



## The American Revolution and the Loyalists.

- Not everyone believed in separation from the Crown (approximately one-third supported the Crown, one third supported the Continental Congress, and the final third were ambivalent), causing a great number (called “Loyalists”) to head north for British territory outside of the Thirteen Colonies.
- These Loyalists came from a variety of different backgrounds: English, Irish, Scottish, Dutch, German, Scandinavian, as well as many Americans born in the Thirteen Colonies.

From the *Black Loyalist Heritage Centre (Nova Scotia Museum)*:

- In 1775, Lord Dunmore, the Royal Governor of Virginia, had a strategy to subdue the rebellious Colonists. He offered freedom to any slave who would escape from his rebel master and fight on the side of those loyal to the British Crown. More than 300 Black People immediately found their way behind British Lines and formed *The Ethiopian Regiment*. Black Soldiers fought in the belief that they were securing freedom, not only for themselves, but for all enslaved blacks. The British were confident, because slaves made up 20% of the American population, that if they could convince them to join the ranks, the Colonial uprising would be squelched.
- By 1779, the British saw another reason for luring slaves from the plantations. Their departure from rebel-owned estates would seriously undermine the southern plantation’s economy. British extended their offer of freedom to include grants of land and provisions to the former slaves once the rebellion was defeated. It is estimated that as many as 100,000 slaves had taken refuge behind British Lines. By the summer of 1782, it became evident that the Americans were winning the war and the British began to make preparations for their departure.
- They left a number of Black People behind as they retreated, who were recaptured into slavery. Other Black Loyalists were resettled in Florida, the West Indies, and British North America ( Canada). More than 3,500, the largest group of Black Loyalists, were transported to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

- The Loyalist colonies were not equipped to maintain the influx of thousands of new citizens. A priority system was established to serve the newest citizens to British North America. White officers and Gentlemen were served first in terms of rations and land grants. Ordinary Privates and Laboring people, among the Whites, had to wait. The Blacks, coming up last, rarely received the land or rations promised to them.<sup>1</sup>
- Loyalists also brought enslaved people. As the *Dundas Museum and Archives* posted on their social media during Emancipation Day in 2021:

*Before Governor Simcoe's 1793 Act Against Slavery the importation and sale of enslaved people was entirely legal in Upper Canada. After 1793 a series of legislation was put in place to limit and eventually abolish the slave trade, but some individuals remained legally enslaved in Canada until the Abolition Act of 1833 . . . it is important to remember that the culture existing here was one that still condoned the enslavement of human beings. It is likely that the area was home to many enslaved people whose stories have not survived in archival records.*

- Charmaine Nelson, founding director of the *Institute for the Study of Canadian Slavery* explains in a 2021 interview with *Toronto Star* reporter Steve McKinley:

*There was extreme diversity amongst what was Black in Canada. Meaning African Canadians — people who were actually born in Canada and have experience of being raised in Canada across generations. **African Americans were here too, especially in the time after the Revolutionary War, the white Loyalists came north, fleeing from that war and they forced their enslaved Black people to go with them.** Because you're property; you do not have a choice. If your owner told you you're moving, you're moving. Slavery and its legacy are often addressed in passing within our current historical records.*

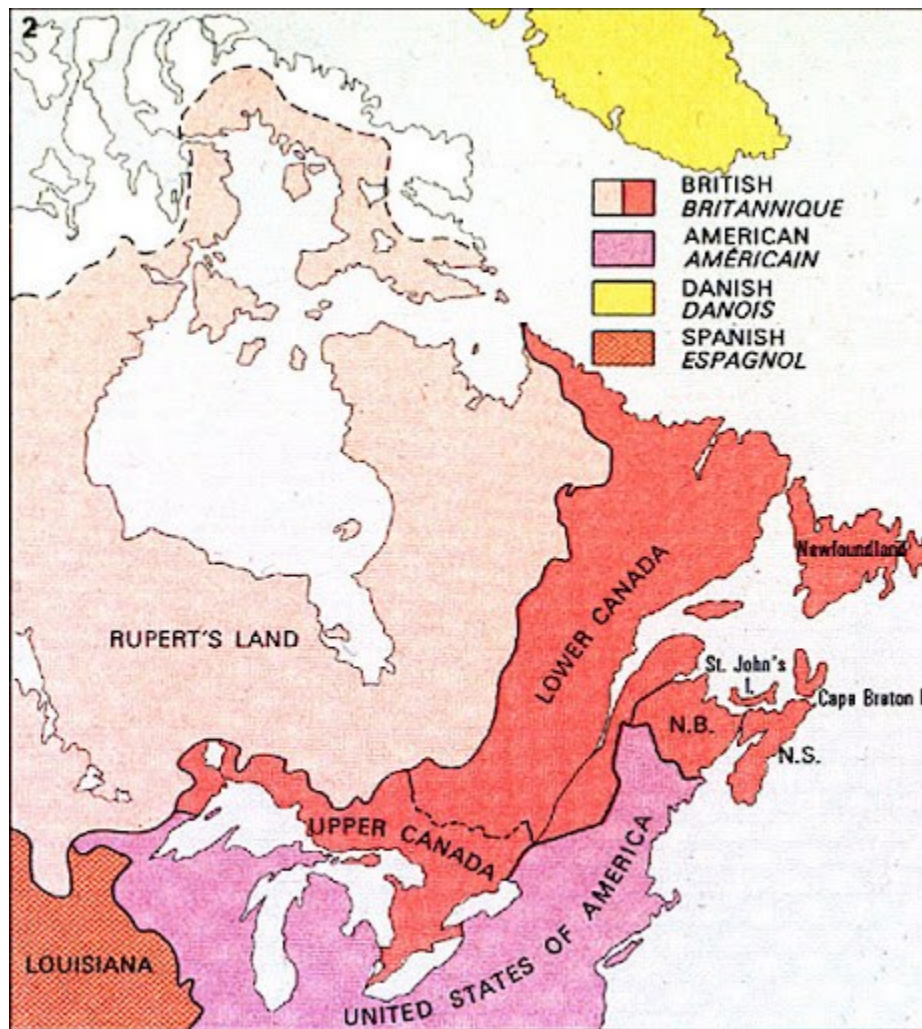
Who was Sophia Pooley?

