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The Loyalist Tradition in New Brunswick: the Growth and Evolution of an Historical Myth, 1825-1914

... They were . . . ;
But words are wanting to tell what they were;
Ask what men should be? and they were that.

— Quoted in the *New Brunswick Courier* (Saint John),
May 23, 1863 (from the *Colonial Presbyterian*).

The “Loyalist experiment” in New Brunswick was the attempt to establish an exclusive Elysium in the north. It was to have been based on a hierarchical social structure, an agricultural society founded on large land-holdings, and a corporate, self-sufficient community of loyal, well-disposed subjects. It had been designed as a bastion against levelling republican principles.¹ The experiment, as such, proved an unmitigated failure. For, united by war, the Loyalists were divided in peace. Throughout the American Revolution, the adversities of war had produced a powerful cohesion among the Loyalists. But in peace, the circumstances of the first settlement of New Brunswick seem to have precipitated only diversity and dissent.² What really constituted

1 W.S. MacNutt, *New Brunswick: A History: 1784-1867* (Toronto, 1963), pp. 42, 44, 89, 150, 164, & 179.

2 For a fuller discussion of the innumerable dissensions and rivalries which arose among the Loyalists during the initial stages of the settlement of New Brunswick, see MacNutt, *New Brunswick*, pp. 32-63, passim; Esther Clark Wright, *The Loyalists of New Brunswick* (Fredericton, 1955), pp. 145-150, 175-177, 233-240, passim; Robert Fellows, “The Loyalists and Land Settlement in New Brunswick, 1783-1790: A Study in Colonial Administration”, *Canadian Archivist*, II, 2 (1971), pp. 5-15; and Rev. W.O. Raymond, “A Sketch of the Life and Administration of General Thomas Carleton, First Governor of New Brunswick”, *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, 6 (1905), pp. 439-480. On similar conditions as they existed in Nova Scotia, see Neil MacKinnon, “Nova Scotia Loyalists, 1783-1785”, *Social History*, 4 (November, 1969), pp. 17-48.

4 *Acadiensis*

Loyalism had become a subject of controversy, as the race for privilege supplanted memories of common sacrifices in the past.³ A tendency had developed among the Loyalist leaders to capitalize on their loyalty by linking it with rewards.⁴ The basic ideal they pursued, it has been argued,⁵ was the pursuit of government office and influence. As a result, their energies were diverted into an obsession with politics and away from the economic development of the colony. Their sons and grandsons, inculcated with inflated notions of their own importance and position, found themselves without adequate means to support their pretensions. The aspiring oligarchy was doomed by the nemesis of its own situation.⁶ The main body of the Loyalists, effectively excluded from power and denied the means of reshaping their environment, had become preoccupied with settling the land. But techniques of land settlement adapted to wilderness conditions were sorely lacking,⁷ and "rum and idle habits"⁸ had greatly mitigated the success of their endeavours. The hopes of a great many Loyalists for an Elysium in the northern wilderness apparently had borne little relation to the harsh New Brunswick realities, as witnessed by a significant number who, disillusioned, returned to the Republic from which they had so recently fled.⁹ This initial exodus had, in fact, illustrated that, for many Loyalists, their utopia had been an illusory dream and an embarrassing failure. But the Loyalist Utopia would find rebirth in the Loyalist myth in New Brunswick in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁰

For the Loyalists, that elusive mirage, the Loyalist Utopia, had been an unfulfilled dream. But for their descendants, the Golden Age of Loyalism had occurred in the past, during the circumstances surrounding the outbreak and

3 MacNutt, *New Brunswick*, p. 33; James Hannay, *History of New Brunswick*, I (Saint John, 1909), p. 137.

4 Margaret Ells, "Loyalist Attitudes", in G.A. Rawlyk, ed., *Historical Essays on the Atlantic Provinces* (Toronto, 1967), p. 53.

5 John Davidson, "The Loyalist Tradition in Canada", *Macmillan's Magazine* (September, 1904), pp. 390-400.

6 Edward Winslow to Jonathan Sewell, January 14, 1797, in Rev. W.O. Raymond, ed., *The Winslow Papers* (Saint John, 1901), pp. 709-710.

7 E.C. Wright, "The Settlement of New Brunswick: An Advance Toward Democracy", *Canadian Historical Association; Report of the Annual Meeting* (1944), pp. 53-60.

8 Colonel Thomas Dundas to Earl Cornwallis, December 28, 1786, in Raymond, *The Winslow Papers*, p. 337.

9 For example, between 1783 and 1785, nearly 2,000 Loyalists had migrated to the region of Charlotte County. By 1803, nearly half of the Loyalist population had emigrated from this area. See T.W. Acheson, "A Study in the Historical Demography of a Loyalist County", *Social History*, 1 (April, 1968), pp. 53-65.

10 For a fuller discussion of "The Loyalist Reality", see Murray Barkley, "The Loyalist Tradition in New Brunswick: A Study in the Growth and Evolution of an Historical Myth, 1825-1914" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Queen's University, 1971), "Introduction", pp. 1-22, upon which this paper is largely based.

events of the American Revolution, and the Loyalist migration and settlement in the wilderness of New Brunswick. What may be referred to as the Loyalist "myth" accordingly grew and developed in New Brunswick between the publication of the first history of New Brunswick, Peter Fisher's *Sketches of New Brunswick*, in 1825 and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. This paper examines the image of the Loyalists as it developed in New Brunswick during the period from 1825 to 1914. It attempts to account for the reason why it evolved as it did, and to assess the meaning and importance of the Loyalist tradition in the New Brunswick experience. Its purpose is neither to examine the Loyalists themselves, nor to determine the degree of truth in what was said about them by succeeding generations of New Brunswickers during this era. Rather, it attempts to analyze the various aspects and recurring themes of the myth, and to explain why these various components emerged when, and in the particular way, they did. Finally, it attempts an overall assessment of the historical significance in New Brunswick of the image of the Loyalists.

The terms Loyalist "myth", "cult", and "traditions", it should be noted, are employed to some degree interchangeably to denote the views that New Brunswickers held of, and the qualities, characteristics, and significance they attributed to the Loyalists. It is, however, important to differentiate the specific application of the three terms. The term "myth", it must be emphasized, is not used in its pejorative connotation as being necessarily opposed to reality. Rather, an historical myth should be understood as being an instrument or means of self-identification, deriving its justification from an ideological reinterpretation of the historical past. A myth is a belief given uncritical acceptance by the members of a group, especially in support of existing or traditional practices or institutions, which it serves to explain. Serving as an "intellectual construction that fuses concept and emotion into an image",¹¹ a myth is a collective representation that so effectively embodies men's values that it profoundly influences their way of perceiving reality, and hence their behaviour.¹² Although they frequently exert a decided influence on practical affairs, myths exist on a different plane from empirical facts and accurate reflection of existing circumstances. In this sense, myths may have varying degrees of fiction and reality. The term "cult" should be understood as denoting a great or excessive devotion or dedication to some person, idea, or thing. Only during two relatively short periods, from 1837 to 1849, and from 1887 to 1897, did the various manifestations of the Loyalist myth in New Brunswick reach a sufficiently profound veneration and intense

11 Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (New York, 1950), "Preface", p. V.

12 Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (New York, 1955), p. 24.

6 *Acadiensis*

emotional fervour to be properly designated a “cult”. “Tradition” denotes a body of inherited principles, beliefs, and practices, serving as the established guide of an individual or group. It implies cultural continuity embodied in evolving social attitudes, beliefs, and institutions, rooted in the experience of the past and exerting a normative influence on the present. It was not until the New Brunswick Loyalist Centennial of May and October, 1883 that the Loyalist myth fully flowered into a tradition.

The basic continuing elements and recurring themes of the Loyalist myth in New Brunswick between 1825 and 1914 were the Loyalists’ élitist origins, their loyalty to the British Crown and steadfast adherence to British constitutional principles, institutions, and the unity of the British Empire, their sufferings and self-sacrifice on behalf of these principles, their struggle against nature, a recurring element of anti-Americanism, and their divinely-inspired sense of mission. Naturally in different periods, different elements of the total myth were emphasized in response to prevailing ideological and psychological needs. To a significant extent, the Loyalist myth was shaped by, and indeed accurately reflected, the contemporary New Brunswick views of the United States, Great Britain, “Upper Canada”,¹³ and of themselves. Its evolution occurred within the context of the contemporary social, cultural, economic, political, and intellectual milieu within British North America, and later Canada, and in response to various external stimuli from the United States and Great Britain.

In referring to the development of the Loyalist image, it should be emphasized that “evolution” represented merely subtle nuances and gradual shifts in emphasis rather than any substantial reinterpretations. From the time of the landing of the Loyalists, the intellectual content of the myth remained substantially the same. There were significant shifts in emphasis, of course, such as the vitriolic anti-Americanism of the 1840’s and 1890’s, and the heightened interest in the Loyalists’ fervent adherence to the unity of the British Empire in the Imperial Federation era, imparting to the myth a distinctive character during these respective periods. The functions and reasons for emphasizing the different elements of the New Brunswick Loyalist myth are examined within the context of various chronological periods, each of which possesses a sufficient cohesion to be treated as a unit. The transitions between these periods are considerably blurred, and no rigid dividing lines between them may be precisely discerned. While the various components of the Loyalist myth remained relatively constant, to attempt to describe these recur-

13 The geographical area referred to as “Upper Canada” was known officially by that name only until 1841. For the sake of convenience, however, the term “Upper Canada” is used throughout this paper to denote what was later Canada West and, after Confederation, Ontario. Similarly, the term “Upper Canadian” is employed throughout, instead of “Ontarian”.

ring themes without reference to their historical context would inevitably distort their meaning, role, and significance in any particular era. For the Loyalist tradition exhibited a growth and adaptation, functional to the needs of a changing community.¹⁴ But the myth's basic recurring themes consistently outweighed its special emphasis at any specific period of time. This high degree of continuity is traceable to the fact that the image of the Loyalists contained many elements of truth. In addition, as the Loyalist myth hardened into tradition, the Loyalists themselves came to symbolize the steadfast loyalty to the British Crown and the conservative social value which they had upheld, fought, sacrificed, and suffered for: they could be accepted or rejected, but it was virtually impossible to reinterpret them. Even in the period between 1897 and 1914, when techniques of historical research were increasingly employed, they were merely used selectively to reassure the Loyalist descendants by "proving" historically the validity of the various aspects of New Brunswick's founding myth.

II

Between 1825 and 1837, the powers and privileges of the New Brunswick "Family Compact"¹⁵ élite began to come under increasing scrutiny and criticism, in what was the initial phase of the struggle for responsible government in New Brunswick. Shortly before 1825, the New England Federalist-Whig élite had begun its struggle against the progressive incursions of Jacksonian Democracy. A strong bond of sympathy, the "Loyalist-Federalist alliance", had grown steadily between the élites of New Brunswick and New England during the four decades between 1784 and 1824.¹⁶ This entente was strengthened through the bonds of trade, and by the fact that both regions had remained relatively neutral during the War of 1812. No enduring animosities or traditional enmities had thus arisen. Population trends and patterns of commerce further reinforced the alliance¹⁷ and the generally pro-American élitist sentiments of many New Brunswickers. Thus, the early New Brunswick historians, from whom one might have expected a spirited hostility towards

14 For similar historiographical approaches to American legends, myths, and symbols, see, for example, Wesley Frank Craven, *The Legend of the Founding Fathers* (Ithaca, 1956); Fred Somkin, *Unquiet Eagle: Memory and Desire in the Idea of American Freedom, 1815-1860* (Ithaca, 1967); and Rollin G. Osterweis, *The Myth of the Lost Cause, 1865-1900* (Hamden, Conn., 1973).

15 The term "Family Compact", while in many respects a misnomer when applied to New Brunswick [See McNutt, *New Brunswick*, pp. 64-253, passim], is employed for the sake of convenience when referring to those Loyalists and their descendants who held prominent governmental positions in the colony during this period.

16 For a fuller discussion of a similar attitudinal change which occurred in Nova Scotia in the late eighteenth century, see Neil MacKinnon, "The Changing Attitudes of the Nova Scotian Loyalists towards the United States, 1783-1791", *Acadiensis*, II, 2 (Spring, 1973), pp. 43-54.

17 MacNutt, *New Brunswick*, p. 165.

8 *Acadiensis*

the Americans, made little or no mention of the injustices committed against the Loyalists and did not attempt to critically dissect American politics and society. Many members of the New Brunswick Loyalist élite may have thought of themselves as essentially a north-eastern extension of the old New England élite.

