

SETTLING IN CANADA

Our country is a mixture of many different people. They came from all over the world to start a new life in Canada. Some thought they were coming to an empty land that was theirs for the taking; many understood that they were building a life where First Nations, Métis or Inuit lived. These settlers mainly came from Europe, leaving behind countries where they could never afford land of their own. Some gave up and went back, but most stuck it out through brutal weather, loneliness and back-breaking work. They built a life for their families, and as they did, they also built a country. There are as many different stories as there are settlers — here are just a few.

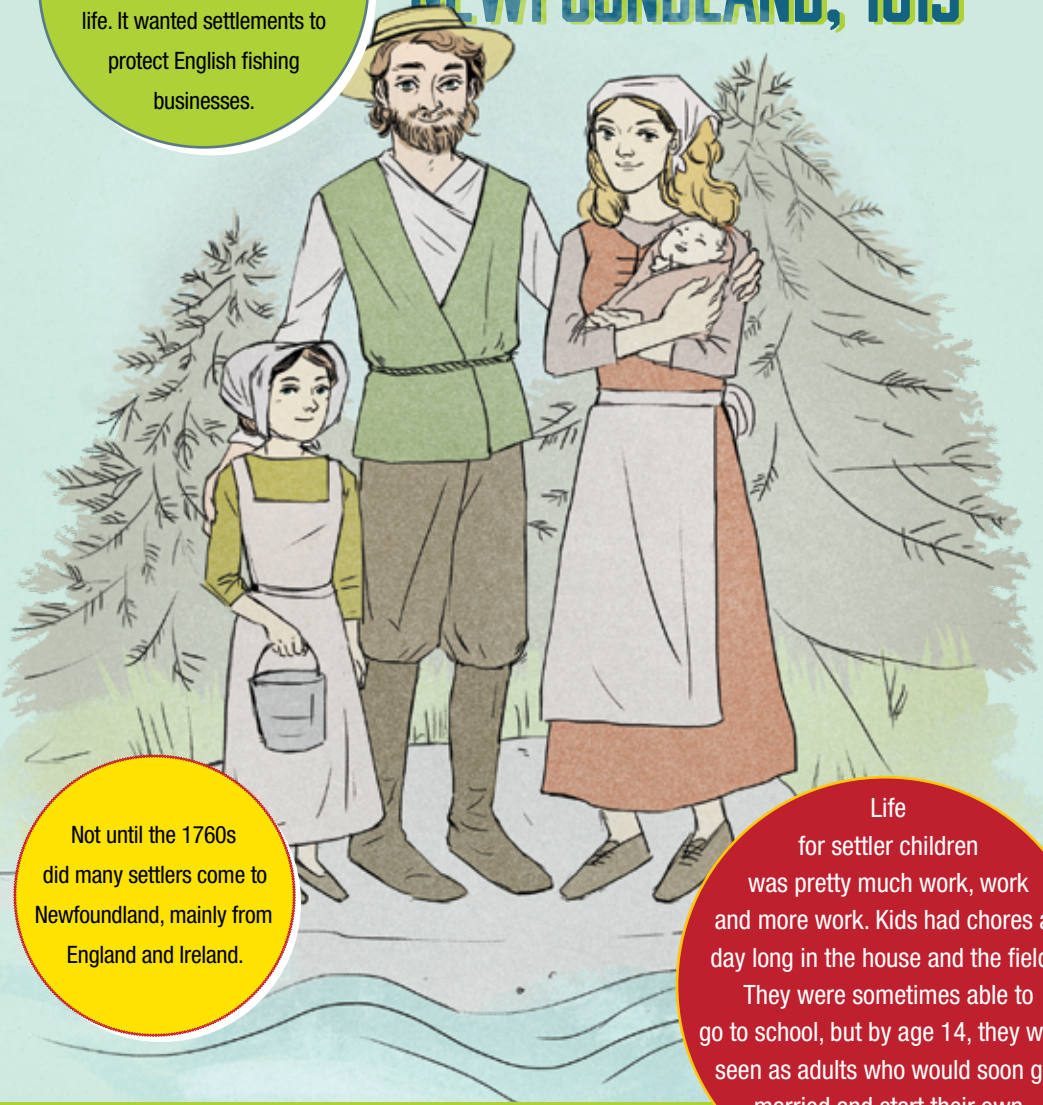


**THE
FIRST SETTLERS
IN WHAT IS NOW CANADA
WERE THE NORSE (SEE KAYAK
#56 FOR MORE) ON THE ISLAND OF
NEWFOUNDLAND. IN THE 1500S, FRENCH,
ENGLISH, SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE
FISHERMEN SOMETIMES STAYED ON THE
ISLAND DURING THE
FISHING SEASON, BUT WENT BACK
HOME OVER WINTER.**

