Loyalist who settled near present-day St. Catharines, Ontario, wrote the following letter. His request was denied, but Pierpoint was granted land. The community he founded would become part of the Underground Railway.

WEB LINK

Find out more about the Black Canadian experience on the Pearson Web site.

Most humbly showeth,

That your Excellency's Petitioner is a native of Bondu in Africa: that at the age of Sixteen Years he was made a Prisoner and sold as a Slave: that he was conveyed to America about the year 1760, and sold to a British officer; that he served his Majesty during the American Revolutionary War in the Corps called Butler's Rangers... That your Excellency's Petitioner is now old and without property; that he finds it difficult to obtain a livelihood by his labour; that he is above all things desirous to return to his native Country; that his Majesty's Government be graciously pleased to grant him any relief; he wishes it might be affording him the means to proceed to England and from thence to a Settlement near the Gambia or Senegal Rivers, from whence he could return to Bondu...

—York, Upper Canada, July 21, 1821

By the mid-19th century, the interests of Black Canadians were represented by the *Provincial Freeman*, a newspaper founded in Windsor, Ontario, by Samuel Ringgold Ward in 1853. Mary Ann Shadd was its first editor, and the first woman editor of any Canadian newspaper. Like other newspapers then and now, the *Freeman* was supported by advertisements. It often published poetry and featured helpful hints, along with local and international news and opinion.

Mary Ann Shadd was well educated. She had escaped from the United States after a law was passed that could have returned her to slave status.

An advocate of Black education, women's rights, and the **abolition** of slavery, she founded a school before becoming editor

of the *Freeman*. Widowed when her children were still small, Shadd also attended law school in the United States, but was denied graduation because she was a woman. She was finally able to practise law at age 60.

- Research Mary Ann Shadd to learn more about her life and accomplishments. Using this evidence, theorize about her historical significance. What “big story” would you say she is a part of? Why?

abolition putting a legal end to slavery



FIGURE 2–21 Mary Ann Shadd's strength of character is evident in this photograph.

You have a right to your freedom and to every other privilege connected with it and if you cannot secure these in Virginia or Alabama, by all means make your escape without delay to some other locality in God's wide universe.

—Mary Ann Shadd

Immigrant Women in Upper Canada

I had just finished the first stage of my cooking and was about to shift my character from cook to gentlewoman...

—Mary O'Brien, a colonist in York, Upper Canada

Women colonists in Upper Canada defined themselves in large part according to their social class, which determined their expectations, values, lifestyle, and beliefs. They tended to think of their own success in terms of the success or failure of their fathers and husbands.

In colonial society, almost all women were married. Because they usually did not own property or work outside the home, widows and unmarried women had to rely on relatives for support and a place to live.

WEB LINK

Read about women in Upper Canada and see their diaries on the Pearson Web site.

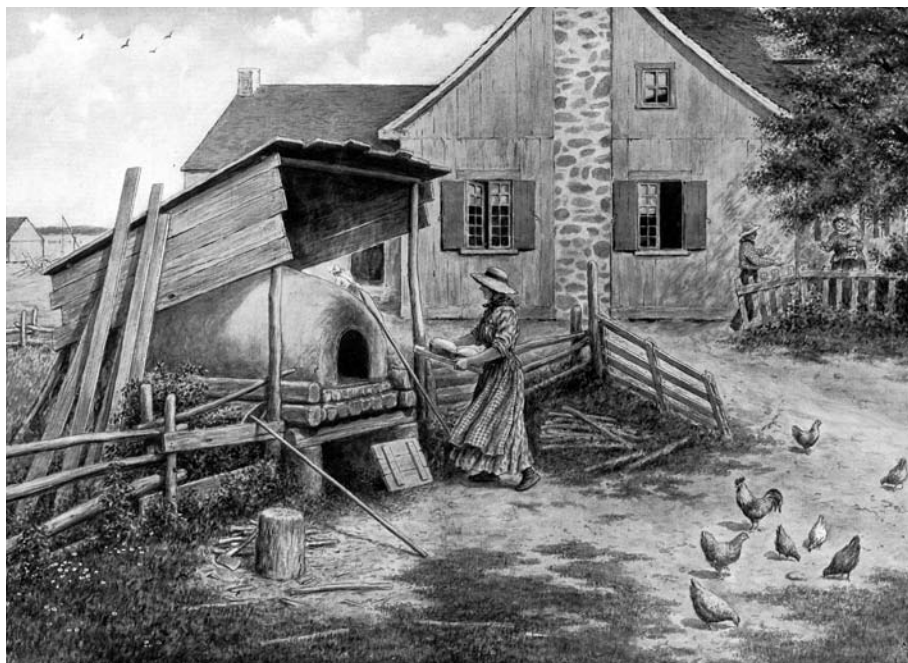


FIGURE 2–22 In colonial society, work came first. This woman is baking bread in an outdoor oven. How might her life compare to yours today?

Divorce did not exist, so choosing the right partner was very important. A good marriage gave a woman status in ways that are difficult to understand today. Even resourceful, educated colonial women such as Susanna Moodie, Catherine Parr Traill, Anna Jameson, and Mary O’Brien seemed preoccupied with the activities of their husbands.

Finding a good marriage prospect for a young woman was so important to families that many social events included matchmaking. Romantic love was deemed less important than friendship and duty, although it was an ideal that many hoped for. Among the upper classes, the match had to be arranged with an “equal” or better. A man might “marry down,” but a woman could never do so because a wife took on the status of her husband.

In colonial Canada, too much work had to be done for anyone to be idle. Even upper-class women had much to do. Mary O’Brien had many friends in government and spent time visiting them, but she also took part in running the farm, as she recorded in her diary:

It was very busy again until twelve o’clock, first in directing my old Yorkshire man how to cut up a fat pig which was slaughtered last night and then in assisting the old Irishwoman to salt and pack away the same. I value myself on being able to put more in a barrel than anyone else except Southby, though this part of the business is usually the province of a man.

WEB LINK

Learn more about Mary O’Brien and the society she lived in on the Pearson Web site.



FIGURE 2–23 British immigrant Anne Langton maintained a comfortable lifestyle in Upper Canada. Her letters and journals, *A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada*, were published in 1950. How do you think her way of life compared to that of the woman in Figure 2–22? How are the lives of these women similar to the lives of women today?

Clearing farmland in the forest was hard work, and completion often depended on help from others. This cooperation tended to break down social barriers, which many appreciated. For immigrant women, hard work and long hours were the norm. Division of labour was one sided; men were not expected to look after household tasks, such as cooking, washing, or sewing, but women helped with planting, harvesting, and other farm jobs. All colonial women learned how to preserve food and to make candles and soap.

Colonial women were expected to have large families, especially in farming communities where children were needed to help with chores. For women, childbirth was an additional risk in a society where life expectancy was not high. Medical care was expensive and often hard to obtain. Overcrowding and poor sanitation in small colonial cabins added to the risks.

