#### British North America in the mid-1800s

## Who were the people of British North America?

## People of BNA

- French people majority in Canada East
- British people majority in Canada West and Maritimes
- First Nations and Metis majority in the Prairies
- British and Americans majority in British Columbia

# The Great Migration

- Many people moved from Europe in the 1830s and 1840s
- Poverty and food shortages forced them to emigrate
- Emigrate: Leave one's country to settle somewhere else

## **Newfound Diversity**

- People from Netherlands, Germany and Ireland now part of Canada
- Irish came because of Potato Famine

# **Underground Railroad**

- Slavery illegal in BNA since 1833
- 30 000 American slaves escaped
- Settled in Canada West and Nova Scotia

### Harriet Tubman

- Born a slave in Maryland in the United States
- Escaped to Canada West
- Helped other slaves escape via Underground Railroad
- Made 19 trips to America between 1850 and 1860
- Helped about 70 people escape to Canada West
- Slave owners put a bounty on her head of \$40, 000 (\$750, 000 in modern money)

## The First Nations

- Unknown how many people lived in the colonies
- Often lived on the fringes of settlement
- Once valued by the British and Hudson's Bay Company
- British for fighting
  - No longer fighting the Americans
- HBC for fur trade
  - Importance of fur trade had declined

# What was life like in British North America?

# **Gender Roles**

- Women responsible for domestic chores
- Men responsible for outside tasks
- Everyone helped with big jobs

#### Children

- Expected to do chores by age 5
- Girls learned to spin, knit, sew, cook, work in the garden, milk the cows and care for the younger children
- Young boys helped feed livestock and gather firewood
- Older boys cleared fields, built fences and harvested crops
- By 14 you were expected to work as hard as an adult

#### Harsh Realities

- No electricity
- No heat
- No air conditioning
- If you plug it in, you didn't have it
- No toilets
- No shower
- No running water

## Daily Life

- Heat came from wood stove
  - Had to cut and haul wood daily
- Wood stove also used for heating water and cooking
- Light came from lamps and candles
  - Went to bed early with day light
- Had to gather water from outdoor hand pumps
- Used basins for washing
- Used outhouse or chamber pot for toilet

#### Education

- In the 1850s most kids stayed home to work
- In Canada West in the 1840s some schools were opened
  - Very few children attended
- Religious organizations offered schooling but charged money
  - Most people could not afford it
- Public school made available in the late 1800s

# Entertainment

- No television, internet, radio
- Newspapers popular
- People wrote letters
- Visited with family and friends
- People attended church regularly
  - o Was a relief from the hard work of daily life and a good time to socialize

## **Social Characteristics**

- Canada East was mostly French and Roman Catholic
- Canada West was mostly English and Protestant

- Black communities in Nova Scotia and Canada West
- First Nations people apart from Europeans
- Distinct class divisions
- Constant movement
  - People were always looking to improve their quality of life

# **Physical Features of British North America**

- Vast Distances
- First Nations people had knowledge of routes to use
  - Showed them to Europeans
  - o Needed knowledge since no roads, railways, canals or powerboats
- Distance from Halifax to Vancouver is 5876 km
  - o Took months to make journey in 1850s
  - Quickest route was around the southern tip of South America by boat
- Also major geographic barriers
  - Mountains and water
  - Needed comprehensive transportation system

#### Climate

- Climate affects how society functions
- Milder winters allows an area to work longer outdoors
- The length of seasons and amount of precipitation influences agriculture and the economy

# **Political Features of British North America**

Political System of the Canada's in the 1850's

- Crown appointed the governor
- Governor usually British nobility
- Governor appointed the members of the legislative council and executive council

## Laws

- Executive council decided what bills were introduced to the legislature
- A bill needed to be approved by the legislative assembly, legislative council and the governor to become law

## Voters

- Male property owners
- Elected members of the legislative assembly

## Legislative Assembly

- Canada East and Canada West had same amount of seats
- Sometimes caused political deadlock
- Two sides fought about best way to solve problems

#### Political Deadlock

- A situation where progress cannot be made because the parties involved do not agree
- Two main issues deadlocked the two sides: transportation and representation
- Transportation
- Canada West wanted to expand
  - Would increase trade and wealth
  - Spend government money
- Canada East wanted to stay the same
  - Would threaten identity
  - Resisted spending government money

## Representation

- Canada West wanted representation by population
- Canada East wanted to retain equal representation

#### Maritimes

- Until 1784 only two colonies: Nova Scotia and P.E.I.
- 1784: Nova Scotia divided into three colonies
  - Nova Scotia
  - New Brunswick
  - Cape Breton Island

## Single Colony

- In the 1850s they wanted to rejoin New Brunswick and Nova Scotia
- Britain wanted one government for one colony
  - Less expensive
  - o Greater influence
- Britain suggested to include P.E.I.
  - Save more money

## Charlottetown Conference

- The colonies scheduled a meeting in 1864
- Would discuss creating a single colony

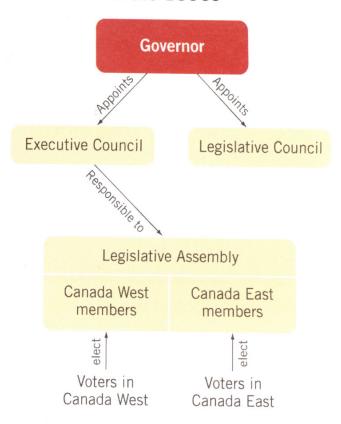
## Newfoundland

- Sea crossing very difficult so seemed very distant
- Watched the Maritime movement with interest

#### **British Columbia**

- British Columbia and Vancouver's Island united in 1866
- Traditional British government system
- American influence
  - There for gold rush
- Thought it should join America
  - Rest of colonies too far away
  - o Better than being a British colony

# The Political System of the Canadas in the 1850s



#### **Economic Features of British North America**

#### Industrialization

- British North America became industrialized
- Industrialize: develop industries, especially manufacturing industries
- Spread was affected by geography, transportation and population
- Factories built in urban area

#### Canada East

- Industry flourished first in Montreal in 1840s
  - o Most industrialized city for next 100 years
- Expanded into Montreal suburbs by 1850s
- Used St. Lawrence River
  - Turned water into steam

#### Workers

- Poor
- Uneducated
- Low wages
- Recent immigrants
- Lots of women and children
  - o Paid less than men

#### Canada West

- Industry in 1870s
- Textiles and metalwork
- Caught up to Canada East by 1880s

# Maritimes

- Shipbuilding important
  - Fishing
  - Overseas trade
- Skilled workers
  - Carpenters, sailmakers
- Farming and logging
  - Lower population than the Canadas

#### The West

- Few industries until late 1800s
- Fur trade in Prairies
- Settlers banned
  - HBC did not want fur trade disrupted
- Forestry and shipping in BC