



Happy 150th Canada! 1867-2017



Jewish Canadian Involvement



by Rochelle Burns, PhD ©

They were called 'egg eaters'. They were the Jewish pioneer peddlers and fur traders. The 'egg eaters' were keeping kosher, thus, eggs, no meat, from their native and early pioneer hosts.

Jewish settlement in Canada began with British occupation in 1760 when they defeated the French. (French laws had forbidden Jews to practice their religion.)

Without exception, early Jewish settlers came for a better life, free from persecution, and, a chance to own land and follow their chosen mode of work.

In quick succession, as they did wherever they fled to in the world, they set up cemeteries, synagogues and schools, usually in that order.

Out West, Baron de Hirsch tried to establish Jewish agricultural colonies, as in Argentina, but they failed. Jewish Canadians preferred individual homesteads.

And in the Maritime Provinces, Lewis Green was the first Jew to be married there in 1882. A rabbi had to be called from Boston to perform the marriage ceremony.

Typical to Jewish history everywhere, Jews adapted to their Canadian environment, and transplanted their ideas of all human freedoms.

The very presence of the pioneering Jewish settlers helped lay the foundation of this country's multicultural identity and laws of equality.

Thus, those courageous Jewish settlers helped create the Canada we so enjoy today.

Dr. Burns is a social historian and member of Temple Emanu-El



Russian Jewish pioneers at Pier 21 about to settle the West 1867-1914