The first history of New Brunswick was written anonymously in 1825 by Peter Fisher, the son of a Loyalist, Lewis Fisher, a member of the New Jersey Volunteers.¹⁸ Fisher emphasized principally the sufferings, hardships, and self-sacrifice endured by the former “flower of the Thirteen Colonies”, who had abandoned their positions of power, prestige, and refinement to begin life anew in a “peculiarly discouraging” and desolate wilderness, with a rigorous climate.¹⁹ An awareness of the role assigned to nature in the initial stages of the New Brunswick Loyalist myth is essential to understanding the frequent references to the wilderness. New Brunswickers lacked the illustrious militaristic tradition of the War of 1812, which Upper Canadians possessed in the myth of Isaac Brook and the militia legend. New Brunswick had not experienced any threatened or real American aggression. Nature, and not the Americans, with whom they had maintained relatively close and cordial relations, was thus viewed as the chief obstacle to the successful accomplishment of the Loyalist experiment in New Brunswick. The ultimate victory, after the temporary reversal of the American Revolution, could be gained by carving out of the wilderness of defeat, the garden of victory: a prosperous, loyal British colony, as visible proof that the Loyalist cause had not been a failure. The struggle was, therefore, one against an uninhabitable wilderness, filled with “savages and wild animals”, in a climate “far more severe than at present”.²⁰ Fisher also recognized the role of adherence to principles in determining Loyalist motivations. Their élitist origins in the Thirteen Colonies were stressed only insofar as they emphasized their self-sacrifice because of unswerving adherence to British constitutional principles and loyalty to the British Crown. The Loyalists, he felt, had been “genuine patriots”, who had sacrificed everything for their attachment to the British Crown and constitution, and had come to New Brunswick “to transmit those blessings to posterity . . .” Their decision, although involving risk of life,

18 The first mention of any celebration concerning the Loyalists was to be found in Saint John on the thirty-eighth anniversary of the arrival of the Fall fleet, on October 3, 1821, the day following the coronation of George IV. The celebrations were confined to the city of Saint John and seem to have been organized and indulged in chiefly by prominent members of the Loyalist-descended “Family Compact” élite.

19 [Peter Fisher], *Sketches of New Brunswick, Containing an Account of the First Settlement of the Province . . .* (Saint John, 1825), p. 11.

20 *Ibid.*

had been made with promptness, . . . [and] was persevered in with constancy".²¹ The many comforts possessed by their descendants gave tangible proof of the Loyalists' perseverance, industry, and heritage.

A short time later, Fisher wrote a second volume, *Notitia of New Brunswick*, in a somewhat more disillusioned tone, and this affected his treatment of the Loyalists.²² Amid discouragements, oppressed with poverty, and exposed to a severe climate in a wild country, the Loyalists had, nevertheless, remained firm in their allegiance. By 1837, however, a discordant note of pessimism had crept into Fisher's writings. He became obsessed with the breakdown and decay of Loyalist society. This he attributed to the military background of the Loyalists, which had rendered them poor settlers, and "too much in the power of the favoured few". The Loyalists had not been wealthy and, lacking the capital needed for investment, a flourishing trade was slow in developing. New Brunswickers, Fisher lamented, had not fulfilled the lofty expectations of the Mother Country.²³

Robert Cooney, an Irish immigrant, newspaper editor, and later Wesleyan Methodist missionary at Miramichi, was the second New Brunswicker to attempt publicly to define Loyalism. Cooney's history, written in 1832, was designed to impress upon Great Britain the value of her colonies. In Cooney's opinion, the distinctive characteristic of the Loyalists had been their steadfast loyalty, which had distinguished their privations from those of other pioneers:

If their sufferings were great, so were their merits, if they forfeited their property, it was to preserve their principles; if they sacrificed every consideration to their duty, the value of the offering was an amiable proof of their sincerity . . . if they were driven from home to seek a refuge in the wilderness, they carried with them the virtues they inherited from their ancestors. The precious pearl of political integrity was theirs, and theirs also, was the exalted dignity of Citizenship to an English King.²⁴

Neither Fisher nor Cooney, from whom one almost certainly would have expected vitriolic anti-Patriot harangues in a period not far removed from the

21 *Ibid.*, p. 20.

22 The same tone of pessimism pervaded his earlier poem, *The Lay of the Wilderness: A Poem in Five Cantos* (Saint John, 1833), in which Fisher depicted the degeneracy of Loyalist officers and the failure of their settlement on the upper St. John River.

23 [Peter Fisher], *Notitia of New Brunswick for 1836, And Extending Into 1837 . . .* (Saint John, 1838), p. 76.

24 Robert Cooney, *A Compendious History of the Northern Part of the Province of New Brunswick . . .* (Halifax, 1832), p. 19.

10 *Acadiensis*

actual events of the Revolutionary War, gave the slightest hint of being even mildly anti-American. This glaring omission, when considered in conjunction with the contemporary anti-Americanism prevalent in Upper Canada, tends to confirm the existence of a strong bond of sympathy between the New Brunswick Loyalists and the neighbouring New Brunswick Federalist-Whigs.

Fisher and Cooney had prepared the way for the Fiftieth Anniversary of "the landing of the Loyalists". The celebration, when it took place on May 18, 1833, marked the first occasion upon which the Loyalist myth was publicly and explicitly articulated. The reasons for articulating it were primarily commemorative, and only slightly defensive. Those aspects of the expression of the Loyalist image which might be termed "defensive" possibly stemmed from a growing anxiety on the part of the Loyalist-descended élite that their positions of privilege were coming under increasing scrutiny and criticism.²⁵ Some members of the "Family Compact" undoubtedly viewed this growing discontent as a challenge and possibly subconsciously sought means to legitimize their privileged positions.

The major feature of the Jubilee celebrations was a public dinner given for all surviving Loyalists resident within the City and County of Saint John. The gathering was extremely élitist, all speakers being prominent members of the "Family Compact". At the head table, on Governor Sir Archibald Campbell's right sat His Honour Judge Jonathan Bliss, and on his left, His Honour Judge Ward Chipman. Pro-American sympathies were a recurring motif throughout many of the speeches. Ward Chipman, replying to a toast to the Loyalists, expressed his fervent hope that the descendants of the "American Loyalists" would always feel that their best inheritance was, "The principles of their Fathers". It is significant that the Loyalists were consistently referred to, throughout the Jubilee celebrations, as "American Loyalists", indicating that their sons still considered themselves to be, at least in part, Americans. The Loyalists' steadfast adherence to principles was rapidly becoming the central element in the myth. The Solicitor General, Robert Parker, remarked that New Brunswickers still gloried in their ancestors' loyalty. He noted that, in the fifty years that had passed since their fathers' arrival, the desolate wilderness had been transformed into a flourishing City, in which "the spirit of the British Constitution" prevailed. The celebrations of the day, Parker felt, would stand as a memorial that "we take the same side our fathers have taken; . . . that we approve their principles; and, Sir, it is a pledge that, if need

25 Such events as the publication of the "John Gape" letters in the *New Brunswick Courier* in early 1833, and Speaker Charles Simond's organization of a protest movement in the Legislative Assembly, served to crystallize public discontent and grievances over the administration of Crown Lands and quitrents. See MacNutt, *New Brunswick*, pp. 234-241.

be, we are ready to imitate their example".²⁶ An underlying assumption, implicit in the image of the Loyalists and closely related to the Protestant ethic, held that material prosperity and affluence were signs of divine favour and proof of the ultimate rectitude of the Loyalist cause. A prosperous, developed New Brunswick would stand as a monument to the final triumph of the Loyalists. The eleventh toast was proposed to "The Land our ancestors left, and the land we live in. Both inhabited from one common Parent and enjoying, though under different governments, the blessings of freedom. May all old animosities be forgotten and the present good understanding be continued". The Attorney General replied that he appreciated the sentiments of Christian charity, which "required us to forgive those who have offended us".

From one point of view, the Jubilee celebrations acted as a common meeting ground for all Loyalist descendants, wherein they could forget the present squabbles and divisive issues, through joining in praise of their common heritage of Loyalism inherited from their illustrious ancestors. In another sense, the Jubilee celebrations indicated that a segment of the Loyalist descendants, the "Family Compact" ruling élite, may have been attempting to appropriate the Loyalist image to legitimize its exclusive access to positions of power and influence, during an era when its privileges were coming under increasing popular criticism. In any event, the Fiftieth Jubilee of the Landing of the Loyalists served to stimulate greater awareness of the Loyalist origins of the colony. An interesting sidelight of this awakened interest is to be found in the immigrant guides and travel literature of the period. These accounts, from this period forward, invariably referred to New Brunswick's Loyalist origins, realizing that they provided a distinct comparative advantage over competing immigration areas. In 1835, for example, in the afterglow of the Jubilee celebrations, Alexander Wedderburn, the Secretary of the Agricultural and Emigrant Society, extolled for emigrants the many advantages of the colony. In addition to the fogs, which acted as an "atmospherial panacea for many diseases" and the action of the frost and snow in rendering the ground more pliable, the loyalty of the inhabitants was viewed as a major asset. The faithful Loyalists, through all vicissitudes, according to Wedderburn, had played a part "as noble and devoted in duty to their King and Constitution as ever was engraven on the altars of public fidelity and virtue".²⁷

The strongly pro-American sympathy common to most manifestations of the Loyalist image during this period was perhaps one of its most significant characteristics. It was evidenced as much by what was not said against the

26 Quoted in the *New Brunswick Courier* (Saint John), May 25, 1833.

27 Alexander Wedderburn, *Statistical And Practical Observations, Relative to the Province of New Brunswick, Published for the Information of Emigrants* (Saint John, 1835), pp. 59-60.

12 *Acadiensis*

Patriots as by what was said on their behalf. In a period in which memories of persecutions and wrongs suffered during the Revolutionary War must have been still firmly embedded within the minds of many New Brunswickers, the total absence of any spirit of hostility towards their Republican neighbours is indeed remarkable. The Loyalist Fiftieth Jubilee celebrations, although largely confined to the Saint John region, helped to establish the tone and content of future expressions of the Loyalist myth in New Brunswick.

III

During the decade of the 1840's, the image of the Loyalists was infused with such an intense emotional fervour that it might be referred to as almost a "cult". The period witnessed a noteworthy efflorescence of intense interest in the Loyalists. A significant portion of this heightened veneration of their ancestors may be at least partially attributable to the internal upheavals and external threats which beset many members of the New Brunswick Loyalist élite during the 1840's. Following the panic of 1837, economic depression had set in for over a decade. The situation had been acutely aggravated in Saint John, where a series of disastrous fires spread ruin and desolation.²⁸ New Brunswick, further, experienced a regional status decline. It remained relatively backward and stagnant in an era in which the United States was undergoing unprecedented expansion and material progress. In this situation, the outward movement of New Brunswickers of Loyalist descent accelerated rapidly. Coincident with this emigration was the arrival of a flood of seemingly unassimilable Irish Catholics. This massive immigration exacerbated the Loyalist élite's growing anxieties and fears of being numerically displaced.²⁹ The Loyalist descendants also felt threatened in the political field, perceiving that their former unchallenged position was being steadily undermined by timber barons, such as Joseph Cunard, and a rising urban group. The struggle both for and against responsible government was obscured amid regional, local, and personal rivalries which denied the emergence of disciplined political parties, frustrating conservatives and reformers alike.³⁰

28 The largest of these, on January 14, 1837, destroyed the entire business district of Saint John, leaving it a smouldering ruin. Many prosperous merchants were left "broken in fortune to the end of their days". See W.K. Reynolds, "The Fire of Thirty-Seven", *New Brunswick Magazine*, II, 1 (January, 1899), p. 2.

29 By 1851, immigrants who had arrived since 1815, of whom 71% were Irish, comprised 21.1% of the total population of New Brunswick. See William F. Ganong, "Origins of Settlements in the Province of New Brunswick", *Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Series II, Vol. X, Section II, (1904), p. 76.

30 W.S. MacNutt, "The Coming of Responsible Government to New Brunswick", *Canadian Historical Review*, XXXIII, 2 (June, 1952), pp. 111-128.

Equally serious problems confronted New Brunswick in her external relations. External threats loomed in the distance, in the form of American aggression and belligerence at a time when Manifest Destiny was reaching its zenith. With the background of American encroachments during the Aroostook War of 1839-41, and the British diplomatic sell-out in the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842, New Brunswickers nervously watched as the Republic annexed Texas and Oregon, and devastatingly defeated Mexico in 1848. New Brunswickers indeed felt very weak and small. Britain's simultaneous dismantling of the mercantilist system and adoption of free trade seemed only to add to these imminent dangers. Many New Brunswickers felt "expelled from the British community" and "thrust into an alien and hostile world . . ." ³¹ The Loyalist myth, most strongly articulated when its adherents perceived themselves to be declining, was increasingly relied upon to compensate for present difficulties, by recalling their proud heritage. Possibly, when confronted by seemingly insurmountable difficulties, they gained from the Loyalist myth a sense of confidence and inspiration to emulate their noble ancestors. The Loyalists, they believed, had also made great sacrifices and endured, and eventually triumphed over, tremendous hardships in order to similarly preserve their attachment to British principles and loyalty to the British Crown. External threats and British weakness with respect to them were reflected in a strident anti-American component and an unquestioning Anglophile point of view.