CUPER'S COVE

NEWFOUNDLAND, 1613

The Newfoundland Company didn't send people to the island for a better life. It wanted settlements to protect English fishing businesses.



Not until the 1760s did many settlers come to Newfoundland, mainly from England and Ireland.

Life for settler children was pretty much work, work and more work. Kids had chores all day long in the house and the fields. They were sometimes able to go to school, but by age 14, they were seen as adults who would soon get married and start their own families.

Over the 50 years after the Cupper's Cove colony was set up near what is now Cupids, more villages appeared. By 1675, there were nearly 1,700 people living around Conception Bay and near modern-day Ferryland.



TERREBONNE

QUEBEC, 1725



THIS SATELLITE IMAGE SHOWS HOW LONG, NARROW FARMS GAVE FARMERS IN LOWER CANADA (QUEBEC) ACCESS TO THE RIVER. SETTLERS [*HABITANTS*] WORKED FOR RICH MEN [*SEIGNEURS*] WHO OWNED THE LAND.



In 1666, there were 3,215 settlers living in what is now Quebec. By 1763, that number had grown to 70,000.

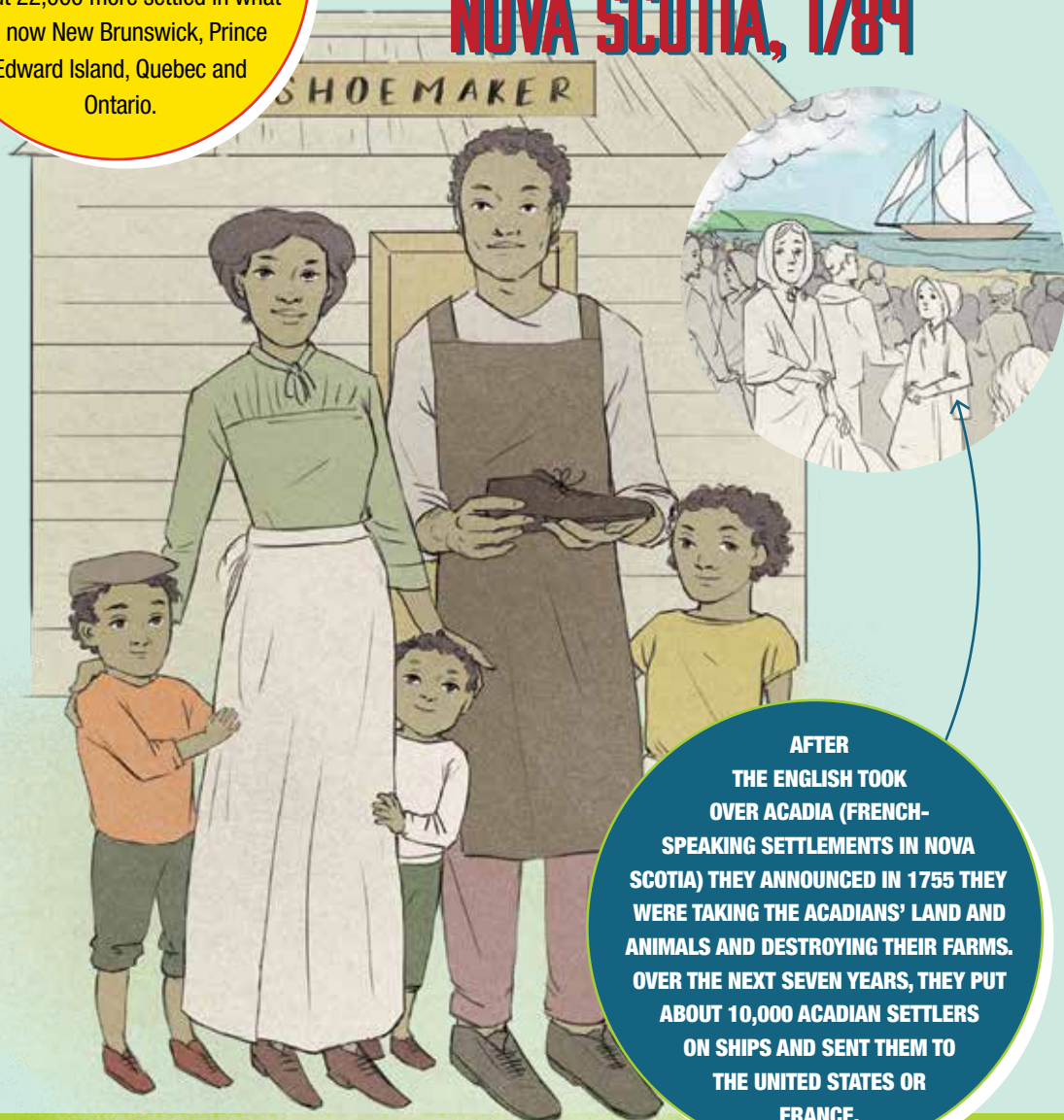
Both French and later English settlers sometimes had slaves. Most of these enslaved people were Black. Some First Nations people had Indigenous slaves who were captured in battle.