ACTIVITIES

1. Create a map to show how and why colonists came to Upper Canada in the early 19th century. Consider country of origin, reasons for leaving the “old country,” and means of transport.
2. The table on page 58 shows British immigration to Canada from 1815 to 1850. Is there a pattern evident in the data? In which years did the numbers change dramatically? Develop a working theory to explain the changes, making connections between events and their causes. At the end of this chapter, reconsider your theory in light of what you have learned.
3. Imagine that you are a Black immigrant to Upper Canada in 1830. Write a short letter to a family member you left behind. Explain how you feel and describe your experiences during your journey on the Underground Railway. You can use the Web link provided to learn more about the experiences of Black immigrants to Upper Canada.
4. How did increasing immigration affect the lives of Upper Canada’s Aboriginal inhabitants? Consider British attitudes about race and class. Create an agenda for a meeting of Aboriginal nations in Upper Canada. What economic, social, and political issues might be discussed?
5. Describe how the roles of men and women were governed by their place in colonial society. Propose what alternatives there might have been for the social structure at that time.

Significance

6. Develop a five-point editorial policy for a colonial newspaper representing the interests of one of the social groups that made up colonial society. Focus your policy on changes your newspaper would want to bring. Explain their significance to colonial society.

Colonial Government and the Need for Reform

► What created the need for government reform in Upper and Lower Canada?

Government in the colonies of British North America was neither representative nor responsible. A **representative government** is made up of people who are elected by voters to make laws on their behalf.

Responsible governments can be voted out if elected representatives fail to please a majority of the people who elected them. Democratic governments are both representative and responsible.

Colonial governments, on the other hand, were indirectly run from Britain. This policy placed power in the hands of a small group of wealthy and influential men—the Family Compact, as you read earlier in this chapter. Rule by a small select group is called an **oligarchy**. Although Britain appointed a governor, he ruled according to the wishes of the oligarchy. As an aristocrat and an outsider, the governor had much more in common with the upper class than with most colonists.

The government of Upper Canada had been established in 1791 by the Constitutional Act. This Act divided Upper Canada from Lower Canada and gave it an elected law-making Legislative Assembly, a governor, and two councils. Since all male citizens who owned property could elect Assembly members, the government appeared to be democratic. However, actual power was in the hands of the governor and the two councils he appointed. They could **veto** any laws passed by the Assembly. Since the councils, whose members came from the Family Compact, had different priorities from those of ordinary colonists, they used their veto power often. They could shut down projects, such as building roads. They ignored problems created by land speculation and crown and clergy reserves. Conflict was bound to occur, and it did.

representative government
a government made up of officials elected to office by the people

responsible government
a government subject to the votes of the people

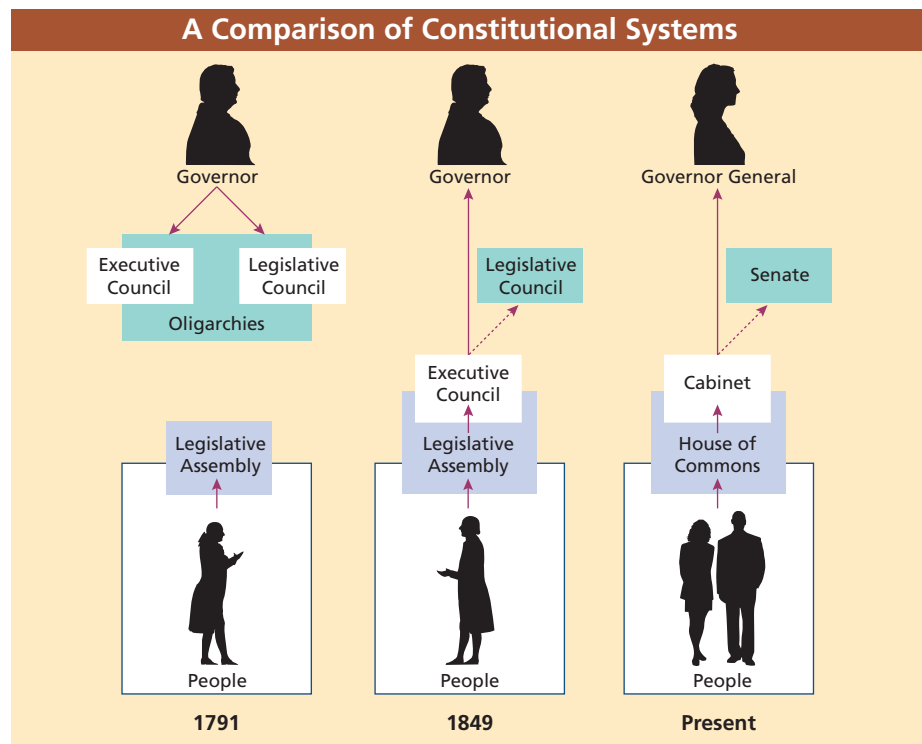
oligarchy rule by a small, select group of people

veto to stop with authority



FIGURE 2–24 This painting shows the first meeting of the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada. Who is present in this room? Who is not present? How do you think attendance by some groups and not others influenced the actions of the Assembly?

FIGURE 2–25 This diagram shows the structure of Upper Canada's colonial government in 1791 and in 1849, after it had been reformed. What are the similarities and differences between the government in 1849 and Canada's government today?



WEB LINK

Learn more about the evolution of Canada's federal government on the Pearson Web site.

A List of Grievances in Upper Canada

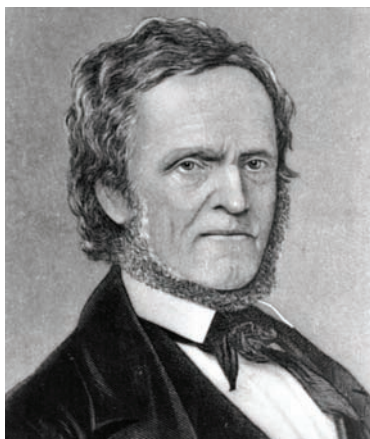


FIGURE 2–26 What aspects of character can you see in this portrait of William Lyon Mackenzie? What message is this image sending to the viewer?

The most extraordinary collection of sturdy beggars, parsons, priests, pensioners, army people, navy people, place-men, bank directors, and stock and land jobbers ever established to operate as a paltry screen to a rotten government...

—William Lyon Mackenzie, writing about the Family Compact

Colonists complained loudly about land and roads. As you have seen, land speculators and absentee landowners overpriced or tied up prime land, while crown and clergy reserves blocked the building of roads that would have connected communities and farmers with their markets.

Most knew that the Family Compact was to blame and did not disguise their anger. When Robert Gourlay, a land agent, surveyed farmers about life in Upper Canada, he was shocked to discover the extent of their discontent with the government and its policies. Gourlay drew up a list of grievances and, with the colonists, a petition demanding change. He was arrested and then sent out of the colony. The government was not interested in listening to complaints, and it was not about to change its policies, no matter what the average farmer thought.

Gourlay's arrest hardened opposition to the Family Compact. Eventually, Gourlay's place as a leader of radical reformers would be taken by another Scot, William Lyon Mackenzie.