This efflorescence of intense interest in all things Loyalist manifested itself in many forms. These ranged from the annual observance of "Loyalist Day" ³² and commemorative concerts, attended, "as might be expected . . . [by] the *élite* of . . . [Saint John]" ³³, to attempts in the Legislative Assémbly in 1846 to have a suitable monument erected in honour of "the arrival of the Refugees". The *élite's* interest in preserving their Loyalist heritage was clearly growing. Public interest in the Loyalists probably reached its peak in February, 1846, with the abortive attempt to organize a "New Brunswick Refugee Loyalist Association". The *New Brunswick Courier* inserted the notice with much pleasure, hoping that the Loyalist descendants would "cordially and zealously unite" in this tribute to "those inflexible adherents to the British standard", who had sacrificed everything but "their allegiance and honorable principles" in upholding the British cause. The Loyalists' example of fidelity, bequeathed to their descendants, had not been surpassed by "*subjects who have inhaled the atmosphere of royalty in the favoured island of Great*

31 MacNutt, *New Brunswick*, p. 295.

32 On May 18, 1839, the *New Brunswick Courier* made the first mention of the observance of "Loyalist Day", excluding, of course, the Loyalist Jubilee in 1833.

33 The *New Brunswick Courier*, May 24, 1845.

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Britain".³⁴ As well as viewing the Loyalists as more loyal than the British, the *Courier* saw in their decision to remain loyal to their King a strong expression of anti-Americanism:

this band of faithful Loyalists . . . would not barter their principles and love of Monarchical government for the pottage of Republicanism . . . there never was a time when the approval of their conduct and respect for their principles could have been more seasonably demonstrated, *as it will assist to convince our republican neighbours that proximity to them has not weakened our attachment to our Queen, and that the leaven of our forefathers has leavened in their descendants.*³⁵

Thus, the Loyalist image served as a watchword of loyalty in defiance of the apprehended encroachments of American Manifest Destiny.

In New Brunswick literary endeavours during the 1840's, the many continuing elements of the Loyalist myth, including the Loyalists' élitist origins, their self-sacrifice for principle, and their struggle against nature unquestionably continued to dominate the Loyalist image. Yet the element of the myth that was emphasized to the greatest extent during this period was its newly-acquired anti-American component.³⁶ This aspect was supplemented by the positive side of anti-Americanism, a strongly Anglophile or ultra-British outlook. Its expression even invaded the lowly Loyalist ode. For example, "Amicus", in his poem, significantly entitled "New Brunswick and Her Danger", published at the height of the Oregon crisis in 1846, revealed himself to be quite hostile towards the United States:

New Brunswick was th' adopted home / Of many a British Brave,
Who had his choice to leave his all / Or turn a Rebel Knave.
But they forsook his happy home, / They left his fertile land.
They landed on a rocky shore / But on a British strand.

Shame, shame to those who did rebel / Against their lawful King,
And thus upon their Milder friends / Destruction sought to bring;
Ah! let them boast that they possess / Great liberty indeed,
But let them know New Brunswickers / Can see as well as read.

Talk not of Liberty my friends, / Judge Lynch your country rules,

³⁴ *Ibid.*, February 14, 1846 (Italics mine).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, (Italics mine).

³⁶ See, for example, Rev. W. Christopher Atkinson, *A Historical And Statistical Account of the Province of New Brunswick, B.N.A., With Advice to Emigrants* (Edinburgh, 1844), p. 20.

And is the Bible not expell'd / From all your common schools
And do ye not the basest deeds / And bring yourselves disgrace,
Enough to make an honest man / Asham'd to show his face?³⁷

The writings of Thomas Hill, however, reflect perhaps to the greatest extent the growing distrust of the United States, which was thrust into the Loyalist cult. Hill was probably the most brilliant and versatile of New Brunswick editors during this period. In a series of articles entitled "The American Loyalists", published in July and August, 1845 in his newspaper, the *Loyalist and Conservative Advocate*, Hill breathed new life into the memory of the Loyalists, and the rectitude of their cause. In so doing, he delivered one of the most vitriolic denunciations of American politics and society ever made in New Brunswick. According to Hill, the Loyalists had come to New Brunswick because of loyalty to principle and faithfulness to conscience and duty. They had remained devoted to their allegiance in the darkest hour of trial. "Impelled by a sense of duty as high and as holy as this", they had been ready, at a moment's notice, to lay down "their lives, their property, their *all*, to prevent that greatest of all possible calamities, the dismemberment of the British Empire".

Hill apparently shared in the growing anxiety that New Brunswickers were straying from their forefathers' principles and loyalty to the British Crown at the very moment when adherence to all things British was imperative. Hill concentrated upon rebel persecutions of the Loyalists in order to rationalize his distrust of the United States. He carefully avoided identifying the source of this distrust: apprehended American aggression and New Brunswick's vulnerability. He dwelt almost compulsively upon the persecutions to which many persons suspected of loyalty had been subjected:

Judges mobbed, insulted, threatened, . . . and made to do penance in a *mock procession!* Men driven from their homes, their families insulted, houses pillaged and destroyed, furniture broken, and *cattle poisoned!* Some mobbed, others plundered, and others *shot in their own houses!* . . . loyalists waylaid, insulted, and beaten! . . . Old and enfeebled men's habitations sacked, and themselves driven to the woods for shelter, or seized at night, dragged away for miles, *and then smoked in a room with the chimney top closed!*³⁸

Hill exclaimed that the appetites of "the ferocious barbarians who com-

37 "Amicus", "New Brunswick And Her Danger", in the *Loyalist, And Conservative Advocate* (Fredericton), January 29, 1846.

38 The *Loyalist, And Conservative Advocate*, July 24, 1845.

16 *Acadiensis*

mitted these depredations”, had been whetted by the scent of blood, and that no one who valued moral or religious obligations could have joined the revolutionaries. The American Revolution, indeed, had been a nefarious conspiracy to rob the Crown of its most precious jewels. The Patriots had been, in reality, “*sanguinary land-pirates*” who had plunged the Thirteen Colonies into anarchy and confusion in order to inflict the curse of republican institutions upon them. With the removal of the Loyalists, American politics and society had degenerated to such a degree that the new republic was beyond political redemption:

We acknowledge our inferiority . . . , but we should be sorry to exchange our scattered population with their dense, *including three millions of slaves!* Our farmers obtain a limited price for their *livestock*, but we should be sorry to know their condition was improved by seeing it announced . . . that . . . a certain planter got \$600. for a *black man*, and \$400. for a *black woman!* . . . we would be loath to change our present religious condition for that of a nation which acknowledges *no religion*, and where pure religion is almost swallowed up by the advances of Puritanism, Popery, Millerism, and Mormonism, on the one hand, and the rapid strides of Infidelity on the other! . . . the mobs never have yet — as in Philadelphia —, demolished our Churches, nor bid defiance to the troops; and . . . the law is allowed to take its course without out the interference of *Judge Lynch*.³⁹

According to Hill, American society was filled with violence — that same violence that had driven the Loyalists from their homes. And the migration of the Loyalists had meant the removal of the law-abiding element. While grasping at licentious mob rule themselves, Hill observed, the Republicans, in their hypocrisy, denied liberty to their slaves, exterminated the Indians and finally subjugated Mexico and overran Oregon and California. Without regard to any natural rights or any principle of moral integrity, they would only be satisfied with the ultimate annexation of the entire continent.⁴⁰ As Hill summarized, “we would on no account . . . change our present insignificance, to become a great and powerful nation, providing that at the same time we must earn the character of being *the greatest cheats and scoundrels on earth!!!*”⁴¹

Behind this rabid anti-Americanism, one of the distinguishing features inherent in the Loyalist cult in the 1840’s, there was to be found a deep-

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*, July 31, 1845.

41 *Ibid.*, July 24, 1845.

seated fear of aggressive American designs. Through an ideological reinterpretation of the American Revolution, from a Loyalist perspective and within the context of the Loyalist myth, New Brunswickers fell back upon stereotypes in order to rationalize their distrust of American political, economic, and social hegemony.⁴² The strident anti-American smugness of many New Brunswickers was perhaps, as well, a means of compensating for their exclusion from the transcontinental nation-building experience and vast material prosperity of the United States. In addition, perhaps part of the explanation for the appearance of a large body of literature extolling the virtues of the Loyalists is to be found in the fact that the last living links with the first generation were expiring in the 1840's. The Loyalist cult grew proportionately as the number of Loyalists remaining alive steadily dwindled.⁴³ A subconscious need apparently existed among their descendants to reassure themselves that, with the removal of their fathers, the influence of their principles and attachment to Great Britain was not also waning. Whatever the reasons, during the 1840's the Loyalist myth had been so frequently repeated, with such emotional intensity and patriotic fervour, that it assumed many of the aspects of a "cult".

IV

During the 1850's, the image of the Loyalists was influenced, in sharp contrast to the preceding decade, by a growing pan-Anglo-Saxon sentiment. Popular pro-Americanism and the ultra-British sentiment of the élite were fused with the help of railways, reciprocity, and prosperity. During this "Golden Era" of reciprocity, comparative affluence lessened the need for New Brunswickers to invoke Loyalist heritage to compensate for their relative backwardness. New Brunswick, as well, achieved closer links with the mainstream of North American social and economic development. This was best exemplified, perhaps, by its growing temperance movement, which drew much of its inspiration and encouragement from Maine.⁴⁴ The temporary disillusionment with Great Britain ended with the achievement of Reciprocity in 1854, while British involvement in the Crimean War seems to have strengthened the Empire's political and commercial ties with bonds of kin-

42 See M. Rokeach, *The Open and Closed Mind; Investigations into the Nature of Belief Systems and Personality Systems* (New York, 1960), pp. 26 & 56; and S.F. Wise & R.C. Brown, *Canada Views the United States; Nineteenth-Century Political Attitudes* (Toronto, 1967), p. 128.

43 See, for example, J. Redfern, "Stanzas Suggested by the Lamented Death of the Late Venerable John Ward, Esquire", in the *Loyalist and Conservative* (Saint John), August 5, 1846.

44 See J.K. Chapman, "The Mid-Nineteenth-Century Temperance Movement in New Brunswick and Maine", *Canadian Historical Review*, XXXV, 1 (March, 1954), pp. 43-60.

ship, loyalty, and tradition.⁴⁵ The element of anti-Americanism, so prominent a feature of the Loyalist myth during the 1840's, had virtually disappeared by the 1850's. It was replaced by an increased emphasis on the principles which had motivated the Loyalists, although most of the other components of the image were also present in varying degrees, as in other periods.

Two sermons preached by the Reverend I.W.D. Gray, the Anglican Rector of the Parish of Saint John, were representative of this shift in emphasis in the Loyalist myth. The first of these, "Trinity Church And Its Founders", preached on New Year's Day, 1854, was a Jeremiad, "calculated to awaken the feelings of veneration and respect" for the Loyalists, not only as a mark of respect, but also as "a means of usefulness" for future generations.⁴⁶ The Loyalists, Gray asserted, had left homes, friends, and possessions in a flourishing country because of their attachment to their Sovereign and constitution. They had been deeply impressed with the conviction that the subjects of every commonwealth were "bound to respect its laws (supposing them to be in harmony with the paramount law of God)", and the sovereign power that maintained them. It was this belief that had led them "to surrender the comforts of civilization, for the sadness of the wilderness; the pleasures of refinement for the hardships of the early settler".⁴⁷ In this brief statement, Gray had expressed most of the elements of the New Brunswick Loyalist myth, but clearly the greatest emphasis was placed upon the Loyalists' principles. Their objectives were invested with religious motivations, emphasized through the use of Biblical allusions.

Almost four years later, on December 8, 1857, the Reverend Dr. Gray preached another sermon, designed to emphasize the validity of "The Principles of the Loyalists of 1783". In the organic conservative rhetoric of order, stability, allegiance, authority, tradition, and continuity, Gray traced the firm roots of the Loyalists' central principle, their allegiance to the Crown and to Biblical precepts. Taking as his text, "One generation passeth, and another generation cometh", he sought to show that the Loyalists' beliefs were still living principles "worthy of respect and imitation", which should guide the new generation. Beneath the surface, the sermon betrayed a growing fear of declension and anxiety that many New Brunswickers were deviating from their forefathers' virtues in a materialistic age. A subconscious need had arisen to be reassured that the influence of Loyalist principles on the

45 For examples of similar reactions in the Canadas, see A.W. Rasporich, "Imperial Sentiment in the Province of Canada During the Crimean War, 1854-1856", in W.L. Morton, ed., *The Shield of Achilles; Aspects of Canada in the Victorian Age* (Toronto, 1968), pp. 139-168.

46 Rev. I.W.D. Gray, *Trinity Church And Its Founders; A Sermon by the Rev. I.W.D. Gray, D.D., Rector of the Parish of St. John, N.B., Preached on New Year's Day, 1854, And Published at the Request of the Vestry* (Saint John, 1854), p. 3.