Despite cold, hard winters, these *habitants* grew enough food for their family on their farm near what is now Montreal, and a little extra to sell. Everyone worked hard caring for animals, looking after the house and garden and working in the fields. There was no road, so, like everyone else's, their farm was a long, narrow strip of land running down to the St. Lawrence River, and their neighbours were never far away.

After the Revolutionary War, more than 21,000 Loyalists flooded into Atlantic Canada, doubling its population. About 22,000 more settled in what are now New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Ontario.

BIRCHTOWN

NOVA SCOTIA, 1784



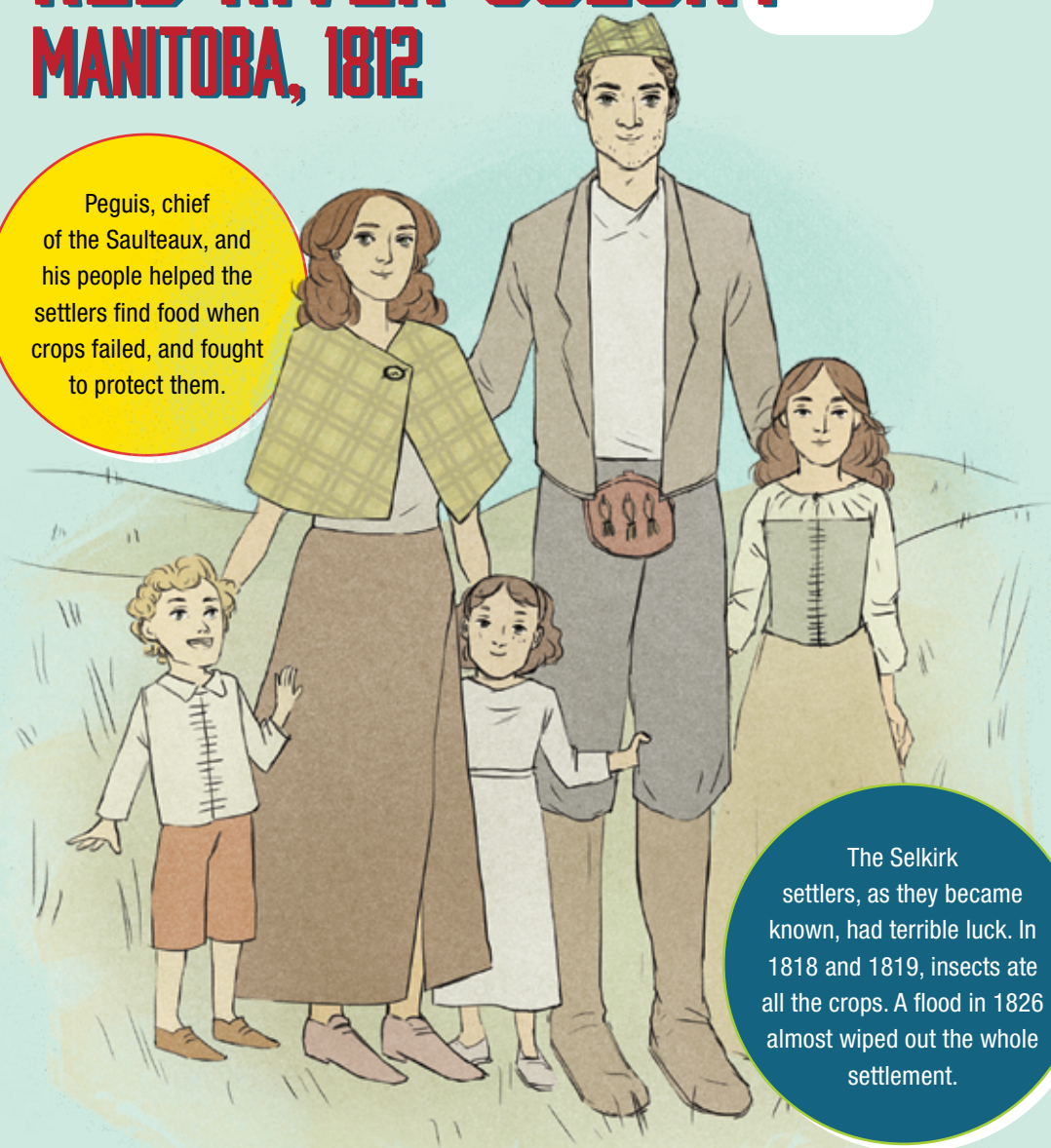
AFTER THE ENGLISH TOOK OVER ACADIA (FRENCH-SPEAKING SETTLEMENTS IN NOVA SCOTIA) THEY ANNOUNCED IN 1755 THEY WERE TAKING THE ACADIANS' LAND AND ANIMALS AND DESTROYING THEIR FARMS. OVER THE NEXT SEVEN YEARS, THEY PUT ABOUT 10,000 ACADIAN SETTLERS ON SHIPS AND SENT THEM TO THE UNITED STATES OR FRANCE.