Mackenzie had strong political convictions. An argumentative man, he often disagreed with more moderate reformers, such as Egerton Ryerson and Robert Baldwin, who hoped to bring about change through negotiation. Mackenzie took a more aggressive approach. He started a newspaper called the *Colonial Advocate* and published articles that strongly criticized the government and the Family Compact. When angry members of the Compact ransacked his offices and smashed his printing press, he did not back down—he sued. Soon, he was at the centre of a group of people who wanted radical change. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1828 and became one of the most important leaders of the reform movement.



Political Action and Protest

Canadian elections have changed considerably since the 1830s. You might be shocked by what went on at the polls in Upper Canada. There was no secret ballot, as there is now. Voters—men only—had to openly declare whom they would vote for. Votes could be bought, and sometimes voters were intimidated by the supporters of one candidate or another.

Election reform eliminated most of these problems and made elections more honest and fair. Today Canadian elections are more efficient. Canada even sends representatives to other countries to help monitor

elections. However, this does not mean that political protest is a thing of the past. Today Canadians have a legal right—some would say a responsibility—to protest. But how far does that right go?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. “One way to take political action is to exercise your right to vote.” Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? What is the record for voter turnout in Canada today? How does that affect democracy in Canada?

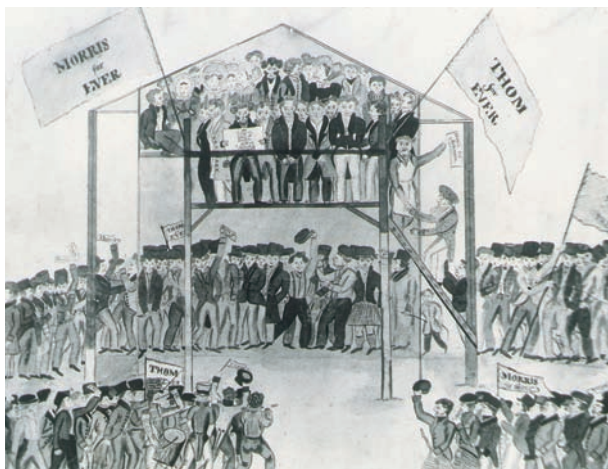


FIGURE 2-27 When voters still had to declare the candidate of their choice, election days often turned into brawls.



FIGURE 2-28 Today, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees our right to protest and to vote.

SKILLBUILDER • Asking Questions

One of the most important tasks that historians and geographers do is to ask questions about their subjects. As a student, you are probably more used to answering questions than asking them. However, asking questions is a way to focus your inquiry and to apply critical thinking skills.

As you read this text, continue to ask questions. You can also write them down as you work through the text. The practice of writing your questions can help you understand the material. It can also uncover new perspectives, inspire fresh ideas, and lead you to new and interesting information.

The 5W + H Model

There are many different types of questions. Most questions follow the 5W + H model. Think of approaching a historical event as if you were a reporter. For example,

if you were approaching the problem of land in Upper Canada, you might look for answers to these questions:

1. **Who** was affected by land division in Upper Canada?
2. **Where** did it happen most often?
3. **When** did it happen?
4. **Why** did it happen where it did?
5. **How** did it affect Aboriginal peoples?
6. **What** could have been done to address the issue fairly?

Factual and Opinion Questions

Factual questions usually require simple, straightforward answers. Other questions are not so straightforward—they can have more than one answer. They may ask someone to provide expert judgement and can bring out different perspectives on a topic.

In the examples of the 5W + H questions shown here, questions 1 to 3 are factual. Question 4 could have a factual answer, or it could require expert opinions to analyze complicated causes. Questions 5 and 6 could require expert judgement and will also draw out different perspectives.

Research Questions

As you work with this text, you will be asked to research different topics as part of your study. Research questions will help you focus your inquiry and find answers more quickly. (Refer to the Skills Tool Kit, page 368, for more information on the research process.)

There are three types of research questions: causal, comparative, and speculative. To find out more about each type of question, examine the table below.

Question Type	History Examples	Geography Examples
Causal (look for causes of events)	What caused the increase of immigration to Upper and Lower Canada?	What geographic features encouraged newcomers to settle in certain areas?
Comparative (make comparisons)	How does life today compare to life for the colonists and Aboriginal peoples of that time?	What differences can be seen between communities of that time and communities today?
Speculative (infer the answer)	How might life have been different for Aboriginal peoples if immigrants had not come to the colonies?	What type of industry would be best suited for the conditions in the colonies at that time?

Critical Thinking Questions

Asking critical thinking questions can help you see beyond what you are reading on the page. These types of questions will also help you understand different perspectives. You will begin to form your

own point of view and defend that position, while discovering what you think and why.

For example, as you study immigration to Upper and Lower Canada after 1814, you may want to ask questions such as these:

1. What is the issue?
2. What are possible solutions?

3. What are the consequences?
4. Whose point of view is expressed? Is there an opposing point of view?
5. What is the significance of this person or event?

APPLY IT

1. Choose a person or topic you have recently studied in this book. Write six questions for which you would like to know the answers.
 - a) What types of questions would you find most useful?
 - b) Which question do you consider the most important? Explain.
2. Look at the map shown below. Explain how the types of questions discussed above can be used to
 3. better understand and analyze the map. Give four examples of questions that can be asked about the map.
 3. Use the questions you created in question 1 to do some additional research on the person or topic. Keep a short journal to explain how the questions helped guide your research. Did the questions change as you went along? Why or why not?



The Situation in Lower Canada

Lower Canada also had serious political problems, which were worsened because the ruling class in Lower Canada was English, and the majority of the population was French. With language and cultural roots dating back to Champlain, French Canadians had never completely adjusted to British rule.

Exposed to the democratic ideals of the French and American Revolutions, and to the democracy of the United States, many French Canadians found British rule without democracy intolerable. Lower Canada's equivalent to the Family Compact, the Château Clique, controlled government and business. It included merchants, such as English brewer and banker John Molson, and former British army officers. The Château Clique was supported by church hierarchy and wealthy French-Canadian landowners. Both had considerable influence in Lower Canada. Even those who were destined to become leaders of the Rebellions of 1837, such as Louis-Joseph Papineau, came from seigneurial families.

The English-speaking minority in Lower Canada still had most of the wealth and power, even though they formed less than one quarter of the population. Many French people believed that the seigneurs and the Church had “sold out” to the English. An attempt to unite Upper and Lower Canada in 1822—and to make English the official language—seemed like an attack on French culture and society.