47 *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

present generation was not, in fact, waning. The Loyalists' adherence to constituted authority, "their earthly Sovereign", had been, Gray thus stressed, divinely-inspired, for God had stamped "the seal of His approbation upon such powers and required all Christians to submit to them". The counsel for the present generation was to "avoid the evils of the age in which you live" and, above all, to cultivate as their forefathers had done, "the spirit of *submission to lawful authority*", as a necessary preparation for assuming their proper stations in the divinely-ordained hierarchical ordering of society.⁴⁸

One may detect in Gray's sermons an implicit assumption that the Loyalist migrations had been divinely-inspired — that the Loyalists, in fact, had been, in some sense, "God's Peculiar People".⁴⁹ While this "Providential theory" and the sense of mission it would later inspire to preserve and diffuse the Loyalist tradition were at this time scarcely in a rudimentary state, its presence is nevertheless significant. Gray had attributed divine sanction to the Loyalists' earthy ends — the conviction of being in harmony with the purposes of God. This would seem to indicate that a substantial segment of New Brunswick society, the Loyalist descendants, were beginning to think of themselves as a community, a distinct collectivity sharing a common past, purpose, and destiny.⁵⁰

Gray apparently had just grounds for his fears of declension, for the prosperous 1850's witnessed considerably less concern with the Loyalists, after the intense interest of the 1840's. The Saint John *Morning News*, in 1858, on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the landing of the Loyalists, lamented this vast change of sentiment which had occurred since the Loyalist Jubilee in 1833. Concerning the complete absence of discussion and preparations for celebrating "one of the prominent marks in the Calendar of New Brunswick", it wondered aloud, "How are we to account for this degeneracy or to interpret the falling off of a once lively and congenial sentiment . . . ?"⁵¹ There seems to have been some anxiety that the example of the Loyalists and their principles were losing their influence over New Brunswick society in the midst of material affluence. The *New Brunswick Courier's* solution was a Loyalist monument. In advocating a concrete expression of filial devotion, the newspaper's remarks betrayed a sense of urgency. The monument, it felt, should be "of the most permanent and durable character", telling all who came after of the trials and triumphs of the City's founding

48 Rev. I.W.D. Gray, *A Sermon, Preached at Trinity Church, in the Parish of St. John, N.B., on the 8th December, 1857, by the Rev. I.W.D. Gray, D.D., and Designed to Recommend "The Principles of the Loyalists of 1783"* (Saint John, 1857), p. 14.

49 See S.F. Wise, "God's Peculiar Peoples", in Morton, ed., *The Shield of Achilles* pp. 36-61.
50 *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

51 The *Morning News* (Saint John), May 17, 1858.

20 *Acadiensis*

fathers. Undoubtedly such a monument should be raised, the *Courier* exhorted, “before the memory of the generation that was its founders altogether passes away”⁵²

Material prosperity, while raising anxieties over declension and the abandonment of the Loyalists’ conservative principles and loyalty to the British Crown by their descendants, also contributed positively to the Loyalist myth. Affluence was pointed to as a sign of divine favour and as the ultimate justification of the rectitude of the Loyalist cause. The Loyalists and their descendants had achieved prosperity by triumphing over the wilderness, the major barrier to the success of the Loyalists experiment in New Brunswick. They had transformed the wilderness of defeat into the garden of victory.

The 1860’s similarly, but for different reasons, witnessed a continued decline of interest in the Loyalists. During the period between the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861 and the Treaty of Washington in 1871 interest in all things Loyalist ebbed to such a degree that the period might, with a fair amount of justification, be considered a “lost decade” for the Loyalist myth in New Brunswick. New Brunswickers were clearly preoccupied with other matters: Confederation, railways, the end of reciprocity, and the Fenians. It is difficult to understand why the Loyalist myth was not increasingly relied upon in this era of prevailing adversities, external threats, and Confederation, in reaction to which one would have expected, as was the case in Upper Canada, a steadily growing concern with the colony’s founding myth. Perhaps part of the explanation for this apparent decline of interest in the Loyalists is to be found in the fact that New Brunswickers were preoccupied during most of the decade with the struggle both for and against Confederation. They consequently had little time for reflecting upon the virtues and accomplishments of their Loyalist forefathers.

Only a few scattered references to the Loyalists were made on Loyalist Days during the 1860’s. On May 21, 1862, for example, the Saint John *Morning News* observed that the custom of keeping the anniversary “appears to be dying out”.⁵³ The only popular Loyalist celebrations in the 1860’s were the firing of salutes and the occasional marching of firemen’s bands. Perhaps the most memorable of these occurred on Loyalist Day, May 18, 1870 when, following a twenty-one gun salute from Fort Howe, Sergeant James Napier was run over by a stray cannon.⁵⁴ Simultaneously, a number of houses below Fort Howe caught fire, ignited by the discharge of the salute, posing a major problem for their inhabitants, since the firemen and engines were taking part

52 The *New Brunswick Courier*, May 29, 1858.

53 The *Morning News*, May 21, 1862.

54 The *St. John Telegraph And Morning Journal*, May 19, 1870.

in the Loyalist Day parade.

During the period from 1849 to 1871 interest in the Loyalists among New Brunswickers thus steadily declined, and the image of the Loyalists seems to have progressively faded and blurred. But the Loyalist myth would revive and return with a vengeance during the Loyalist Centennial era in New Brunswick.

V

In 1876 at Philadelphia the United States celebrated the centennial of the Declaration of Independence with extravagant displays and spread-eagle speeches, directed at strengthening national unity and extolling the material progress of the Republic. Carl Berger has observed that in Upper Canada, Canadians of the Loyalist persuasion saw in the American centennial "attempts to vilify their ancestors in particular and demonstrations of hostility to British America in general. They responded with the loyalist centennial celebration in 1884 and renewed their ancestors' pledge of fidelity to the British Crown and the unity of the Empire".⁵⁵ In New Brunswick, on the other hand, the American "Centennial Era", from 1875 to 1883, was a period of unprecedentedly friendly Canadian-American relations. The Saint John Loyalist Centennial celebrations of May and October, 1883 provided many New Brunswickers with an opportunity of reciprocating the pro-British atmosphere of the American celebrations. As the Saint John *Daily News* observed on July 4, 1876, noting the Republic's heroic assertion of independence and wonderful century of progress, "blood is thicker than water, and . . . we cannot but feel a certain family interest in the grand Centennial."⁵⁶ And the *New Dominion and True Humorist* added that, far from being a source of ill-feeling, the approaching Centennial should be "an occasion for re-knitting the ancient ties of kindred and fellowship which the political divisions of a century ago so cruelly snapped asunder".⁵⁷ This mutual goodwill was strengthened by such incidents as the universal Canadian mourning on the death of President Garfield in 1881 and the American salute to the British flag at the Yorktown Centennial in October, 1881. The image of the Loyalists as conveyed during the Centennial era reflected this definite pro-American orientation.

On Loyalist Day, May 18, 1875, the *New Dominion and True Humorist* ironically lamented that the day had passed, never to return, when full jus-

55 Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto, 1970).

56 The *Daily News*, July 4, 1876.

57 The *New Dominion and True Humorist* (Saint John), May 20, 1876.

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tice would be done to the memory of those noble men.⁵⁸ But that same year marked the revival of intense interest in the Loyalists that was to continue, virtually unabated, until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. The Upper Canadian Loyalist Centennial celebrations had arisen partly as a vindication of the Loyalists, whom it was believed had been vilified during the American celebrations. In addition to this negative stimulus, it appears probable that the New Brunswick Loyalist Centennial was inspired also by a desire to emulate the American examples. Through the tremendous interest which it generated, the New Brunswick Loyalist myth assumed many of the aspects of a tradition. The Loyalist myth had been previously a deep-seated and implicit part of New Brunswick life, articulated only when circumstances required. But, beginning in the 1870's, the social attitudes, beliefs, and institutions of the Loyalists apparently came to possess for many New Brunswickers, a pressing relevance for, and moral influence over, the present.

While most of the basic continuing elements of the Loyalist image were present, in varying degrees, in the immediate pre-Centennial era, a new component of the founding myth was emphasized. The Loyalists were no longer considered as merely the fathers of New Brunswick, but also, increasingly, as the "true founders of Canada". This would seem to indicate that many New Brunswickers were becoming reconciled to Confederation. The Loyalists, through their exertions, principles, and institutions, were credited with laying, broad and deep, the foundations of a great nation that was destined to vie with the United States as the leading power on the continent.⁵⁹

Until this time, Loyalist celebrations and comment had been largely confined to Saint John and its immediate vicinity. In the late 1870's, the other areas originally settled by the Loyalists, especially Charlotte County and the St. John valley, began to awaken to a realization of their Loyalist heritage, in the light of the approaching Centennial.⁶⁰ But the movement behind the Loyalist Centennial commemoration was largely élitist in origins, personnel, and execution. It was led, for the most part, by the members of the New Brunswick Historical Society. Founded in 1874, it was composed of a number of prominent clergymen, lawyers, antiquarians, doctors, politicians, and editors, who comprised the élite of Saint John and New Brunswick society.⁶¹ While the Society's historical papers were not widely published, they repre-

58 *Ibid.*, May 15, 1875.

59 *The Daily Telegraph* (Saint John), May 18, 1876; *Ibid.*, May 18, 1880.

60 See, for example, "The Old Loyalists", in the *Bay Pilot* (St. Andrews), October 18, 1878 — January 9, 1879; "Loyalists in Fredericton", in the *Capital* (Fredericton), October 23, 1880; and "March of the 104th Regiment", in *ibid.*, April 15, 1882.

61 Joseph W. Lawrence was elected President, Alfred A. Stockton, a prominent Saint John lawyer, became Vice-President, and William P. Dole, later of Centennial Prize Ode fame, became the Corresponding Secretary. Other distinguished members included William R.M. Burtis, James Hannay, Isaac Allen Jack, George Upham Hay, and Clarence Ward. This group was to play a key role in organizing the Loyalist Centennial celebrations of 1883.

sented the first instances in which serious, albeit selective, historical research was employed to reinforce and attempt to “prove” the Loyalist myth. Thus, in this era, the previously receding and fading Loyalist image began to be reinvigorated by a growing historical sense and antiquarian interest in the Loyalists.⁶² Some New Brunswickers had discovered in historical research a means of infusing the Loyalist myth with a new life and of steadily expanding their usable past.

From among this group, the clergymen of the various religious denominations, especially Anglican and Methodist, played a key role in arousing public interest in the approaching Loyalist Centennial. For example, on the ninetyeth anniversary of the landing of the Loyalists, May 18, 1873, the Reverend James J. Hill, the Rector of Trinity Church, delivered a sermon entitled, “The Landing of the Loyalists”. Hill noted the declension of Loyalist values among their descendants, who had become accustomed to affluence. The rising of a worldly spirit had alienated them from the Almighty. Hill’s constant dwelling upon “degenerate sons” and ritualistic praising of the Loyalists and their principles suggests a subconscious desire on the part of Loyalist descendants to be reassured that their forefathers’ virtues were not waning in a materialistic age. This fear of deviation from their ancestors’ uprightness pervaded most of the Jeremiad literature of the Centennial era. There appears to have been some latent anxiety that the Loyalist descendants had left behind forever the Golden Age of Loyalism. But material progress and affluence also pointed to the righteousness of the Loyalist cause. It was, according to Hill, surely a sign of divine favour.⁶³

The Reverend D.D. Currie, Secretary of the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada, took up Hill’s theme of the Loyalists’ mission and their role as “God’s Chosen People”. On January 9, 1882, Currie delivered a lecture entitled ‘The Loyalist Idea’, attended by the largest audience of the season at the Mechanics’ Institute in Saint John. Obedience to the Biblical precept, “Fear God, Love The Brotherhood, Honor The King”, Currie felt, had pervaded the minds and hearts of the Loyalists. It had led them to advance God’s cause and to cherish unswerving loyalty to the constitution, the laws of the land, and the sovereign power representing them. But their loyalty to the British Crown merely symbolized a deeper commitment to

62 This was part of a growing concern in North America with local history, as a means of fostering and strengthening a spirit of patriotism. In the decade of the 1880’s, over eighty local historical societies were established in the United States, and between 1882 and 1896, fifteen such organizations appeared in Ontario alone, indicating a substantial growth of interest in history. See Berger, *The Sense of Power*, p. 96.

63 Rev. James J. Hill, “*The Landing of the Loyalists*”; *A Sermon by the Rev. James J. Hill, M.A., Rector of the Parish of St. John: Preached in Trinity Church on May 18th, 1873, And Published at the request of the Parishioners* (Saint John, 1873), p. 12.

24 *Acadiensis*

a conservative social order, established institutions, and the inner spirit of the British constitution. The Loyalist tradition was thus founded on an insistence upon authority, respect for history, a deeply conservative instinct, the belief of the primacy of the community over the individual, and the key role of religion as “the mortar of the social order”.⁶⁴

Currie’s central theme, however, was that from these principles the Loyalists had derived a divinely-inspired sense of mission. From the “Loyalist Idea” they had derived an inspiration which had made them heroic in all their conflicts. He thought he traced “a divine purpose” in the work of the Loyalists. God had meant that the “Loyalist Idea”, inherited from the Pilgrim Fathers, should be brought by the Loyalists to “these Provinces, and that, thereupon, a Canadian Dominion should be built”. They had sown the seeds of a New Empire.⁶⁵ The “Loyalist Idea”, Currie felt, had been greater than the Loyalists themselves. Undoubtedly influenced by the recent Loyalist hagiography of Egerton Ryerson,⁶⁶ he traced its roots to the signing of the Mayflower Compact in 1620 by the Pilgrim Fathers, a declaration of unswerving loyalty to the British Crown. The Loyalists had been the rightful successors to the Pilgrims. The Pilgrims’ long struggle had climaxed in the struggle of their descendants, the Loyalists, for the creation of a grand Anglo-Saxon Empire. The coming of the Loyalists, Currie argued, had thus been part of a divine plan:

They came hither with duty as their polar star, with justice in their right hand, with truth in their left, with the fear of God in their hearts, and clad with loyalty as with a garment. They planted the loyalist idea in this British soil . . . for the promotion of the purposes of Providence and of the beneficent designs of God. That idea has taken root. Its developments are apparent to-day throughout this prosperous Dominion, from the Atlantic to the Pacific . . .⁶⁷

The “irresistible sweep and drift of Providence” had led God’s Chosen people, like the children of Israel, into the wilderness, where their divinely-ordained mission had been handed down to their descendants.

