

# LIFE IN THE EARLY 1900s CANADA AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

<u>1900 - population of Canada was 5.2 million;</u> largest cities were Montreal, Toronto, Quebec City <u>By 1911</u> - populations were Montreal (490,504), Toronto (381,833), Winnipeg (136,035), and Vancouver (120,847)

men - most worked on farms; others worked in logging camps, railways, fishing, construction

# Women

- factory-workers, servants to the rich, teachers, store clerks, housewives / houseworkers

- not seen as "persons" under the law, and therefore cannot OWN property; they also can NOT vote (suffrage = right to vote)

- fought for *temperance* (moderation in the use of liquor) or outright *prohibition* (banning the sale of liquor)

- men often received paycheques at bars / pubs at this time, and could use up the family's money drinking at the tavern before returning home the same night

- women wanted more rights to protect themselves and their families from the evils of alcohol!





<u>1916</u> - Women get the right to vote in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, thanks in large part to people like Nellie McClung

# **Transportation**

 short distance -> horse & buggy; long distance was via the train <u>Automobile</u> - began production in the early part of the century <u>1907</u> - McLaughlin Carriage Company produced 193 cars; by 1915 carriage-making business sold in order to make more

# Chevrolets

<u>By 1918</u> - General Motors bought the company, and Sam McLaughlin became president of the new Canadian *branch plant* 

\* What are the + / - of Canadian businesses being bought by larger American companies? What are several examples of branch plants in Sudbury?

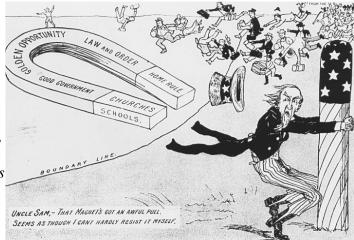
# Entertainment

- centred on local community (ex. Some sports, dances, concerts, church socials)

\* Why would communities be closer at this time? In what ways has our society changed?

# The West

- was of grave concern to the Canadian



government, who were afraid of American expansion into Canada's prairies

1872 - Prime Minister John A. Macdonald began the Canadian Pacific Railway from east to west; this was completed in 1885

1896 - Clifford Sifton was appointed Minister of the Interior by PM Wilfrid Laurier

- Sifton's job was to populate the west -> only searched for new immigrants in U.S., UK, and eastern Europe

- new immigrants were referred to as sodbusters since they naturally had to establish homes, farms, etc. on undeveloped land

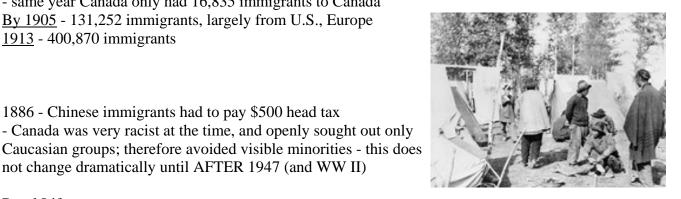
Why would Sifton only consider these areas for *immigrants?* 

- same year Canada only had 16,835 immigrants to Canada By 1905 - 131,252 immigrants, largely from U.S., Europe 1913 - 400,870 immigrants

- Canada was very racist at the time, and openly sought out only

1886 - Chinese immigrants had to pay \$500 head tax

not change dramatically until AFTER 1947 (and WW II)



Rural Life CANADA

1900 - more than half of Canadians worked on the land; three key primary industries involved forestry (ex. Sudbury began as a forestry centre), mining, and fishing

technology - old technology was being replaced by new (ex. Steam-powered tractors now used to help break up the soil, vs. animal-driven plows, etc.) 1904 - Charles Saunders developed a hardy strain of wheat (Marquis) that would be more resistant to Canadian weather patterns

- earlier in the previous century (1885), Angus Mackay inadvertently came upon the concept of summer *fallow* - allowing one area of land to remain unused for one year in order to allow it to recuperate moisture

Urban Life

- immigrants poured into the cities looking for jobs

\* Why would immigrants tend to head to larger cities upon arriving in Canada, despite free land being provided in areas like the prairies?

- within the cities, *distribution of wealth* was rapidly widening - store owners lived in luxury while their employees barely made ends meet

- people lived where they could (apartment living nowhere near standards of today), which sometimes meant many people might be crammed into one small room

ex. In Toronto (1911), 12 occupants lived in a room that measured 13ft x 12ft x 7ft (where only 2 occupants *should* have been



#### **Political Issues**

<u>Tariffs</u> - raised by Macdonald in 1879 in order to protect Canadian business; helped some but angered others (ex. Farmers)

\* How do tariffs work?

<u>1870 - 1885: Louis Riel</u>led rebellions in Manitoba fighting for improved conditions for the Metis, Indians, and other settlers in the new province

**By May 1885** - North West Mounted Police surrounded Riel's headquarters at Batoche, and arrested various leaders



- several jailed while 8 natives were hanged; Riel's trial eventually led to a guilty decision, but with a plea for mercy - Macdonald accepted the judge's death sentence, and on November 16, 1885 Riel was executed

- created tensions between English (who supported the execution) and the French (who supported Riel)

#### 1890 - Manitoba Schools Act

- new education law in Manitoba meant that only public schools would be funded by the province (despite Manitoba Act of 1870 which stated that religious schooling was guaranteed)

1896 election - PM Laurier compromised on the issue

- religious education would be at the end of the day in public schools; if there were enough students, a Roman Catholic teacher could be hired, and students could be taught in French

- upset French (not enough) and English (too much)

#### 1899-1902: (Second) Boer War

- largely over British desire to increase wealth after Dutch settlers (Afrikaners, or Boers) find gold in Orange Free State and (South African)





Transvaal Republic

splits English / French opinion in Canada - English want to support the British, while the French don't see how the confrontation has any importance to Canada;
PM Laurier allowed Canadians to volunteer to fight with the British in South Africa, but nobody would be forced to go

- eventually some 6000 volunteers would be paid by the British government

#### Alaska Boundary Dispute

1867 - U.S. bought Alaska from Russia for \$7.2 million; Alaskan panhandle was an area U.S. and Canada disputed as being their own

- commission of 6 men (3 American, 2 Canadian, 1 British) studied the issue, and eventually sided with the U.S. -

Canadians felt betrayed by Britain, after Lord Alverstone (British) sided with U.S.

1909 - International Joint Commission established bt Canada and U.S. to resolve border issues

- PM Laurier also est. a Department of External Affairs

# The Naval Question - 1910

- Britain had the largest navy in the world, but others were striving to be larger (ex. Germany)

- asked Canada for contributions to their navy; English supported this, while French did not <u>1910: Naval Act</u> - created a Canadian navy to defend Canadian shores; could be used by the British fleet, but only if Canadian Parliament approved

- PM Laurier's "tin pot navy" (Robert Borden) pleased nobody and created more tensions again bt. English & French

1911 - Reciprocity Treaty

- U.S. wanted reciprocity with Canada (for cheap raw materials); some areas of Canada were also in favour of this

- PM Laurier negotiated a treaty with U.S., and would allow Canadians to decide during the election of 1911; when the Liberals lost the election, the reciprocity agreement disappeared

\* Who do the figures represent in the cartoon? Explain their symbolic significance.