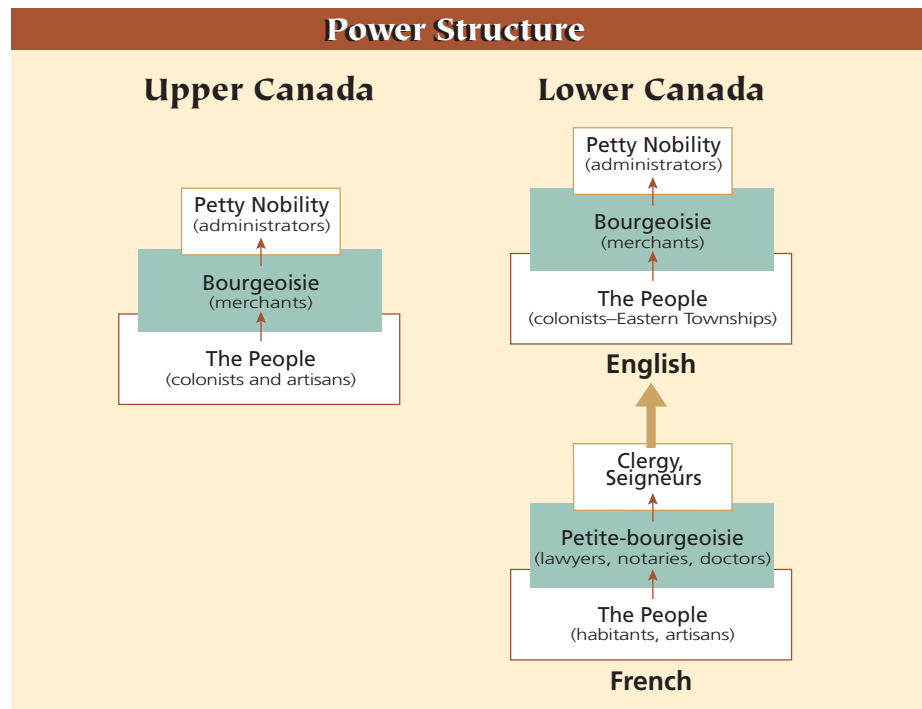


FIGURE 2–29 This chart shows how the population of Lower Canada saw the power structure of their society. Why would the clergy and the seigneurs still have a place in this structure, even after British rule began?

Economic Woes

Lower Canada did not experience the same kinds of land problems that were at the root of discontent in Upper Canada. However, as the population increased, the amount of arable land available was limited, and soil was becoming less fertile. Wheat crops began to fail, and the only alternative was to import wheat from Upper Canada. Unfortunately, this created a huge economic **deficit**. Farmers could only grow enough to feed their families, and the agricultural economy failed.

Many turned to forestry. However, while forestry employed many French Canadians, not everyone had a share in the profits. Also, the new limit on farmland (seigneurs now wanted forests, not farms), created more dissatisfaction among the rural population.

deficit a situation where there is more spending than income

Nationalism

French Canadians mistrusted the English, and feelings of **nationalism** were strengthened by opposition to British rule. These feelings were supported by a need to protect their language and religion. They also feared that Britain might be trying to solve its “French problem” by bringing more English-speaking immigrants into the colony. This trend made the French a minority, weakening them politically and socially.

This situation led to powerful feelings of mistrust. In 1832, when immigrant ships brought a cholera epidemic to Lower Canada, many thought that Britain was trying to kill off the French population with disease.

French Canadians were also frustrated by the undemocratic nature of their government. Most citizens were struggling to pay taxes, some of which paid government salaries, and yet received no voice in return. As in Upper Canada, reformers fought to bring change.

nationalism devotion to the support of one’s culture and nation, sometimes resulting in the promotion of independence



FIGURE 2–30 Louis-Joseph Papineau, shown here giving a speech, got many of his ideas about rebellion and political change from revolutions that were happening in Europe. Why would these ideas alarm the British colonial government?

Three Issues for Reform

WEB LINK

For more information about Louis-Joseph Papineau, visit the Pearson Web site.

Three issues—discrimination against the French, lack of representation in government, and taxes—became the focus of reform in Lower Canada. Louis-Joseph Papineau, leader of the radical reformers, was a powerful public speaker. A seigneur and a lawyer, he had originally supported British rule. Like other French Canadians, he had been optimistic that British rule would bring change for the better. When it did not, he joined in the cause for reform. In 1815, he became Speaker for the Legislative Assembly for Lower Canada. He also became leader of the Parti Canadien, which lobbied for reform.

Not all reform leaders were French—Wolfred Nelson, an English doctor, was mayor of Montreal and later became a leader of the rebel Patriotes. Edmund O’Callaghan, the Irish publisher of the radical

newspaper, *The Vindicator*, also joined the Patriotes. They all believed that the Assembly should have control of the government’s budget, and they wanted a democratic system.

In rival newspapers, and in the Assembly, the Château Clique and the reformers squared off against each other. Britain did little to ease the tension. In 1807, the Colonial Office appointed James Craig as governor of Lower Canada. Craig, who was openly anti-French, immediately arrested those who criticized the government. He also closed *Le Canadien*, a reformer newspaper.

Although French protest brought an end to the Union Proposal of 1822, feelings toward the government grew more hostile. After British soldiers shot protestors in Montreal, Papineau and other reformers submitted “Ninety-Two Resolutions” to the governor. These resolutions were demands for major changes in the colonial government. Lord John Russell, in charge of the Colonial Office in Britain, replied three years later with “Ten Resolutions” that denied the rights of the Assembly. After 30 frustrating years of attempting political reform, Papineau and his Patriotes openly rebelled against the government.

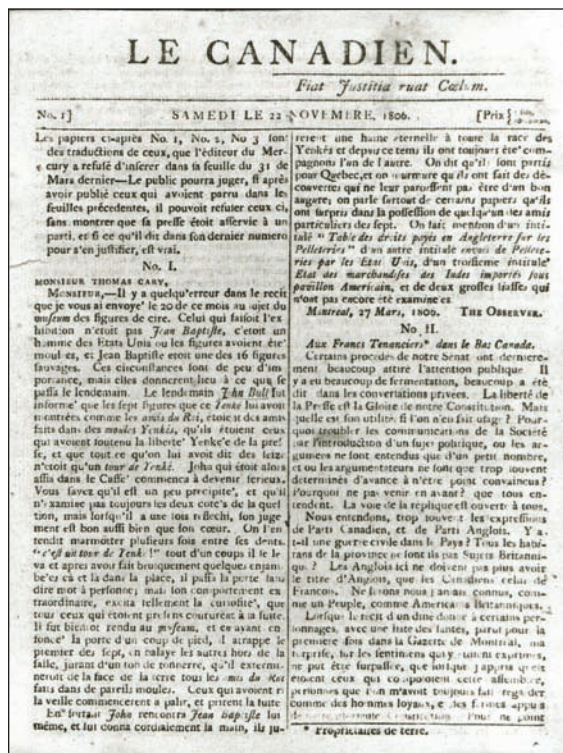


FIGURE 2-31 The reformers openly criticized the government in their newspapers. What could be the advantages and disadvantages of this?

ACTIVITIES

1. In a table or a Venn diagram, summarize the main ideas that eventually led to rebellion in Upper and Lower Canada.
2. List at least three examples that show how the governments of Upper and Lower Canada were not democratic. Rank them according to importance.
3. How did language and cultural differences emphasize discontent in Lower Canada? What could have been done differently? Are there any examples of this divide today?
4. Write an editorial that either supports or defies government reform in Upper or Lower Canada. Suggest an effective solution to the problems being faced.