An interesting sidelight to the preparations for the Loyalist Centennial was the overt breach which occurred in August, 1882 between those Loyalist descendants who favoured a Memorial Hall and those who pressed for a monument to commemorate the Centennial. The distinction was both significant and symbolic. A Saint John lawyer, David Shanks Kerr, the leader

⁶⁴ Berger, *The Sense of Power*, p. 103.

⁶⁵ Rev. D.D. Currie, “The Loyalist Idea”, quoted in the *Morning Herald* (Halifax), January 11, 1882.

⁶⁷ Rev. D.D. Currie, “The Loyalist Idea”, quoted in the *Daily Telegraph*, January 10, 1882.

of the monument faction, focused on the Loyalist sons' militaristic prowess during the War of 1812, as justification for building a monument similar to that dedicated to "the immortal Brock".⁶⁸ The existence of the monument faction was perhaps a measure of the extent to which some New Brunswickers had been assimilated by the Upper Canadian Loyalist tradition and its component, the militia legend. It was also indicative, however, of the continuing differences between the Upper Canadian and New Brunswick Loyalist myths that this militaristic and anti-American argument served only to alienate Kerr and his followers from the mainstream of the New Brunswick Loyalist tradition. Joseph W. Lawrence and the majority of the New Brunswick Historical Society felt that a pretentious column, dedicated to non-existent martial virtues, was a "petrified idea". On the other hand, a Memorial Hall would be "a fountain of living thought and enlightenment" for future generations.⁶⁹

The New Brunswick Loyalist Centennial of 1883 imparted the Loyalist image in its purest and most perfect form, with the exception of its recurring anti-American aspect. The celebrations manifested a decidedly pro-American component. On May 17, a Watch Night service was held in Centenary Church. It was attended by an immense gathering. All of the aisles and corridors were packed and "the greatest enthusiasm prevailed". The Stars and Stripes and Union Jack were visible at many points throughout the Church. The Reverend Dr. Pope began the service with a prayer, implicit in which was the belief that the Loyalists were the architects of Canadian development and nationhood, and that the whole country had assumed the characteristics of the original fragment. The role of nature was crucial. Like the Israelites, the Loyalists had gone defeated into an "unbroken desert" and transformed it into "a garden which the Lord delighted to bless".⁷⁰ In so doing they had won the final victory by creating New Brunswick and laying, "broad, deep, and strong", the foundations of Canada's future greatness.

Loyalist Day began with a re-enactment of 'the Landing of the Loyalists', viewed by an estimated 40,000 persons.⁷¹ It seems to have turned into a "farical burlesque", as one observer remarked, in that the participants did not assume a "stern and grave aspect". A parade up King Street followed, composed of Polymorphians, in period costumes, the "H.M.S. *Union*", representing the Loyalists' arrival, a log cabin, symbolizing the wilderness experi-

68 The War of 1812, according to Kerr, was "the most glorious victory ever known in which the sons of the Loyalists figured, *even in their blood*, in a way deserving everlasting memory and praise". Quoted in the *Daily Sun* (Saint John), August 16, 1882.

69 Quoted in *ibid.*, August 31, 1882.

70 Quoted in [J.W. Lawrence, ed.], *Loyalists' Centennial Souvenir; New Brunswick Historical Society* (Saint John, 1887), p. 13.

71 The *Daily Telegraph*, May 19, 1883.

ence, a regiment representing the "Old 104th", sixty knights in armour carrying spears, and finally the "Loyalists", who had been received by a sixty-gun salute. A Centennial Service was then held in Trinity Church at 9:00 A.M. The Rector, the Reverend Canon Brigstocke, compared the day, significantly, to Israel's delivery from Egypt, annually commemorated by the feast of the Passover. The day was being celebrated as due recognition that the nation's history was "the development of divine purposes and designed to promote divine glory". The Loyalists, observed Brigstocke, had been firmly opposed to the existence of an independent republic. But a hundred years had passed and Canadians and Americans, "a people composed nominally of two nationalities", were now closely united by the ties of church fellowship, commerce, friendship, and goodwill. They had long since lost all sense of hostility, and now seized every opportunity to manifest the "mutual respect and honor . . . entertained towards each other".⁷² Brigstocke then exhorted the descendants of the Loyalists not to abandon their forefathers' self-denial by merely amassing wealth and forgetting spiritual values. "In obedience to Divine obligation, and in honor of the memory of the founders of the city", they were to reaffirm their forefathers' principles.

That afternoon, the Saint John Mechanics' Institute was filled to capacity to hear the Centennial addresses and oration. Eulogy followed upon eulogy. Mayor Simeon Jones of Saint John had no doubt that it had been the spirit and example of the Loyalists that had produced the vast Dominion of Canada, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific. There was, however, another reason for celebration. The Loyalists had entertained bitter feelings against their neighbours across the border. But all hard feelings and misunderstandings had long since vanished and, the Mayor asserted, "we are now practically as one people . . ." The presence of the representative of "that great country", here to honour the memory of those brave enemies of his sires, added Jones, to sustained applause and "great cheering", provided further proof that "we are now as one nation . . ."⁷³ William P. Dole then proceeded to read his Centennial Prize ode, which had won the fifty dollars' prize from the *Saint John Globe*. Dole had won over thirty-six other entries, an indication of the intense popular interest in the Centennial.⁷⁴ Dole's ode, replete

72 Quoted in [Lawrence, ed.], *Loyalists' Centennial Souvenir*, p. 27.

73 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 33.

74 Glowing accounts of the Centennial celebrations are to be found in most New Brunswick newspapers. One notable exception was *Le Moniteur Acadien* (Shédiac), which ironically noted that "On peut dire que ce jour a été une fête générale pour tout le monde". In addition to the innumerable odes, songs, and epic poems, a number of commemorative publications appeared. See, for example, D.R. Jack, *Centennial Prize Essay on the History of the City and County of St. John* (Saint John, 1883), and J.W. Lawrence, *Foot-Prints; Or, Incidents In The Early History of New Brunswick, 1783-1883; Or, New Brunswick's Centennial Souvenir* (Saint John, 1883).

with Biblical allusions, rhapsodized grandiloquently on the Loyalists' noble virtues, divinely-inspired cause, vindicated principles, and lasting accomplishments.⁷⁵ A Fireman's parade was held in the evening. It had been intended to have a gigantic fireworks display on King's Square, but unfortunately a spark fell into the uncovered box, and the entire display went up immediately, "to the disappointment of thousands who expected to witness a brilliant pyrotechnic display".⁷⁶

Newspaper reactions to the Loyalist Centennial were overwhelmingly sympathetic to the Loyalist cause. The one dissenting voice was raised by John V. Ellis' pro-annexationist *Saint John Globe*. It believed that the golden age lay in the future, not the past.⁷⁷ Regarding the Fireman's Parade, it remarked that New Brunswickers were indebted more to the descendants of the rebellious colonists than to the Loyalists:

... how much that we had on Friday to honor the Loyalists was not due to the genius of the Loyalists, but to the people whom they left Almost all that we have that is most worthy of our people today comes to us through the reaction upon us of the United States, through what we learn by observation of, and contact with, that people. The gallant Captain Kerr, beneath his Yankee helmet, behind his Yankee fire engine, his breast adorned with a Yankee badge — of what was he the representative? The question needs no answer.⁷⁸

The *Globe's* editorial may suggest one of the reasons behind the tremendous and seemingly spontaneous out-pouring of emotions which characterized the New Brunswick Loyalist Centennial — what Freud called the "Narcissism of small differences". As the distinctions between American and Canadian life and institutions diminished, the need to insist upon them intensified.⁷⁹ Confronted by growing American influences in every aspect of life — political, commercial, social, intellectual, and cultural — many New Brunswickers apparently seized the opportunity afforded by the Centennial to assert their distinctiveness. The Loyalist tradition provided them with a sense of intrinsic moral superiority.

Throughout the summer of 1883, interest in the Loyalists continued to

75 William P. Dole, "Ode For 18 May, A.D. 1883", quoted in [Lawrence, ed.], *Loyalists' Centennial Souvenir*, pp. 41-43.

76 The *Weekly Freeman* (Saint John), May 26, 1883.

77 The *Saint John Globe*, May 17, 1883.

78 *Ibid.*, May 23, 1883.

79 See Wise & Brown, *Canada Views the United States*, pp. 95-96.

run high.⁸⁰ In early October the Dominion and Centennial Exhibition was held in Saint John to commemorate the Centennial of the arrival of the Fall fleet. The *Saint John Centennial Advertiser*, distributed during the week, reflected the light-hearted detachment with which many New Brunswickers viewed the events of a century before.⁸¹ The H.M.S. *Garnet*, in Saint John harbour, ran up the American flag and fired a royal salute of twenty-one guns, in return for the salute to the British flag at the Yorktown Centennial. The United States warship *Alliance* returned the salute. Joseph W. Lawrence wrote that "These international courtesies, in the harbour where the Loyalists landed one hundred ago, were highly gratifying to our citizens, and worthy of two nations holding the first place in the ranks of civilization."⁸² And the *Christian Visitor* of Saint John added, "His heart must be callous indeed, who would not feel a grateful appreciation of [this] exchange of courtesies . . . the great heart of these two peoples is animated by mutual respect, esteem, and affection. May the ties grow closer".⁸³

And thus, by December, 1883, the intense interest generated by the New Brunswick Centennial drew to a close. Perhaps part of the reason behind these enthusiastic celebrations lay in the distinctly Victorian phenomenon of hero worship.⁸⁴ Faced with the growing complexities and frustrations produced by rapid industrialization and the decline of traditional religious faith, many New Brunswickers seem to have "worshipped" the Loyalists as the heroes of a Golden Age. The Loyalists were regarded as men of the highest moral stature, and thus an important source of inspiration in a period witnessing an alarming growth of commercial spirit and religious doubt. Many New Brunswickers had found in the Loyalists welcome signs of God's providence and justice.⁸⁵

80 For example, see *An Address . . .* (New York, 1883), written by General John Watt De Peyster, a Loyalist descendant and a member of the old New York élite, read before the New Brunswick Historical Society in his absence by Jonas Howe, on August 28, 1883. De Peyster felt that the Loyalists had been sacrificed between the "upper millstone of the colonies and the nether millstone of the British ministry . . ." His account added an element of grievance, betrayal, and persecution to the Loyalists' sufferings and self-sacrifice. As De Peyster stated, ". . . the Loyalists in America . . . were the first to find the Golgotha of virtue . . . Disinterested loyalty . . . almost invariably finds a Calvary". *Ibid.*, pp. 7 & 21.

81 The *Saint John Centennial Advertiser* (*For Free Distribution During Exhibition Week*), October, 1883. A sharp contrast to this prevailing sentiment was to be found in *A Centennial Souvenir, 1783-1883; Issued Under The Auspices of St. John Typographical Union, No. 85* (Saint John), October 2, 1883. This publication concentrated upon the class distinctions which had arisen among the Loyalists, possibly indicating that the Loyalist myth was not shared by all segments of New Brunswick society.

82 Quoted in [Lawrence, ed.], *Loyalists' Centennial Souvenir*, p. 54.

83 The *Christian Visitor* (Saint John), October 10, 1883.

84 See Walter E. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870* (New Haven, 1957), pp. 305-340.

85 *Ibid.*, pp. 315-316.

But whether motivated through fears of declension, by the "Narcissism of small differences", by hero worship, or simply by a desire to commemorate the landing of the Loyalists, the Loyalist Centennial of 1883 witnessed one of the most widespread, spontaneous, and sincere tributes ever paid in New Brunswick to the memory of the Loyalists. The Upper Canadian Loyalist Centennial celebrations of 1884 have been generally regarded as having triggered an intense interest in the Loyalists which continued unabated until the outbreak of the First World War. In New Brunswick, however, the immediate aftermath of the Loyalist Centennial was a temporary decline of interest in the Loyalists. Even more surprising was the fact that Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887, while providing an outlet for innumerable super-loyal, ultra-British eulogies, incredibly elicited hardly the slightest mention of the Loyalists.⁸⁶ By 1887, all memory of the Loyalist Centennial seemed to have faded from the minds of most New Brunswickers.

