

It's a Very Respectable Town

I was walk-ing down town in Saint John, N.B., and I saw sev'ral Loy-al-ists
ta-king their tea. They looked at me there with me beard on my face and they
said sev'ral things to put me in my place. It's a ve-ry res-pec-ta-ble,
ve-ry res-pec-ta-ble, ve-ry res-pec-ta-ble town. It's a ve-ry res-pec-ta-ble,
ve-ry res-pec-ta-ble ve-ry res-pec-ta-ble town.

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I was walking downtown in Saint John, N.B.
And I saw several Loyalists taking their tea.
They looked at me there with the beard on my face
And they said several things to put me in my place.

Chorus:

"It's a very respectable, very respectable, very respectable town;
It's a very respectable, very respectable, very respectable town."

I said to them, "Folks, there must be some mistake:
You ain't got no cause to view me with hate.
I'm a hard-working guy, got a family as well."
They said, "You've got a beard, so you're going to hell."

We pay minimum wages in this Loyalist town—
It's not that we like to put anyone down.
We hate to see poverty stare us in the face,
So we're doing our best to keep the poor in their place.

"So if you've got talent or you've got brains to burn,
Culture is nothing that Saint John would spurn.
You're welcome to move in and settle down here
If your folks have been Wasps for five hundred years."

A brief historical note on Jim's song—Saint John, New Brunswick, was founded by Tories fleeing their homes on the American coast before the forces of the revolutionaries. Each July, the founding is commemorated by festivities known as "Loyalist Days"—a counter-revolutionary display transformed these days into a binge for tourists. The Mayor of the City *et al* dress up in tricorne hats and make speeches to one another, Loyalist Queens are elected (surely an unpleasant reminder of things democratic?) and shops advertise "Loyalist Days Specials." I was fortunate to be in Saint John in 1976 for Loyalist Days, and could not but notice the desperation of the affair: like the rest of the Atlantic provinces, New Brunswick is an economically depressed area, and so Loyalist Days, along with the "World famous reversing falls" on the Saint John river (another tourist trap, hard by K.C. Irving's pulp mill) have become an important part of the province's burgeoning tourist industry.

Jon Bartlett