The Rebellions of 1837

► What were the events and consequences of the Rebellions of 1837?

Reformers in the colonies of British North America were in constant contact with each other, sharing their views on government, and exchanging possible solutions to problems, even though their goals were sometimes different. For example, language was not an issue in Upper Canada as it was in Lower Canada. Reform leaders realized that change in one colony would set a pattern for change in the other. When it became clear that the government could not be reformed from within, Mackenzie and Papineau prepared for armed rebellion.

Rebellion in Lower Canada

Since Britain did not have enough troops to fight rebels in both colonies, leaders planned to coordinate their revolts. However, while Papineau was busy organizing protests and assemblies, armed rebellion suddenly broke out when a group of Patriotes chose to resist arrest. A branch group of the Patriotes, the more militant *Fils de la Liberté* (Sons of Liberty) soon joined in. This group had been openly parading with their weapons in the streets of Montreal, and were ready for a fight.

Full rebellion began with the attempted arrest of Papineau, who quickly fled to the United States. The battle moved to the countryside. Led by Wolfred Nelson, the Patriotes took Saint-Denis, a village in the Richelieu valley. However, the Patriotes soon lost battles in Saint-Charles and Saint-Eustache. By December of 1837, not even a month after it began, the rebellion was over in Lower Canada.

Did You Know...

Although there was also a reform movement in the Maritime colonies at this time, Maritimers did not participate in the rebellions. Instead, government reform was peacefully achieved in those colonies.

WEB LINK

On the Pearson Web site, read first-hand accounts from Patriotes who fought in the Battle of Saint-Charles.



FIGURE 2-32 During the Battle of Saint-Eustache, 1500 British troops surrounded the Patriotes' stronghold, set fire to it, and shot them as they escaped. This drawing is called *Defeat of the Insurgents*. What point of view do you think the drawing illustrates?

Did You Know...

National Patriotes Day is now an official holiday in Quebec, replacing Victoria Day.

If the Catholic Church had supported the rebels in Lower Canada, they might have been successful. Instead, church leaders advised their parishioners to remain loyal to Britain. Also, many people were intimidated by the British army, which had been looting and burning villages.

Encouraged by American supporters, some Patriotes prepared for a second rebellion, which broke out in 1838. Although hoping to cut off communication between Montreal and the countryside and create a full rebellion involving French farmers, the rebels were disorganized and poorly supplied. Unfortunately, many of them also took part in looting the countryside, which did not gain them much support. After one small victory, the rebels quickly scattered when approached by a large British division. There were rumours of further uprisings, but Papineau eventually left for exile in France and the United States, and nothing happened.

Although rebellion in Lower Canada had ended, resentment lingered. To this day, feelings about that period remain a factor in Quebec and Canadian politics.

Rebellion in Upper Canada

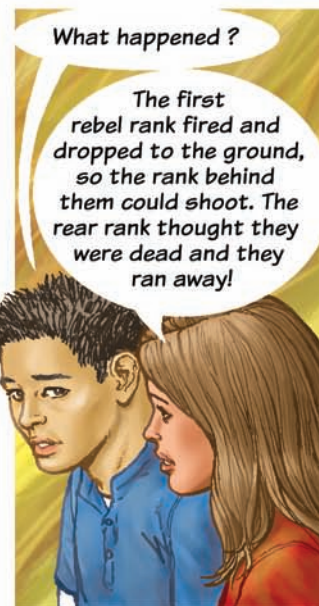
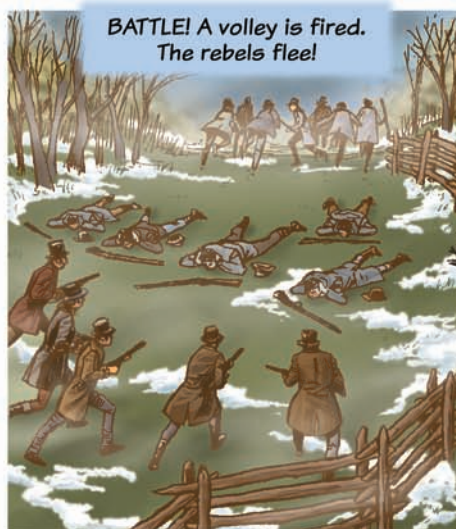
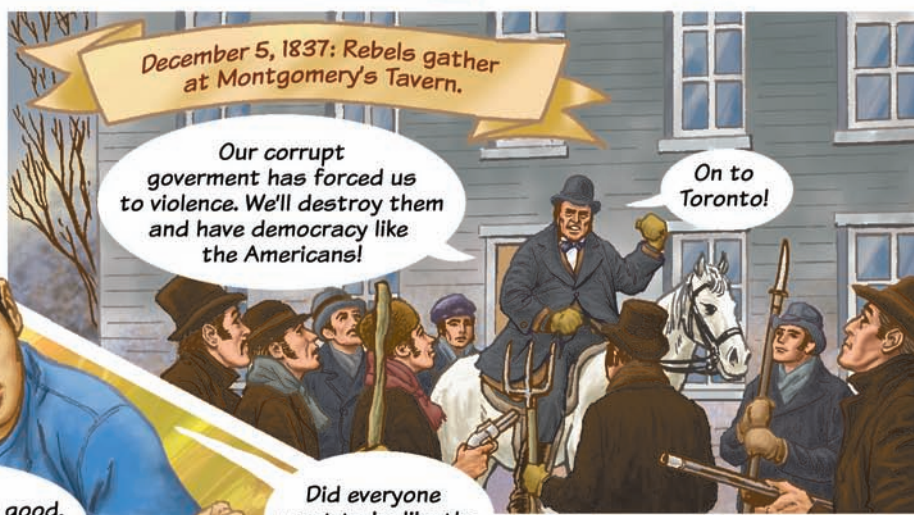
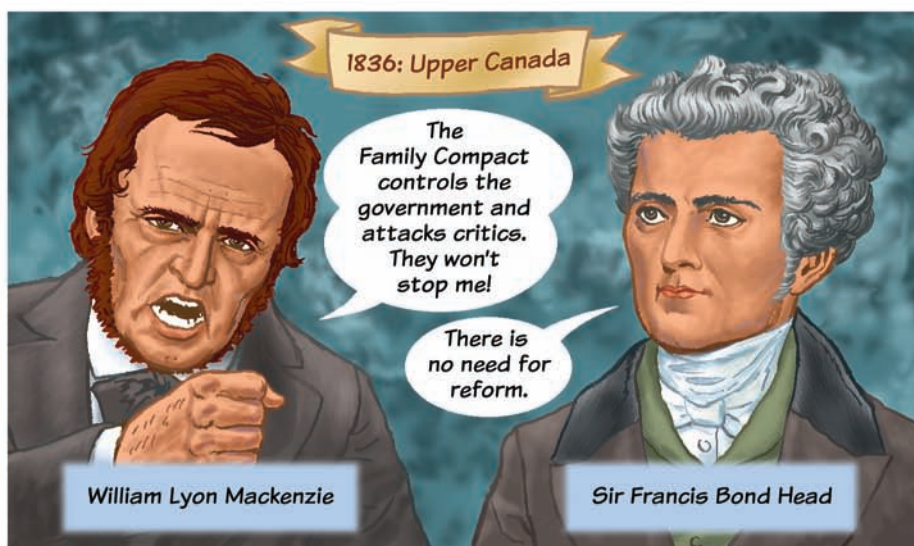
In Upper Canada, Mackenzie and other radical leaders decided that they wanted American-style democracy as well as closer ties to the United States. This decision distanced them from those colonists who saw the United States as an enemy. Nevertheless, many people, including those of Mary O'Brien's social class, wanted better government.