VI

The decade of anxiety, disillusionment, and national despair between 1887 and 1897, however, witnesses the re-emergence of the Loyalist cult. The recession of the late 1880's and the panic of 1893 were acutely felt in New Brunswick. The Great Fire of Saint John in 1877,⁸⁷ the cutting off of the free American market for Canadian fish in 1885, the passing of the era of the wooden sailing vessel,⁸⁸ the decline of the timber industry, and the industrial recession all played their respective roles in helping undermine the New Brunswick economy.⁸⁹ The "exodus", the incessant drain of New Brunswick's population to the United States, peaked in the late 1880's and during the 1890's. While the exact extent of the exodus cannot be ascertained with complete certainty, it has been estimated that approximately 44,000 persons migrated from New Brunswick to the United States between 1881 and 1891 and an additional 32,000, between 1891 and 1901.⁹⁰ The total emigration dur-

86 See St. John, N.B., Committee on the Jubilee Celebration, 1887; *Souvenir of the Queen's Jubilee: An Account of the Celebration at the City of Saint John, New Brunswick, In Honor of the Jubilee Year of the Reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria* (Saint John, 1887).

87 See Wright, *The Loyalists of New Brunswick*, p. 232.

88 As of December 31, 1884, Saint John possessed a total of 677 ships (251,136 tons), of which 626 (245,869 tons) were sailing vessels, and only 51 (5,267 tons) were steam-powered. See C.H. Lugin, *New Brunswick (Canada) Its Resources, Progress And Advantages* (Fredericton, 1886), in E.B. Biggar, ed., *Canada: A Memorial Volume; A Statistical And Descriptive Handbook of the Dominion* (London, 1889), p. 60.

89 In addition, the Maritimes as a whole were confronted with the numerous problems involved in reorienting their economies to the National Policy. See T.W. Acheson, "The National Policy and the Industrialization of the Maritimes, 1880-1910", *Acadiensis*, I, 2 (Spring, 1972), pp. 3-28.

90 See M.C. Urquhart & K.A.H. Buckley, ed., *Historical Statistics of Canada* (Toronto, 1965), p. 22.

ing these two decades represented well over 20% of New Brunswick's remaining population in 1901. Many of the emigrants were Loyalist descendants, and those left behind looked on helplessly as their numbers dwindled.

Confronted with the perceived failure of Canada's National Policy, a number of alternative panaceas had been put forward. The *Moncton Transcript* favoured unrestricted reciprocity. *Canada* (Benton) advocated immediate independence and commercial union,⁹¹ while the *Saint John Globe* stood for outright annexation. The serious discussion of various forms of continentalism affronted the Loyalist descendants. They felt that the righteousness of their forefathers' principles was being challenged and leaped to their defence.

If Canada's future was in grave doubt, so was her present. The intensification of racial and religious animosities following Riel's execution in 1885, and the revival of regional economic jealousies, provincial rights, and cultural antagonisms seemed to indicate that Canada was coming apart at the seams. The prophecies of Canada's future were uniformly gloomy. It seemed to many that the attempt to found a transcontinental nation had been a disastrous mistake. The upheavals of industrialization and urbanization, and the consequent rise of new urban social and economic classes, added to the profound pessimism over Canada's future. Within this context, the Loyalist descendants in New Brunswick felt it necessary to invoke the memory of their Loyalist ancestors. It has been observed that the mood of doubt, disillusionment, and uncertainty which culminated in the late 1880's provoked many of the appeals to tradition and to the certainties of the past. "It is in times of trial that the sense of nostalgia for a heroic history is heightened and in the midst of turbulence and change that traditions are most useful for maintaining the assurance of security".⁹²

In addition to the interest stimulated in the Loyalists, the Loyalist myth in this period was characterized by a re-emergence and externalization of underlying anxieties directed against the United States. As in the 1840's, the volatile element of anti-Americanism as reflected in the image of the Loyalists during the late 1880's and early 1890's owed a great deal to a series of international incidents. The re-opening of the fisheries dispute and seizure of American fishing vessels after 1885, the Behring Sea dispute, the American annexation of Hawaii,⁹³ and the Venezuelan Boundary dispute brought old hostilities to the surface. The "twisting of the British lion's tail" in warlike speeches during American Presidential campaigns, especially in 1888, height-

91 *Canada* (Benton), Malch, 1893.

92 Berger, *The Sense of Power*, p. 95.

93 See, for example, "Miss Canada to Cousin Jonathan", in the *New Brunswick Reporter* (Fredericton), March 1, 1893.

ened anti-Americanism. While the closing of free American markets for Maritime fish had dealt a crushing blow to the fishing industry, the prohibitive McKinley Tariff of 1890 destroyed a large segment of the New Brunswick market for agricultural and manufactured products in the United States. The struggle against the “veiled treason” of commercial union was only one aspect of the growing anti-Americanism of the period, primarily among ultra-British Loyalist descendants. Thus, many New Brunswickers of Loyalist descent increasingly fell back upon their ancestors’ loyalty and superiority to compensate for these internal anxieties and external threats. It has been observed that traditions become the “objects of justificatory invocations when they are under attack and not when their propositions are taken for granted and tacitly accepted”.⁹⁴ Accordingly, anti-Americanism, reflected in an anti-Patriot reinterpretation of the American Revolution, provided the distinguishing characteristic of the Loyalist image in New Brunswick in this period. It must be emphasized, however, that most of its other long-term elements also received some attention.

The predominant element of anti-Americanism in the Loyalist image of this period perhaps found its strongest expression in the historical writings of James Hannay.⁹⁵ Hannay was the editor of the Saint John *Daily Telegraph*, one of the largest circulating Canadian daily newspapers east of Montreal. Between January 2 and September 29, 1893, there appeared in its columns a thirty-seven chapter “History of the Loyalists”, written by Hannay. Hannay’s anti-Patriot emphasis is to some extent traceable to his over-reliance on “impartial Loyalist accounts”, such as the rabidly Tory Judge Thomas Jones’ *History of New York during the Revolutionary War*.⁹⁶ But its anti-Americanism was for the most part indigenous to New Brunswick, judging from the favourable response it received in the province. In a sense, Hannay’s “History of the Loyalists” was symbolic and representative, although in the extreme, of the Loyalist image in New Brunswick during this period. In Hannay’s own modest words, it would be “the most important work ever issued from the Press of the Maritime Provinces”⁹⁷ Hannay, later a prominent New Brunswick historian, traced the course of the Revolution from its earliest agitations to Yorktown, drawing a hagiographic-daemonic distinction between the Loyalists and Patriots. In Hannay’s incredibly over-wrought conspiratorial interpretation, the American Revolution was considered the pro-

94 Berger, *The Sense of Power*, p. 82.

95 For a fuller discussion of Hannay’s historical writings, see Gregory H. Theobald, “George Foster and James Hannay: Studies of the Imperial Idea in New Brunswick, 1883-1900” (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1971), pp. 143-190.

96 Thomas Jones [Edward F. De Lancey, ed.], *History of New York During the Revolutionary War, And of the Events in the Other Colonies at that Period*, I & II (New York, 1873).

97 *The Daily Telegraph*, January 3, 1893.

duct of a long-range conspiracy on the part of a handful of rebel leaders. They had skillfully manipulated the barbarity and mob rule of the rebellion. This had been merely the “revival of the same False and Treacherous Spirit which always distinguished the Puritans of Massachusetts, and which made them persecutors and tyrants”.⁹⁸ The Puritans had been the real fathers of the rebellion:

. . . they, if possible, surpassed their Indian enemies, using the scalping knife as freely as the untamed savages of the forest [They] professed a dark and gloomy system of religion, founded mainly on the Old Testament, in which murder and assassination were invested with divine sanction. All light, all beauty, and all refinement were removed from their lives, while they hoped by long prayers and a sanctimonious aspect to atone for their inherent dishonesty in commercial transactions. As for their cruelty, that was a part of their religion itself.⁹⁹

Following the example of their Puritan forefathers, the Patriots had “contrived to combine rascality with religion, a pretended love of freedom, and an absolute denial of free speech”¹⁰⁰

Hannay summarily dealt with this insidious conspiratorial element through character defamation and calumny. Every sordid and base motive was attributed to the castigated revolutionary leaders. Washington’s nature, Hannay believed, had been compounded of “treachery and cruelty in equal proportions”. He had encouraged the mobs to wage war upon Loyalist women and children. In addition, he had had an aristocratic contempt for the rights of others, a violent temper, and “was much given to profanity”. Jefferson had been an infidel and, moreover, a flagrant hypocrite, having been a slaveowner. Even the venerable Benjamin Franklin had been capable of “any act of treachery”. The centre of this lawless conspiracy had been Boston, where the leading agitators had included such incendiaries as John Hancock, the smuggler, and Samuel Adams, a failure in everything except “his marvellous capacity for intrigue”. All of the Patriots had inflamed the passions of the multitude through falsehoods in order to better their own fortunes.¹⁰¹

By thus describing the selfish and pecuniary motives of the Patriots, not only were the Loyalists’ sacrifices for principles favourably contrasted with the former, but republicanism was identified with lawlessness and vulgar materialism. While the rebels had been unprincipled and motivated only by

98 James Hannay, “History of the Loyalists”, in the *Daily Telegraph*, March 13, 1893.

99 *Ibid.*, May 19, 1893.

100 *Ibid.*, March 6, 1893.

101 *Ibid.*, January 27, 1893.

base materialistic factors, the Loyalists were animated by higher religious precepts. Their descendants could consequently experience a profound sense of moral superiority. In sharp contrast to the “revolutionary party”, the immaculate Loyalists represented for Hannay the forces of truth and light. They were rational, sincere, loyal, honest, and upright subjects of the King. While they had shared and sympathized with many of the Patriot’s grievances, they had believed that the unity of the Empire was of far greater importance.¹⁰² However, according to Hannay, the Loyalist cause had been lost through Patriot conspiracies and British indifference. A sense of grievance — that the Loyalists had been martyred for their cause — pervaded his account. The allegiance of much of the overwhelmingly loyal population had been insidiously eroded by “shrewd and designing demagogues”. The Loyalists, fighting for their King and the unity of the Empire, had not only been the victims of countless rebel persecutions. They had also suffered at the hands of British ministerial ineptitude and military incompetence. They had been far more loyal than the British, and were the only element to emerge spotless from the Revolutionary struggle.

Hannay presented a veritable catalogue of rebel sins, describing in lurid detail innumerable atrocities and outrages committed upon the loyal inhabitants of the colonies. The same hypocrisy in boasting of freedom and yet suppressing dissenting views, according to Hannay, still characterized American society. “The crude maxims which the men of the revolution were so fond of spouting upon every occasion as to the beauties of liberty”, were little heeded by their descendants, who no longer glorified rebellion or dignified resistance to the established government by “the name of patriotism”.¹⁰³ Regardless of the “pompous and flatulent” Declaration of Independence, “no people in any age . . . ever showed a greater degree of intolerance and barbarity than the rebels in America. In their eyes, rebellion was something sacred, and all means were lawful to make it successful”¹⁰⁴ Part of the viciousness of Hannay’s “History of the Loyalists” stemmed from his reaction to the “shameless mendacity” of contemporary American histories, written “without the slightest regard for truth, for the purpose of inflaming the so-called patriotism of the American people” and perpetuating their hatred of England. Great Britain’s cause, Hannay alleged, had suffered grievous injury, in that nearly all the revolutionary historians had been her enemies, “ready to resort to any misrepresentation and falsehood, which would serve

102 *Ibid.*, January 4, 1893.

103 *Ibid.*, January 27, 1893.

104 *Ibid.*, June 28, 1893.

34 *Acadiensis*

their own evil end".¹⁰⁵

While James Hannay's "History of the Loyalists" was vitriolic and extreme, it was nevertheless symptomatic of a trend towards anti-Americanism in New Brunswick. This trend was reflected in the reinterpretation of the events of the American Revolution, and in the re-examination of the subsequent Loyalist migrations. No impartial observer would question the fact that many of Hannay's allegations, even if somewhat partisan and distorted, had a substantial factual basis. Indeed, many quite similar statements concerning Patriot motives and actions were made by the Loyalists themselves. The question at issue, however, is not Hannay's historical accuracy, but why such stridently anti-American bias was continually emphasized during this period. Indeed, when many New Brunswickers, and specifically the Loyalist descendants, viewed the social turbulence and violent disruptions in the United States during the late nineteenth century, they became much more explicit about their preferences, and even more convinced of their forefathers' wisdom.¹⁰⁶ In the face of perceived threats of aggression from the United States, anti-American stereotypes were conjured up and incorporated into the New Brunswick Loyalist image. Furthermore, it served to emphasize, through contrast with the Patriots, the higher principles by which the Loyalists had been animated. In addition, the emphasis on the Patriots' persecutions of the Loyalists provided an additional element which heightened the Loyalists' sufferings and self-sacrifice for principles.

Not only was there a considerable anti-American content in the Loyalist image in the late 1880's and early 1890's. There was, in addition, a tremendous explosion of publications concerning the Loyalists. The very fact that Hannay believed that his "History of the Loyalists" would increase the *Daily Telegraph's* circulation, and the *St. Croix Courier's* simultaneous publication of the Reverend W.O. Raymond's *The United Empire Loyalists* in serialized version, would seem to indicate a growing public interest in the Loyalists. The numerous references to the Loyalists' persecutions and sufferings and to their triumph over these, in such publications, would have appealed to

105 *Ibid.*, June 8, 1893. Hannay found a worthy opponent of his views in Martin Butler, the one-armed, quasi socialist Fredericton printer, publisher, poet, and pedlar. Predictably, Butler took violent exception to Hannay's "garbled accounts", in which the Patriot leaders were portrayed as "fiends incarnate", actuated only by selfish and dishonourable motives, while the poor Loyalists were represented as martyrs of the first water". Butler noted that "Doubtless there were excesses on both sides, but . . . we are strongly of the opinion that these articles are animated by a spirit of jealousy at the prosperity of the United States, . . . rather than a fair and impartial statement of the facts in the case. *Butler's Journal* (Fredericton), April, 1893. Nevertheless, Butler conceded that the Republic had "sadly degenerated since the days of the founding fathers". *Ibid.*, May, 1895.

