

Shipman's tavern, where they crossed the Twelve Mile Creek on the present site of the city of St. Catharines. A third, leading from Niagara through the dreaded "Black Swamp," of which all trace has long since disappeared, united with the road from St. Davids before crossing the Four Mile creek. Still another, beginning near the mouth of the Two Mile creek, ran nearly parallel with the river till it intersected Lundy's Lane. Besides these there were the main travelled roads along the river from Queenston to Niagara, and along the lake from Niagara to Burlington.

In 1794, Lieutenant Governor Simcoe styled the Niagara settlement "the bulwark of Upper Canada," and affirmed that the militia were loyal to a man, and "very well calculated for offensive warfare." Since then the character and feelings of the population had essentially altered. Many of the first settlers had died or removed with their families to other parts of the Province, and their places had been taken by later immigrants from the United States. The twenty townships extending from Ancaster to Wainfleet, which then composed the County of Lincoln, were supposed to contain 12,000 inhabitants in the spring of 1812. In the entire province of Upper Canada, one sixth of the population were believed to be natives of the British Isles and their children; the original loyalist settlers and their descendants were estimated to number as many more, while the remainder, or about two-thirds of the whole, were recent arrivals from the United States, chiefly attracted by the fertility of the soil and freedom from taxation. Michael Smith states (1813), that within twelve years, the population "had increased beyond conjecture, as the terms of obtaining land have been extremely easy." The proportion of loyalists in the County of Lincoln was perhaps greater than elsewhere, but it is probably a safe estimate to say that one-third of the inhabitants were recent settlers from the United States, who had removed to escape taxation or avoid militia service. John Maude met several families in 1800 on their way to Canada from those counties in Pennsylvania where the "Whiskey Insurrection" had just been suppressed, who informed him that they had fought seven years against taxation, and were then being taxed more than ever. "Hundreds of them," he remarked, "have removed, are removing, and will remove into Upper Canada, where they will form a nest of vipers in the bosom that fosters them."

In 1811, the Governor General estimated the number of militiamen in Upper Canada fit for service at 11,000, of whom he significantly stated that it would probably not be prudent to arm more than 4,000. This was virtually an admission that more than half the population were suspected of disaffection. The Lincoln Militia were organized in five regiments, numbering about 1,500 men, of whom perhaps two-thirds were determined loyalists.

In many quarters, before the war, the disaffection of the people was open and undisguised. Schultz states that while at Presqu' Isle, on Lake Ontario, in 1807, he strolled along the main road, and found six or seven farmers assembled in a country tavern, who had just heard of the Chesapeake affair. "They seemed disappointed," he observed, "that I did not think, it would lead to war, when they expected to become part of the United States." He also relates that he was subsequently in a public house in Niagara, where eight or ten persons were gathered about a billiard table. The attack upon the Chesapeake again became the topic of conversation, and one man said, "If Congress will only send us a flag and a proclamation declaring that whoever is found in arms against the United States, shall forfeit his lands, we will fight ourselves free without any expense to them."