Moderate reformers found their hopes dashed by Lord Russell's Ten Resolutions, which were direct rejections of their requests for government reform, and by the appointment of Sir Francis Bond Head as lieutenant-governor in 1835. Head allied himself with the Family Compact and misused his power. When the Assembly reprimanded him, he dissolved it, and then went on to win a disputed election by advocating loyalty to Britain. Mackenzie took this defeat of the reform movement as a call to arms.

Mackenzie decided to strike after hearing that Head had sent soldiers to Lower Canada, leaving York relatively defenceless. Mackenzie planned to seize weapons and ammunition, take the governor prisoner, and set up a new government. Although he had little support, he chose to attack. Read what happened in Window on Canada.



FIGURE 2-33 Rebels prepare to march on York. Mackenzie spent a great deal of time training farmers to be fighters. Do you think these men would make an effective army? Why or why not?



Continued...

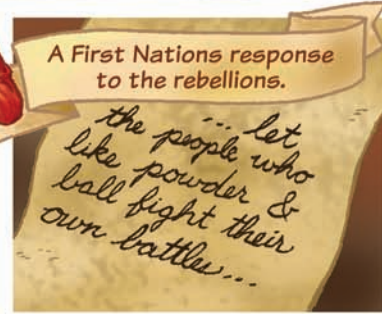


The Rebels have lost. In disguise, Mackenzie flees to the United States.



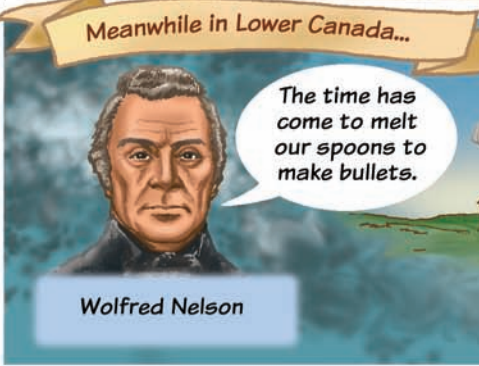
John A. Macdonald fought against the rebels in Upper Canada.

Another Father of Confederation—George-Étienne Cartier—fought with the rebels in Lower Canada.



A First Nations response to the rebellions.

...let the people who like powder & ball fight their own battles...



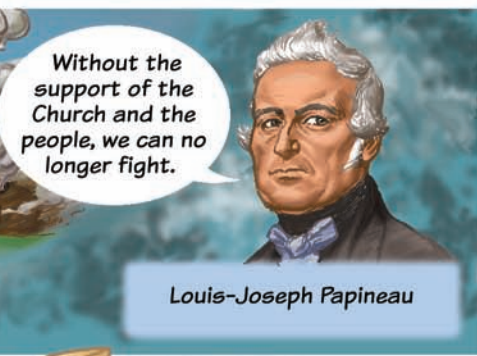
Meanwhile in Lower Canada...

The time has come to melt our spoons to make bullets.

Wolfred Nelson

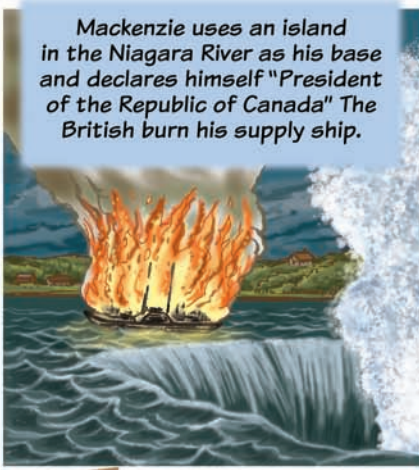


At Saint-Eustache, Patriotes are shot fleeing the burning church.



Without the support of the Church and the people, we can no longer fight.

Louis-Joseph Papineau



Mackenzie uses an island in the Niagara River as his base and declares himself "President of the Republic of Canada" The British burn his supply ship.



Hundreds of rebels were arrested. Some were transported to penal colonies in Australia.

Lount and Matthews were executed, although thousands protested the sentence.

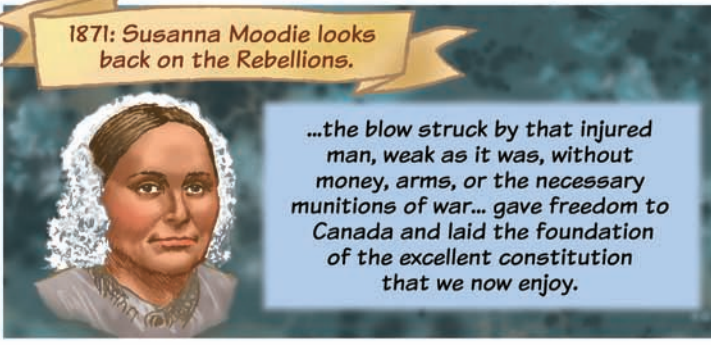


1838: Lord Durham arrives to report on the Rebellions.

He's too radical!

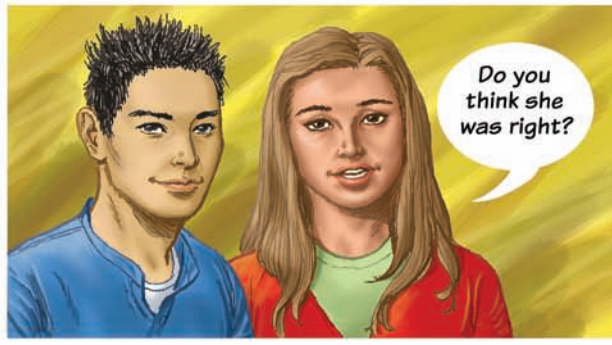
He is too easy on the rebels.

He doesn't like the French.



1871: Susanna Moodie looks back on the Rebellions.

...the blow struck by that injured man, weak as it was, without money, arms, or the necessary munitions of war... gave freedom to Canada and laid the foundation of the excellent constitution that we now enjoy.



Do you think she was right?

Punishing the Rebels

With the rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada now over, captured rebels remained imprisoned. The rebels probably expected little mercy from the government. The British legal code prevailed in the colonies, and it gave the death penalty for **insurrection** against the government. British justice focused on punishment rather than rehabilitation; judges hoped that severe penalties would deter others from committing similar acts. Rebellion against the government was considered a serious crime.

