

THE LOYALISTS: REVOLUTION, EXILE, SETTLEMENT, by Christopher Moore, Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1984, ISBN 07715-9871-9, illus., 218 pp., hard cover, \$27.95.

Reviewed by *Earle Thomas, Ph.D*

Christopher Moore begins his book with the statement, "For two hundred years the loyalists have been turning into bronze." He then proceeds, in less than two hundred pages, to reverse the trend by presenting them in their true flesh and blood. He lays before us a wide selection of American Loyalists. He introduces us to loyal Americans all the way from New Hampshire to Georgia. He takes us with the fleeing refugees from Halifax to Niagara and beyond. He covers with us a time span from 1763 on into the nineteenth century. It is a gigantic undertaking for a book of its size, especially considering that approximately one hundred illustrations and maps, many of them at least half a page in size, compete with the text for space.

The Loyalists is divided into three parts: the coming of the Revolution up to 1776, the Revolution itself and the Loyalists' response to it, and the Loyalists' years of exile in what is now Canada. These parts are again divided into chapters, a total of eleven, and a glance at the titles - "The Eve of the Revolution", "The Language of Liberty", "The Crisis of Loyalty", "The King's War", "The Loyalists' War", "Refugee Routes", "Preparing the Way", "Edward Winslow's New Brunswick", "Gideon White's Nova Scotia", "Samuel Farrington's Upper Canada" - furnishes an idea of the book's enormous scope. With substantial volumes already written on some of these topics, the question that comes to mind is: Does this book succeed?

I think it does. Moore obviously is not attempting the impossible: to condense the entire history of the Loyalists in one slim volume is not his intention. Rather, his concern is to tell us just who these people called United Empire Loyalists were. "The Loyalists," he states in his preface, "tries to reach those diverse loyalists in 1783 and 1784, and follow their intricate routes to loyalty - and to Canada." He does that.

The author follows about 50,000 American Loyalists into exile and provides us with a glimpse of their fears, their problems, their aspirations, their grief and despair, their successes and failures, by selecting a dozen or so whom he considers representative of class and region and describing their experiences. He introduces us to name a few, to: Governor Thomas Hutchinson, who, after suffering outrages from the Boston mob, retired to England to a life of unhappiness; Samuel Curwen, who forsook Salem for England, to return home after rebellious tempers had cooled; Alexander MacDonald of the 77th Regiment who had married into the Livingston family and settled on Staten Island, and spent ten years in Nova Scotia before returning to Britain; Samuel Farrington, born and raised in the Mohawk valley, who joined Allan Maclean's Royal Highland Emigrants and finally settled in Upper Canada; Edward Winslow, scion of the Mayflower Winslows of Plymouth, mustermaster general of the Provincial Forces during the Revolutionary War, who became one of the founding fathers of the Province of New Brunswick; Gideon White, one of the leading citizens of Shelburne. Each of these men, while remaining loyal to King and Empire, responded to the revolutionary challenge in a different manner, reflecting his background, circumstances, and personality. Through the experiences of these men, Moore runs through the whole gamut of the Loyalist experience in the American Revolution. It is a novel approach.

It is also an interesting approach and makes for good reading. It captures the feeling of loyalism during and after the Revolution without going into all the events and facets and politics and philosophy. It is an attractive book in appearance: its copious illustrations are superb. It contains end notes, an index, and a fairly comprehensive bibliography. The style is bright and forceful. The Loyalists should appeal to those who are looking not for a volume containing the first and the last word on the Loyalist experience but rather an accurate and entertaining overview of the subject.