106 Berger, *The Sense of Power*, p. 103.

many New Brunswickers. They gave to the Loyalist descendants a source of inspiration when confronted with similarly overwhelming difficulties. If they had inherited their forefathers' strength and determination, they too would be able to overcome all obstacles.

Hannay also wrote a number of articles on the Loyalists during this period. All of the publications were characterized by the prevailing anti-Americanism of the era. In 1891, for example, he contributed an article entitled simply "The Loyalists" to the *New England Magazine*. With evident relish, Hannay chronicled the atrocities and harsh acts of confiscation and banishment perpetrated by the revolutionaries. This short-sighted policy had been "one of the greatest acts of folly ever perpetrated by a people", for it had consolidated British power in North America and had built it up into the Dominion of Canada.¹⁰⁷ This theme was expanded upon by the Reverend William Odber Raymond, the Rector of St. Mary's Church, Saint John between 1884 and 1920. Raymond was probably even a more influential historian-propagandist than was Hannay. His first minor publication had been a pamphlet, *Kingston And The Loyalists of The "Spring Fleet" of 1783*, published in 1889. Even in this early work, Raymond's anti-American bias, which was to become the predominant characteristic of his writings on the Loyalists throughout the following decade, was clearly evident. It contained "A Narrative of William Bates", a particularly lurid account describing the Loyalists' sufferings at the hands of the "cruel and barbarous" rebels.¹⁰⁸ In 1893, the year in which interest in Loyalism seems to have peaked in New Brunswick, Raymond published a second pamphlet, *The United Empire Loyalists*. He felt that the United States had learned from the bloody and costly Civil War that the Loyalists had been right. The cause of constituted authority and the unity of the Anglo-Saxon race that had been lost in 1783, had triumphed in 1865.¹⁰⁹

Raymond, again like Hannay, dealt at length with the persecutions of the Loyalists. Unlike the previous era, Loyalist hardships were no longer perceived as being solely the result of their struggle against nature. Rather, they were viewed as the direct consequence of persecutions inflicted by their rebel enemies. There followed a lengthy catalogue of tarrings and featherings, "smoking" of Tories, ridings on rails, "gross personal injury", "murderous violence", and the cruelty and injustice of the mobs. While the emphasis in Raymond's account was upon anti-Americanism, the other continuing, long-term elements of the image were not appreciably neglected.

107 James Hannay. "The Loyalists", *New England Magazine* (Boston, 1891), pp. 297-315.

108 Quoted in Rev. W.O. Raymond, ed., *Kingston and the Loyalists of the "Spring Fleet" of A.D. 1783 . . .* (Saint John, 1889), pp. 6-7.

109 Rev. W.O. Raymond, *The United Empire Loyalists* (St. Stephen, 1893), p. 2.

36 *Acadiensis*

The Loyalists' principles, "their honesty of purpose and integrity of character", had been of foremost importance in determining their actions. Honest, fearless, moderate, and rational, they had been men of "the noblest character and highest positions". Acting from only the highest motives, they had been willing to sacrifice all to preserve the integrity of the Empire. Their most precious gift to Canada, according to Raymond, had been their adherence to the British constitutional tradition and a conservative social order. Canadians had secured reforms through the redress of grievances by constitutional means. "All honor to the brave hearts that laid strong and deep the foundations of our own Canadian home — that steadfastly adhered to principle, 'faithful alike to God and king' ".¹¹⁰

In 1890, Douglas B.W. Sladen, a close friend of Bliss Carman, had published an epic poem, *Lester the Loyalist; A Romance of the Founding of Canada*. It was printed in Tokyo on deluxe rice paper, with an oriental version of maple leaves underprinted on its pages. The primary significance of this piece of doggerel lay in the fact that it almost perfectly fused the new emphasis of Hannay and Raymond on the persecutions and sufferings of the Loyalists at the hands of the Patriots with the older concept of their struggle against the wilderness. The plot centred on Jonathan Sherwood, a well-born Whig merchant, his daughter Dorothy, and the Advocate Lester, who had joined the Loyalist forces at the outbreak of hostilities. Sherwood had suffered terrible degradations at the hands of the mob:

The day saw him bruised with foul eggs, tar-scalded, half-smothered
in feathers,
The night saw his warehouses wrecked and his home invaded by
maskers,
Who tore him, cursed, from the arms of his terrified wife and
daughter,
Scared in the belief of murder, and failing his oath to Congress,
Left him tied up like a dog, by the neck, half hung in the market . . .¹¹¹

Sladen took the opportunity afforded by such graphic descriptions of mob rule to emphasize the value of British constitutional liberty, which the Loyalists had brought with them to New Brunswick, in contrast to the Patriot version:

Charlatan Liberty, despot at heart, thy clamour for freedom

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹¹¹ Douglas B.W. Sladen, *Lester the Loyalist; A Romance of the Founding of Canada* (Tokio [sic]. 1890), p. 11.

Is claptrap for change of power, and when lordship lays down his
 sceptre,
 Thou seizest it cheering hoarsely, and usest thy sceptre in club wise,
 Most merciless, most malicious, because most minute of despots . . .¹¹²

From this point, the struggle of the Sherwoods was transformed into a particularly excruciating one against the “Northern Winter” and all the forces of nature. Their hardships in the wilderness seemed to have overshadowed their sufferings at the hands of the Patriots. Their persecutions by the Patriot mobs, however, added a new dimension to their sufferings and sacrifices for principles. They felt that they would “die as those children of Israel / Who died in the forty years of their wandering after Canaan”. It would have been “Far better to die by the hands of Revolvers, / Than these torments outwearying Hell”.¹¹³ Lester, the dauntless Loyalist, however, came to their rescue, arriving just before their last breath had expired. Lester and Dorothy built a mansion at Clearwater, where the old log cabin stood, and lived happily ever after, owning a large shipyard in Saint John. Sladen had thus successfully integrated the anti-Americanism of the period into the recurring motif of Loyalist sufferings.

The Hannay-Raymond emphasis upon Loyalist persecutions at the hands of the Patriots, together with the Sladen epic, apparently received a very favourable reception in the province.¹¹⁴ Besides the emphasis placed upon its recurring anti-American element, the New Brunswick Loyalist image in the late 1880's and early 1890's was expressed in an intense outburst of writing about the Loyalists. A number of New Brunswickers of national prominence referred to the Loyalists in glowing terms. For example, Charles G.D. Roberts observed that they had seized the ultimate victory from their unworthy opponents, those “agitators and demagogues who now strut as patriots across the pages of history . . .”.¹¹⁵ The United Empire Loyalists had thus become the true founders of Canada, for, as Roberts noted, that “destiny that governs nations was working to great ends”. It had been decreed that “of stern and well-trying stuff should be built a nation to inherit the northern half of the continent”. The Loyalist migration, no less significant than the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers, had been “one of those movements which have changed the course of history”. The stubborn energy of this “army of leaders”, the “very flower of the Thirteen Colonies” had thus “carved success out of mis-

112 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

113 *Ibid.*, p. 24.

114 See, for example, Mrs. J.C. Turnbull, *Ripples on the St. John River in Loyalist Days* (Saint John, 1898).

115 Charles G.D. Roberts, *A History of Canada* (London, 1897), p. 183.

38 *Acadiensis*

fortune". As Roberts summarized, "The Canada of today is their monument".¹¹⁶

It was not until the 1890's that the descendants of the Loyalists throughout Canada began to commemorate their ancestors with unbroken, persistent enthusiasm. In the process, the Loyalist myth was transformed into a "cult". Following previous unsuccessful attempts, the most important of which occurred, significantly, in 1846 and 1887, the New Brunswick Loyalist Society had been formally established at Saint John on May 13, 1889. It had as its objects "to perpetuate the memory and principles of the Loyalists, and to bring their descendants into closer association with one another".¹¹⁷ Its founding was to a large degree a northward extension of the same impulse that had led to the growth of seventy-five filiopietistic orders in the United States after 1870. Its inception chronologically coincided with that of the Sons of the American Revolution in 1889, and the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1890. The Loyalist Society's annual observances of Loyalist Day elicited forth yearly tributes to their forefathers in the form of sermons, speeches, odes, and editorial comment. The latter helped to diffuse the tradition to a wide audience. For example, the *Daily Telegraph* emphasized the value of the Loyalists' adherence to British constitutional liberty by contrasting it with the contemporary corruption in the United States. The Loyalists, observed the *Telegraph*, had rejected mob rule and "republicanism leavened with infidelity". Acting upon principles of order and justice, and strongly influenced by religious and moral precepts, they had created new provinces which speedily attained "the highest form of civil and religious liberty". Their children had abolished slavery and had made the government responsible to the people, "while yet the Legrees of the republic scourged to death their human victims . . ." ¹¹⁸ The *Daily Sun* attributed this moral superiority of Canada to the Republic's loss of "the stable, law-abiding, thrifty, and intelligent" Loyalists. Their exodus had left the young republic in the grasp of "mercenary men and politicians without convictions", and of "a dangerous foreign element", still crowding out the older families, "to the detriment of its morals public and private".¹¹⁹

In the period between approximately 1887 and 1897, the Loyalist myth in New Brunswick, for some, had reached the level of veneration of a cult. Much of this transformation was encouraged by a vitriolic anti-Americanism and by a similar movement taking place in Upper Canada. This obsession

116 *Ibid.*, p. 95. See also "A Son of the Loyalists" [Charles G.D. Roberts], "The Loyalists of the American Revolution", *Canadian Magazine*, VI (November, 1895-April, 1896), pp. 127-131.

117 Quoted in the *Evening Gazette* (Saint John), May 18, 1889.

118 The *Daily Telegraph*, May 19, 1888.

119 The *Daily Sun*, May 19, 1890.

with the nature of Loyalism reveals, among other things, the acute disorientation of some New Brunswickers during this period of self-doubt.

VII

Between Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the treatment of the Loyalists in New Brunswick seems to have been influenced only to a moderate extent by the achievement of Anglo-American rapprochement. This entente was accompanied by the emergence of an aggressive Anglo-Saxon Imperialism. The Spanish-American War and the Boer War seemed to many New Brunswickers to be parallel Imperialistic adventures, leading in the direction of a moral federation of the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race. The *Daily Telegraph*, for example, felt that the steady blending of interests in a firm Anglo-American alliance would be "the consummation of the most momentous event since the Christian era".¹²⁰ In addition, during the unprecedented prosperity of the Laurier boom, there no longer existed the pressing need to invoke the memory of the Loyalists in order to compensate for prevailing adversities. This growth of Anglo-American amity was reflected in New Brunswick in the development of a pro-American attitude. The growing pro-Americanism was perhaps demonstrated as much by the disappearance of the overt hostility of the late 1880's and early 1890's as by any widespread outpouring of pro-American sentiments.

Another striking characteristic of New Brunswick attitudes at this time was the growth of Imperialistic sentiment. At first glance, the connection between Loyalism and Imperialism would appear to be immediate and direct — almost a foregone conclusion. Carl Berger has discovered that in the Upper Canadian tradition, the Loyalists were credited with having implanted firmly in Canada British institutions and the impulse towards Imperial Federation. The preservation of the former and the realization of the latter had become almost sacred duties.¹²¹ In the case of Upper Canada, the Loyalist tradition did, in fact, provide one of the strongest ingredients in Canadian Imperial sentiment, and the Loyalist descendants constituted the major element of support for Imperial Federation. In New Brunswick, however, the relationship between the Loyalist tradition and Imperialism would seem to have been much more tenuous. Some emphasis was indeed placed upon their role in ostensibly fighting to prevent the disruption of the first British Empire.¹²² But there exists surprisingly little evidence to suggest that the Loya-

120 The *Daily Telegraph*, May 18, 1898.

121 Berger, *The Sense of Power*, p. 107.

122 See, for example, Rev. W.O. Raymond, "Loyalists In Arms", *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, 5 (1904), p. 202; and James Hannay, *History of New Brunswick*, I (Saint John, 1909).

list tradition in New Brunswick was employed as a rationale for Imperial Federation. Apart from a few isolated references to the Loyalists as preserving intact the British connection, the relationship between Loyalism and Imperialism seems to have been rarely articulated in the myth. At any rate, the advent of the Imperial era does not seem to have transformed the New Brunswick Loyalist tradition from a nostalgic, backward-looking myth into a future-oriented ideology with a sense of Imperial mission. This would appear to be a major point of differentiation between the Upper Canadian and New Brunswick Loyalist traditions.