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<sup>1</sup> Black Loyalist Heritage Centre Society. (n.d.). The American Revolutionary War. Retrieved December 15, 2021, from [https://blackloyalist.com/?page\\_id=631](https://blackloyalist.com/?page_id=631)

- This influx of settlers created new homes for themselves in modern-day Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (settling on land that had been vacated by the Acadians), Quebec and Ontario, where their descendants continue to be active members of their communities.
- Representatives of the Crown, notably John Graves Simcoe (the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada), began to mould these regions to reflect a very British identity.
- Indigenous allies of the British (largely Mohawks, Cayugas, and Onondagas of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy) made up nearly six thousand of the people travelling north. Some Indigenous Peoples saw their independence better protected through maintaining relationships with the British Crown.
- Twice, Americans tried to invade Canada, occupying both Montreal and Quebec City in 1775, but were pushed back. That the republicans were repelled highlights how many French Canadians saw that liberties granted to them by the Crown could only be guaranteed through its continued existence on the continent, for without the Crown, the French would become an unprotected minority.





## "First Loyalists" or United Empire Loyalists<sup>[SEP]</sup>

- By 1784, some 10,000 Loyalists had arrived from the United States in Québec seeking refuge. They had expected to find familiar institutions: British laws, Protestant churches, and freehold land tenure. Instead, they found Catholic churches and unfamiliar French-language political institutions.
- British authorities dealt with this problem in two ways:
  - sending most of these Loyalists into the more westerly rural part of the province that would eventually become known in 1791 as Upper Canada;
  - creating new law and governmental institutions alongside the French ones to benefit the remaining Loyalists.
- On November 9, 1789, Québec governor Lord Dorchester issued an order in council that gave particular recognition to Loyalists by formally differentiating them from other settlers who had immigrated to the colony after 1783.

- He allowed them to affix the initials "U.E." after their names so they could be recognized as those who adhered to "the Unity of the Empire".
  - These settlers are among those referred to as the United Empire Loyalists, though it has since come to include those who settled in the Maritimes prior to the creation of America in 1783 as well.
  - As a result of Lord Dorchester's order, the sons and daughters of adult Loyalist settlers were also to be given 200 acres of free land when they became 21 years old. (Daughters could claim this land even earlier in life if they married before turning 21).

### **"Late Loyalists" or "Simcoe's Loyalists"**

- In 1791, John Graves Simcoe became the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada. Using Treaties that violated the *Treaty of Niagara (1764)* the colonial society took control of land from Indigenous Peoples, and began an aggressive campaign to attract:
  - Former military officers living in the Maritimes who were loyal to Britain.
  - Americans living in what was now called the United States, particularly from New York and Pennsylvania.
- He attracted American settlers by offering cheap land and other kinds of assistance, like food, clothing, building materials and seeds.
- Simcoe extended his invitation to those who were neutral and hadn't taken up arms against the British during the American Revolution. He was particularly targeting those who:
  - were unhappy with life in the newly-created United States;
  - wanted to obtain inexpensive land in Canada.
- Many historians now feel, though, that most of these U.S. immigrants remained somewhat sympathetic to the ideals of American republicanism well after their arrival, and came not out of loyalty to Britain, but out of forwarding their own self-interests. It is now felt that this does not necessarily make them true "Loyalists".

- By 1800, Upper Canada's non-Indigenous population had grown to 50,000 from about 12,000 in 1791. By 1815, the population grew to 95,000. About 80 per cent of those living in the colony around this time had been born in America.

The territory covered in the 1784 *Between the Lakes Purchase* covered more than a million hectares. In return for this land, the Anishinaabe were given 1,180 pounds. A violation of the Silver Covenant Chain of Friendship, the *Between the Lakes Purchase* was later made official by Lieutenant Governor Simcoe as Treaty No.3 (1792).



Figure 18. The territory covered by Treaty No. 3 (1792) as shown on the Government of Ontario's Treaty Map. Many people argue this is not a Treaty, but rather the Crown forcing a land surrender that violated the principles of the Silver Covenant Chain of Friendship extended here by the Treaty of Niagara (1764).