Because they supported Britain during the American Revolution, this family had to leave after the Americans won. Along with about 1,500 other Black loyalists, they settled near what is now Shelburne. The white loyalists were given all the best land, and many Black settlers never received the land they were promised. They often worked in other jobs, as shoemakers, carpenters, seamstresses, teachers or cooks.

RED RIVER COLONY

MANITOBA, 1812

Peguis, chief of the Saulteaux, and his people helped the settlers find food when crops failed, and fought to protect them.



The Selkirk settlers, as they became known, had terrible luck. In 1818 and 1819, insects ate all the crops. A flood in 1826 almost wiped out the whole settlement.

As farming in northern Scotland changed, landowners forced farmers off the land in what are known as the Highland Clearances. With little money and nowhere to work, many of these families came to Canada. This one arrived as part of Lord Selkirk's plan to bring poor Scots to settle the area around the Red River on land from the Hudson's Bay Company. (No matter that there were already Métis farming there.) The Selkirk settlers, as they were known, faced hunger, harsh weather and anger from the fur traders who wanted them gone.

SCOTT'S MILLS (PETERBOROUGH) ONTARIO, 1825

Even though they suffered through cold in winter and heat in summer, not to mention dealing with bugs and wild animals, many settlers preferred the freedom of their new home.

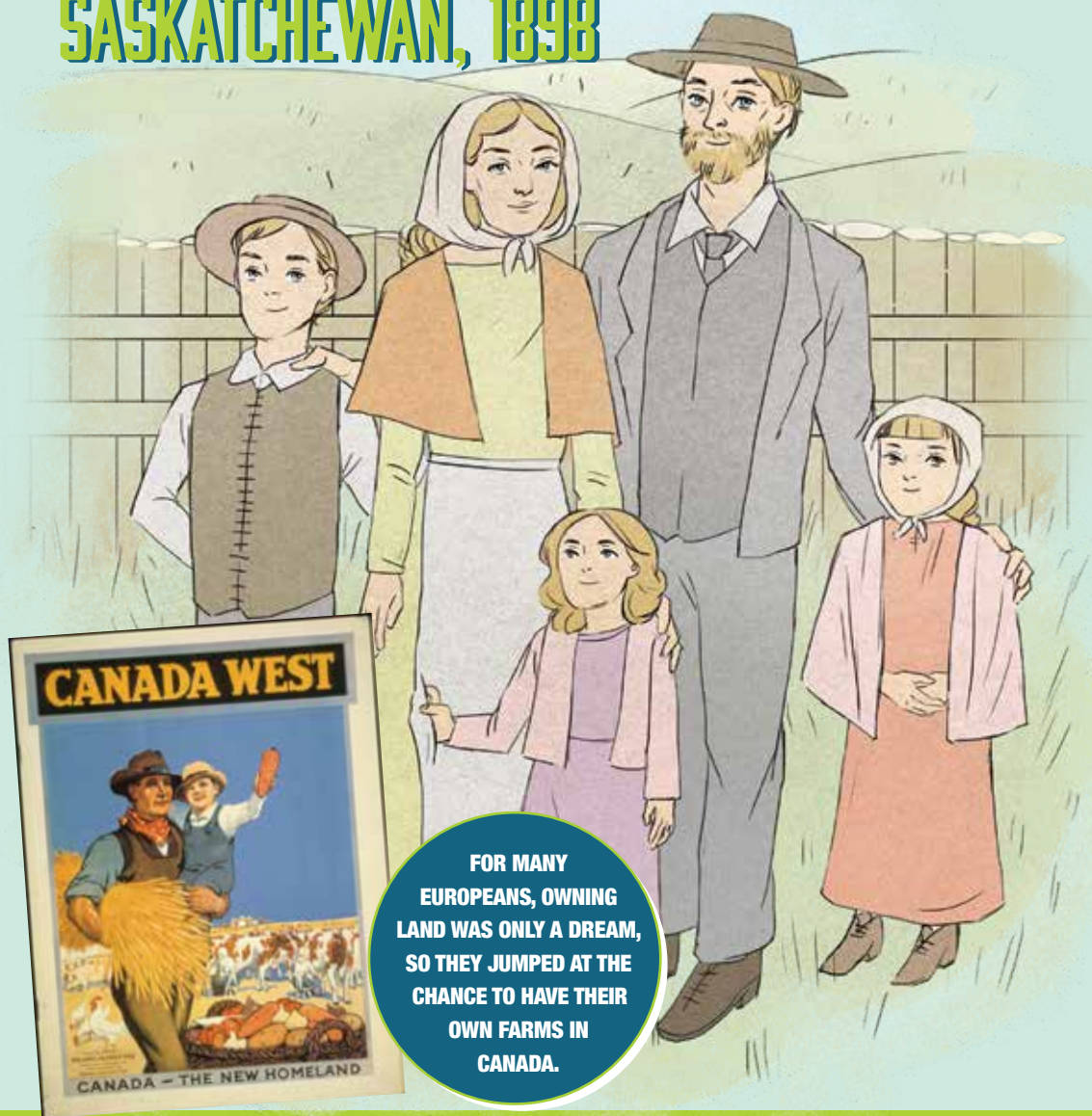
Besides all the hard work and harsh weather, life was often very lonely for settlers, who often lived a long way from other families or the closest town.

This family, along with more than 2,000 others, left Ireland with a man named Peter Robinson, who brought them to what is now central Ontario. They had a hard trip during a very hot summer, and many, including Robinson, fell sick. About 20 years later, thousands more Irish people, many facing starvation at home, flooded into Canada after their potato crops failed. The British government wanted the poor people somewhere else. Moving them to Canada meant there would be more men available to fight if the Americans tried to invade.



ENDEAVOUR

SASKATCHEWAN, 1898



FOR MANY
EUROPEANS, OWNING
LAND WAS ONLY A DREAM,
SO THEY JUMPED AT THE
CHANCE TO HAVE THEIR
OWN FARMS IN
CANADA.

Members of this family from Ukraine knew how to farm and were ready to spend years working nonstop in exchange for land that was more than 10 times the size of farms back home. The rules required homesteaders like them to build a house and have 15 acres of land ready to plant within two years. More than 170,000 Ukrainians came to Canada, many to the Prairies, between 1891 and 1914.