While many were pardoned—including, eventually, Mackenzie and Papineau—some rebel leaders, such as Samuel Lount, were quickly tried and publicly executed by hanging. Others were transported to Tasmania, an island off the coast of Australia. Transportation was a severe punishment in those times. During the long sea voyage to the penal colonies, prisoners were kept in the cramped spaces between decks, chained to the walls. Many died during the journey. Once they arrived, prisoners were used as slave labour, working on plantations, farms, and government projects. Many of Australia's early colonists were transported convicts.

insurrection taking up arms against the government



FIGURE 2-34 Today, a monument in Tasmania honours the exiled rebels from Upper Canada. Why might the exiles be remembered in this way?

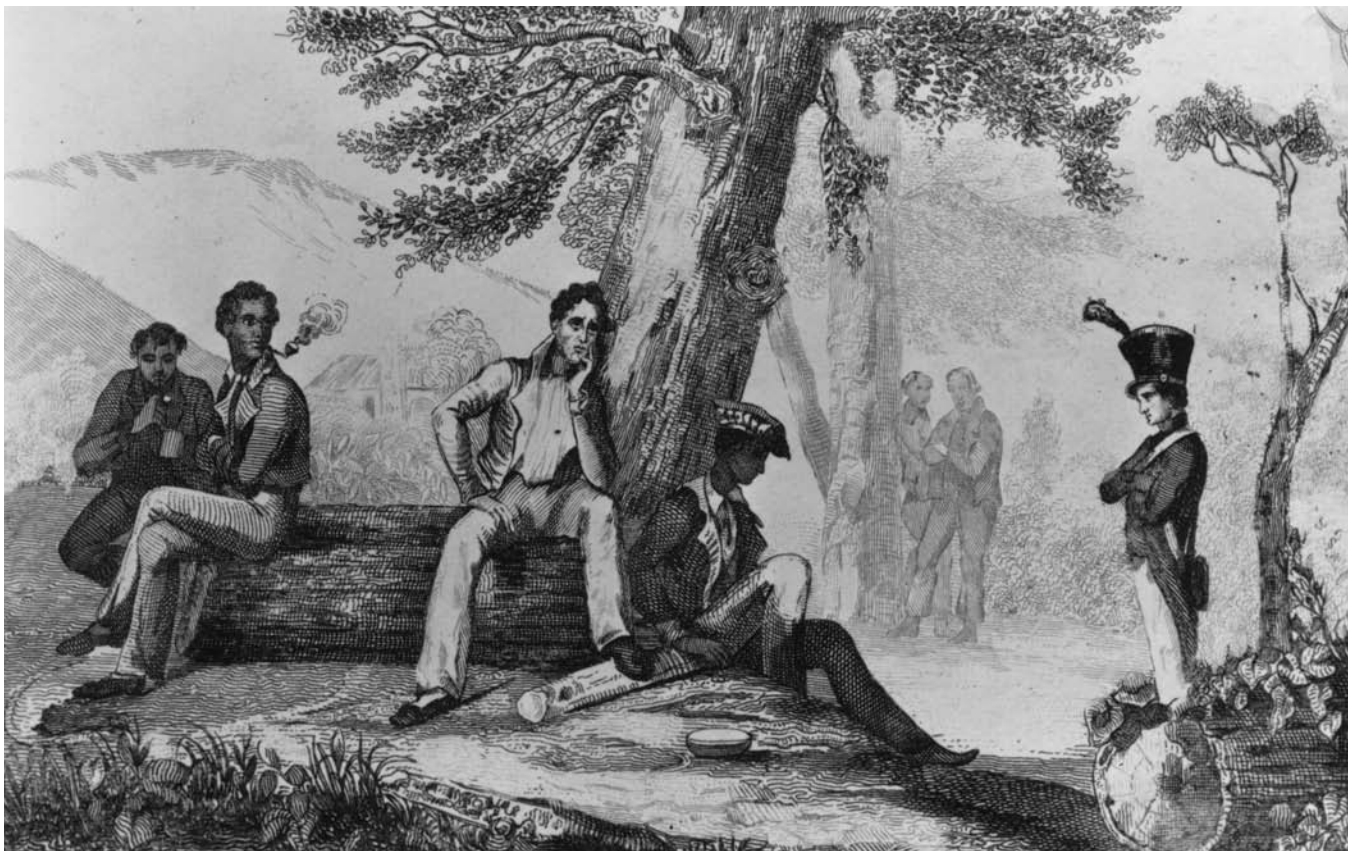


FIGURE 2-35 This image shows convicts who have just arrived in Tasmania—they will soon start work as labourers. The Upper Canada rebels would have had the same experience. Do you think their punishment was just and fair?

The Aftermath

The Rebellion in Lower Canada ended French-Canadian hopes for justice and democracy under the British Empire. The Act of Union, which followed in 1840, joined the colony with English-speaking Upper Canada. Radical ideas were purged, and English became the language of government. While union may have resulted in a larger, stronger colony headed in the direction of a more responsible government, it also brought a sense of loss to many of the residents of Lower Canada. Feelings of loss and betrayal meant that political strife in the Canadas was not at an end, as you will read in the next chapter.

Lord Durham's Report



FIGURE 2–36 Lord Durham was a young British aristocrat who made a fortune from coal mines. How do you think the social class of the reformers might have influenced what they proposed? Try linking your answers to the quotes shown on this page.

I found two nations warring within a bosom of a single state.

—Lord Durham, 1838

The language, the laws and the character of the North American continent are English, and every other race than the English race is in a state of inferiority. It is in order to release them from this inferiority that I wish to give the Canadians our English character.

—Lord Durham, 1838

After the Rebellions of 1837, Britain realized that the old ways of governing the colonies had to change and appointed Lord Durham, a reformer in England, as governor-in-chief of the Canadas. Lord Durham remains a controversial figure. Hailed in English Canada as one of the founders of Canadian democratic government, he has the reputation in French Canada of a racist who wanted to erase French culture.

Durham arrived in the spring of 1838 and immediately upset the powerful Family Compact and Château Clique when he let it be known that things would have to change. Though an aristocrat and a very wealthy man, Durham had progressive ideas. He appointed experts in colonial reform—Charles Buller, Thomas Turton, and Edward Gibbon Wakefield—to his staff. He treated captured rebels as leniently as possible and pardoned most of them. Still, without the Councils and the Assembly, Durham was really a **dictator**. He also ignored many British laws.

dictator a ruler with unrestricted power, without any democratic restrictions

Even though the results of Durham's actions were generally beneficial, he made enemies, particularly among those who had lost property during the rebellions. Many complained about him to Britain. Durham realized he had little support—even his pardons were overturned—so he resigned and went home to England to complete his report.

The Durham Report is an important document in Canada's history. It recommended that Upper and Lower Canada be joined together and given responsible government. It also recommended that all the colonies of British North America be brought together.

However, the Durham Report was not well received in Lower Canada. It proposed the same union that had been rejected in 1822. Durham's opinions about the French were well known, and his solution was to force the French to assimilate into English Canada.