The articulation of the Loyalist myth in New Brunswick seems to have been influenced to a far greater extent during this era by a growing emphasis on scholarly historical research. Prior to this time, the Loyalist myth had consisted largely of a progressively receding image, which had been revived with a brilliant immediacy in response to emotional and psychological needs at specific times. With the appearance of such Saint John-based publications as *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society* in 1894, the *New Brunswick Magazine* in 1898, and *Acadiensis* in 1901, a period of serious, albeit selective historical research, largely antiquarian, genealogical, and biographical, had opened. This increased historical interest in the Loyalists would seem to suggest that the former image of the Loyalists, crystallized in the minds of New Brunswickers, no longer sufficed as the focal point of the Loyalist myth, implanted in their minds by its critics. Or perhaps, alternatively, instead of reassuring themselves of its validity, they were proving the myth's ever-increasing vitality by infusing it with new life through accumulating historical evidence and "proof". They thus steadily expanded their awareness of their Loyalist heritage and added to New Brunswick's usable past. At any rate, this major innovation, the resort to techniques of historical research, produced a "Golden Age of Historiography" in New Brunswick during this era.

Unquestionably the foremost historian and proponent of the myth during this era was the Reverend W.O. Raymond, the President of the New Brunswick Historical Society and Chaplain of the Loyalist Society. His published monographs, historical articles, sermons, and addresses, more than any other source, embodied the quintessence of the Loyalist myth in New Brunswick from 1897 to 1914. His earlier virulent anti-Americanism seems to have disappeared following the speech of Professor Moses Coit Tyler of Cornell University on the occasion of the Centennial of the University of New Brunswick. This address, given in Fredericton on May 29, 1900, expressed unequivocally pro-Loyalist sympathies.¹²³ Raymond was greatly influenced by this recognition of the Loyalists' hardships and virtues by a prominent American

123 See Rev. W.O. Raymond, *The River St. John: Its Physical Features, Legends and History from 1604 to 1784* (Saint John, 1910), pp. 551-552.

academic.¹²⁴ From this time, he discontinued his previous concentration upon the Loyalists' anti-Americanism and sufferings at the hands of the Patriots. He even, on occasion, made passing references to the Loyalists' role in preserving a united Empire and to the essential unity of the Anglo-Saxon race.¹²⁵

Raymond's historical publications regarding the Loyalists were also quite typical of the period in another significant respect. His articulation of the Loyalist myth no longer was based upon intuitive judgments, but came to rely increasingly upon serious historical research. Raymond's first major publication was his carefully edited version of the Winslow Papers. This "labor of love", as he described it, was designed to be "a veritable mine of information with regard to circumstances under which the Province of New Brunswick sprang into existence",¹²⁶ Raymond meticulously traced Edward Winslow's direct lineal descent from the Mayflower Pilgrim and first Governor of Plymouth Colony, of the same name. The implicit assumption underlying this genealogical digression was that the Loyalists had been not only the ideological heirs, but also the direct descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers. Through the atavistic transmission of the Pilgrims' noble qualities, the Loyalists had inherited the courage, strength, and endurance to sacrifice everything for the sake of adherence to their principles. A direct bond was thus established between two of God's Chosen People. The Loyalist had been the chosen of the chosen. A general overview of Raymond's published historical writings between 1897 and 1914 reveals the presence of most of the basic unifying elements in the Loyalist myth. Raymond's view of the Loyalists remained substantially unaltered from the previous period,¹²⁷ apart from the disappearance of his former anti-Americanism.

In addition, in his role as Chaplain of the Loyalist Society, Raymond annually delivered the Loyalist Day sermon, relating Loyalism to topical issues. Perhaps the most significant of these, preached by Raymond in Trinity Church, Saint John, on Loyalist Day, May 18, 1913, attempted to tie the Loyalist migration firmly to the Social Gospel movement. The Loyalists had been bound by a spirit of self-sacrifice, the ideal of a Christian life, and "a communal spirit of mutual helpfulness and sympathy" for those "unfortunate above their neighbours". The social concern and the "principle of co-oper-

124 *Ibid.*, pp. 550-552; *The Daily Sun*, May 18, 1901.

125 See Rev. W.O. Raymond, *Glimpses of the Past; History of the River St. John, A.D. 1604-1784* (Saint John, 1905), p. 370; *The Daily Sun*, May 19, 1902.

126 Raymond, ed., *The Winslow Papers*, "Introduction", p. II.

127 A similar tendency is to be found in the historical writings of James Hannay during this period, especially with regard to his monumental *History of New Brunswick*. His former anti-Americanism had all but disappeared. Indeed, he attacked both the American revolutionaries and British statesmen and soldiers only to illustrate the folly and stupidity of the dismemberment of the first British Empire. Only the Loyalists had possessed the clear foresight to remain true to the British Empire.

ation” manifested in the organic Loyalist community, noted Raymond, provided a worthy example for New Brunswickers to follow in coping with the social problems created by industrialization. Immigration, urbanization, and the scramble for wealth had led to great social injustices which only the application of Gospel teachings could solve. The Loyalists’ perserverance in the mission which they had possessed, in the face of tremendous difficulties, afforded an excellent example for their descendants, similarly confronted by seemingly insurmountable obstacles. The Loyalists’ task had been one of construction. Their descendants’ task was one of reconstruction.¹²⁸

In addition to the writings of the more prominent historians during this period, a widespread interest in all things Loyalist was also expressed on the popular level. The flood of family genealogies, biographical sketches, local histories, literary magazines, and school texts,¹²⁹ saturated with accounts of the Loyalist leaders, their settlements, and their lasting accomplishments, reaffirmed the vitality of the Loyalist tradition. The distinguishing feature of the articulation of the myth in this era was an increasing reliance upon historical research. This new emphasis does not seem to have altered perceptibly what was said about the Loyalists. Its main significance appears to have been in imparting to the image of the Loyalists a sense of certainty and reassurance. But the resort to attempting to “prove” the Loyalist image historically, in the long-run sowed the seeds of its ultimate destruction.¹³⁰ Although its implications were not fully felt until the mid-twentieth century, the resort to history had also placed a powerful weapon in the hands of non-adherents of the myth. Succeeding generations of scholars, unaffected by the myth and employing advanced historical techniques, would critically dissect its elements and dispassionately disprove them.

128 Quoted in the *Daily Telegraph*, May 21, 1913.

129 During this period the Loyalist image seems to have permeated through and become a significant factor in New Brunswick school texts. See, for example, George U. Hay, ed., *Canadian Historical Readings* (Saint John, 1900); and George U. Hay, *A History of New Brunswick for Use in Public Schools* (Toronto, 1903).

130 For example, John Davidson, a Professor of Philosophy and Political Economy at the University of New Brunswick, contributed an article entitled, “The Loyalist Tradition in Canada”, to *Macmillan’s Magazine* (September, 1904), pp. 390-400. Davidson, an outside observer of Loyalism in New Brunswick, dissected, critically and dispassionately, its development in the province. He perceptively noted that the descendants of the Loyalists formed a self-constituted nobility in Canadian society: “The popular Canadian impression is that Loyalist was synonymous with all that is good and noble and upright, patriotic, self-sacrificing, and that to be descended from a Loyalist is to be possessed of the inheritance of all these virtues [It] is like having a patent of nobility, like coming over on the *Mayflower*, or coming over with the Normans the cult of the Loyalists is sometimes carried so far that it is impossible to treat it with patience”. *Ibid.*, p. 395.

VIII

New Brunswick had been in turn a colony of New England and Great Britain and then a province of Canada. Consequently, it appears that its transference of allegiance and the New Brunswickers' concepts of loyalty became somewhat blurred, although the traditional loyalty to Great Britain and to New Brunswick itself probably remained the strongest. In this position of diffused allegiance and multiple loyalties, New Brunswickers required a unifying factor to tie together in historical continuity these disparate objects of loyalty. Many thus turned to what they conceived to be their glorious past and invested characteristics peculiar to the Loyalists in the language of religion, mission, and destiny.¹³¹ The Loyalist experience provided the one element of glory in New Brunswick's history. "All other achievements were subordinated or adapted to the idea of loyalism, which has functioned as the founding and integrating myth of the new society".¹³² History was the chief vehicle through which the Loyalist tradition was expressed, being based on the assumption that the past contained principles to which the present should adhere, in order to preserve the continuity of national life.¹³³

Those exalted qualities, principles, and aspirations attributed, with fanatic pride, to the "true founders of Canada" by succeeding generations were probably more important ingredients in the development of Canadian nationalism than the actual accomplishments or the political and social ideology of the Loyalists themselves. The Loyalist myth represented a nascent form of New Brunswick patriotism, within the larger context of loyalty to Great Britain. In this situation, the image of the Loyalists was essentially backward-looking, concentrating upon the prominent positions held by the Loyalists in the Thirteen Colonies. Following the Loyalists' migration to the northern wilderness, greater emphasis had been placed upon the sufferings, hardships, and self-sacrifice endured in the struggle against nature, in the attempts to create an asylum, and then a Loyalist Elysium. Frequent Biblical allusions to Abraham and to the Israelites' flight from Egypt, and elaborate comparisons of the Loyalists to the Pilgrim Fathers, their ideological and supposedly genealogical forefathers, served to emphasize their divinely-inspired sense of mission as one of God's Chosen People.

Unlike Upper Canada, New Brunswick did not feel itself to be under a constant state of siege, either from without, as during the War of 1812, or from within, through massive immigration. In this respect, the image of the

131 Carl Berger, "The True North Strong and Free", in Peter Russell, ed., *Nationalism in Canada* (Toronto, 1966), p. 24.

132 David V.J. Bell, "The Loyalist Tradition in Canada", *Journal of Canadian Studies*, V, 2 (May, 1970), p. 24.

133 Berger, *The Sense of Power*, p. 90.

Loyalists in New Brunswick differed significantly from the Upper Canadian Loyalist tradition. New Brunswick thus developed less of a defensive mentality and militaristic spirit than did Upper Canada. And its Loyalist myth consequently exhibited more of a sense of mission than a "sense of power". The Loyalists' struggle was seen as primarily one against nature and not against the Americans. The entire basis of the Loyalist experiment in New Brunswick had been to create out of the wilderness of defeat, the garden of victory. The Indians, far from being allies against the Americans, as in the Upper Canadian experience and myth, were symbolic of nature. They were thus enemies that had to be overcome so that true Loyalist goals could be achieved. The only event mentioned concerning New Brunswick's "Loyalist sons' " participation in the War of 1812 was the winter march of the 104th Regiment from Fredericton to Quebec. This had obviously been a struggle against nature rather than the Americans. The American threat influenced the New Brunswick myth only during two relatively short periods, during the 1840's and the 1890's. Anti-Americanism during these respective periods was employed to rationalize distrust of the United States, and thus compensate for New Brunswick's vulnerability in the event of aggression. It also helped to emphasize the Loyalists' principles through contrast with the Patriots' vulgar materialism and sordid motives, and to stress the magnitude of their sufferings by luridly describing their persecutions. The Loyalist myth in these respective periods thus reached the level of veneration of a "cult", in order to compensate for political chaos, economic depression, and regional status decline. Otherwise, the anti-Americanism implicit in the Loyalist tradition remained hardly perceptible.

Gradually, as the nineteenth century wore on, the role of Loyalist principles, especially their steadfast loyalty to the British Crown and British institutions, was increasingly stressed. The New Brunswick Loyalist tradition thus differed from the American Tory myth in this respect. Unlike the former, the Loyalists' élitist origins were not central to the myth. The Loyalists' motivations, their unswerving adherence to British principles and the British Crown, were the central element in the New Brunswick myth. While it would be a mistake to underestimate the role assigned to former Loyalist social, cultural, economic, political, and intellectual superiority in the Thirteen Colonies, the concept of their élite origins was merely a subordinate myth, instrumental in emphasizing their self-sacrifice for principles. In this tradition, the United Empire Loyalists, the former New England élite, animated solely by loyalty to British principles and the British Crown, had triumphed over nature and created New Brunswick from the wilderness, thus helping to lay the foundations of the Canadian nation. Nature also assumed a new role. The rapidly increasing material wealth of New Brunswick represented the Loyalists' victory over nature. Prosperity was considered a sign of divine

favour, and the ultimate justification of the Loyalist cause and vindication of its righteousness. But the reaction to prosperity was ambivalent. Materialism also confronted the Loyalist tradition with an overt challenge. Deep-seated fears of declension, or deviation from their forefathers virtues, gave rise to a subconscious desire to be reassured that these virtues were not waning in a materialistic age. Many Loyalist descendants seem to have feared that they had left behind forever the Golden Age of Loyalism.

It may be argued that the Loyalist tradition fused many of the dispersed elements of New Brunswick loyalty, and thus facilitated the transference of allegiance from New Brunswick to Canada by providing an element of historical continuity between the two objects of loyalty. In the post-Confederation era, in addition to being regarded as the fathers of New Brunswick, the Loyalists were also viewed in their wider role as having been the "true founders of Canada."

Thus, according to the Loyalist tradition in New Brunswick, the Loyalists had created out of a wilderness, through their labours and their principles, the thriving province of New Brunswick and the great Dominion of Canada. They had laid the basis of those institutions and principles regarded as the cornerstones of Canadian nationality. By means of the Loyalist myth, the descendants of the Loyalists of New Brunswick had truly seized, out of their forefathers' defeat, the ultimate victory.