Union and Beyond

Durham had correctly reasoned that peace could never be achieved in Canada without some form of democracy. His recommendations for responsible government came as a result of his own liberal ideas, those of his advisors, and those of moderate reformers such as Robert Baldwin and Louis LaFontaine. This responsible government would not represent an independent country, however. Canada would still be a colony of Britain, which would control external affairs and the military.

Durham proposed changes to the structure of the colonial government, including removing the power of the Legislative Council to make laws. Although Durham's proposal became the basis for our present system of government, governors who followed him were either unwilling or unable to make the change. Nevertheless, reform leaders in both colonies continued to press for responsible government.

A United Canada

Durham's union proposal was accepted by the British government and by his successor as governor, Lord Sydenham. Sydenham was instructed by the British government to bring about unity and, in spite of protests in Lower Canada, used the Act of Union of 1840 to make it happen. In 1841, Lower Canada and Upper Canada ceased to exist. They became the Province of Canada, with Montreal as its capital. Union was accomplished without the support or participation of the French. In fact, the Act of Union even declared that all government documents were to be in English. These actions created problems that even today have not been fully resolved.

Did You Know...

Lord Durham concluded that the real problem in the Canadas was the cultural conflict between the English and the French. As a result, he recommended the assimilation of French culture through union and the immigration of English-speaking people.

Get to the Source • Lord Sydenham Proclaims the Act of Union

Lord Sydenham was business-like and efficient. His job, as he saw it, was to unite the colonies of Upper and Lower Canada and introduce limited self-government, and to do it in ways that did not overly upset reformers or French Canadians.

However, the Act of Union, which Sydenham engineered, was seen as tremendously unfair to French Canada. It made English the language of government, and took seats away from Lower Canada. (Even though the population of Lower Canada was much greater than that of Upper Canada, the two provinces had the same number of representatives in the Legislature.) As well, citizens of Lower Canada were expected to help pay off the debts of Upper Canada.

- Read this extract from Sydenham's Act of Union speech. As you read, imagine that you are a French Canadian in the 1840s. What would you feel as you read or heard the speech? Would anything make you doubt Sydenham's word?

In obedience to the commands of the Queen, I have this day assumed the government of the province of Canada. Upper and Lower Canada, separated for 50 years, are once more re-united and henceforward will form but one province under one administration. Efforts have been... made to deceive the unwary, and especially some of our fellow subjects of French origin, upon this point: to represent these provisions as [harmful]... and to excite opposition which can only prove as mischievous as it must be useless. I rely, however, on these efforts proving unavailing, and I appeal with confidence to the loyalty and good sense of the inhabitants of Lower Canada, of whatever origin, so to use the power which is now again committed to their hands as to justify the trust which our Sovereign and the Imperial Parliament have reposed in them and cordially to join in an endeavour to promote the common interest of the united province...

—Lord Sydenham, 1841

ACTIVITIES

1. Who do you think was responsible for the rebellions? In your opinion, did the rebellions fail? Keep your answer in mind as you continue reading the following chapter.
2. Create a timeline for each of the rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada. Identify key events, and briefly describe the significance of each event you include.
3. Develop a “position paper” for the colonial government regarding the rebellions. Represent the wishes of either the Family Compact or the Château Clique.
4. Explain why Aboriginal peoples tended to avoid involvement with the Rebellions of 1837.
5. Examine Lord Durham's words on page 78. Explain why it would have been difficult for French Canadians to see Durham in a positive light. Do you think Durham's ideas were unusual in his day? Why would Durham not have been more guarded about what he said, as modern politicians often are?

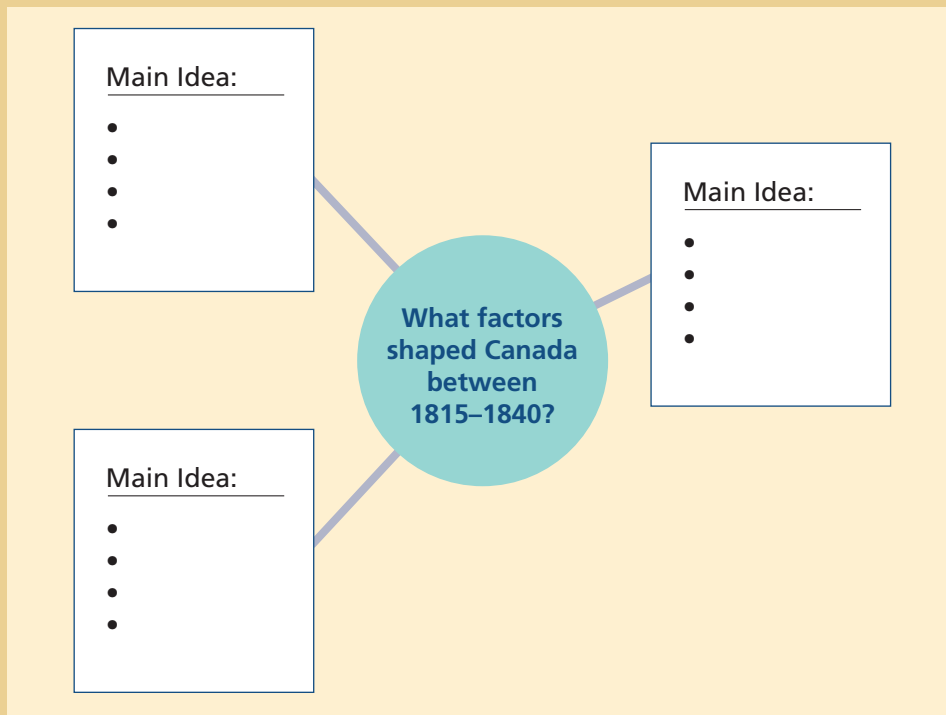
Significance

6. Discuss the significance of the following for both English and French Canadians: a) the Rebellions of 1837, and b) the Act of Union.

Explore the Big Ideas

You have read about life in Canada between 1815 and 1840, and have a better understanding of the impact of immigration on the economy, society, politics, and people of Upper and Lower Canada. You have learned about the interaction between Aboriginal peoples, immigrants, and the government. You have also learned about the Rebellions of 1837, ultimately leading to union and responsible government.

1. What factors shaped Canada at this time? Use an organizer like the one below to show your thoughts on this question. Consider main ideas such as geography, immigration, Aboriginal peoples, social class, the actions of individuals, and changes in government. Decide if certain factors can be grouped together, include supporting details, and explain your organization of the information.



2. What was life like for people living in colonial Canada? Research at least two primary sources to find information about life for men or women in Upper or Lower Canada. Create a journal entry describing a day in that person's life.
3. Why would anyone decide to go against the British government, the most powerful empire of that time? Create a chart to show

the events and players of the rebellions in both Upper and Lower Canada. How were the rebellions similar? What were the differences? Indicate what you think was the most important factor that led to the rebellions and explain your thinking.

4. Debate the following statement: "Based on its origins, Canada does not deserve a reputation as a 'peaceful country.'"

The debate should be properly organized with speakers for and against the proposal, rebuttals, and all other elements of formal debate.

5. Choose an event listed in one of the timelines in this chapter. Explain in a few short sentences both the causes and the consequences of the event.