

*I SEE NOTHING BUT THE  
HORRORS OF A CIVIL WAR*

THE LOYALIST EXPERIENCE DURING AND  
AFTER THE 1777 SARATOGA CAMPAIGN

# WHO WERE THE LOYALISTS?



By the conclusion of the American Revolution, between 80,000 and 100,000 loyalists had fled the American colonies.

Almost half of them escaped to Canada. Of those, 45,000 refugees settled in the Canadian Maritime region.

An additional 9,500 refugees fled to the Quebec province.

From Quebec, 7,500 loyalists ultimately settled in Upper Canada.

Many colonists who ultimately became “Tories” were not distinguishable from their neighbors who embraced independence.

Many loyalists were respected members of their towns; often well-educated Harvard graduates who worked as merchants, doctors, lawyers, distillers or ministers.

However, most colonists from New York and New England who remained faithful to the crown hailed from the middle and lower classes of the American colonies. These loyalists enjoyed neither wealth nor privilege.

Of the four hundred eighty-eight loyalists who eventually settled in the Ontario region of Upper Canada and submitted claims to the English government for losses sustained during the American Revolution, only five held public office.

Only one claimant was a physician.

A small number owned shops, ran taverns or were considered artisans.

Ninety percent of those loyalists who settled in the Ontario region simply identified themselves as farmers.

The average loyalist farmer who ultimately took refuge in Upper Canada leased or owned less than two hundred acres of land prior to the American Revolution.

42% of the Ontario settlers admitted they had cleared less than ten acres of land prior to their flight.

54% percent of the farmers hailed from Tyron County.

An additional 25% percent had ties to Albany County.

14% claimed Charlotte County as their county of origin.

Over half of the refugees who settled in Upper Canada were foreign born.

Over 50% of Ontario loyalists were Scot Highland Roman Catholics. Second in number were German and Irish immigrants.

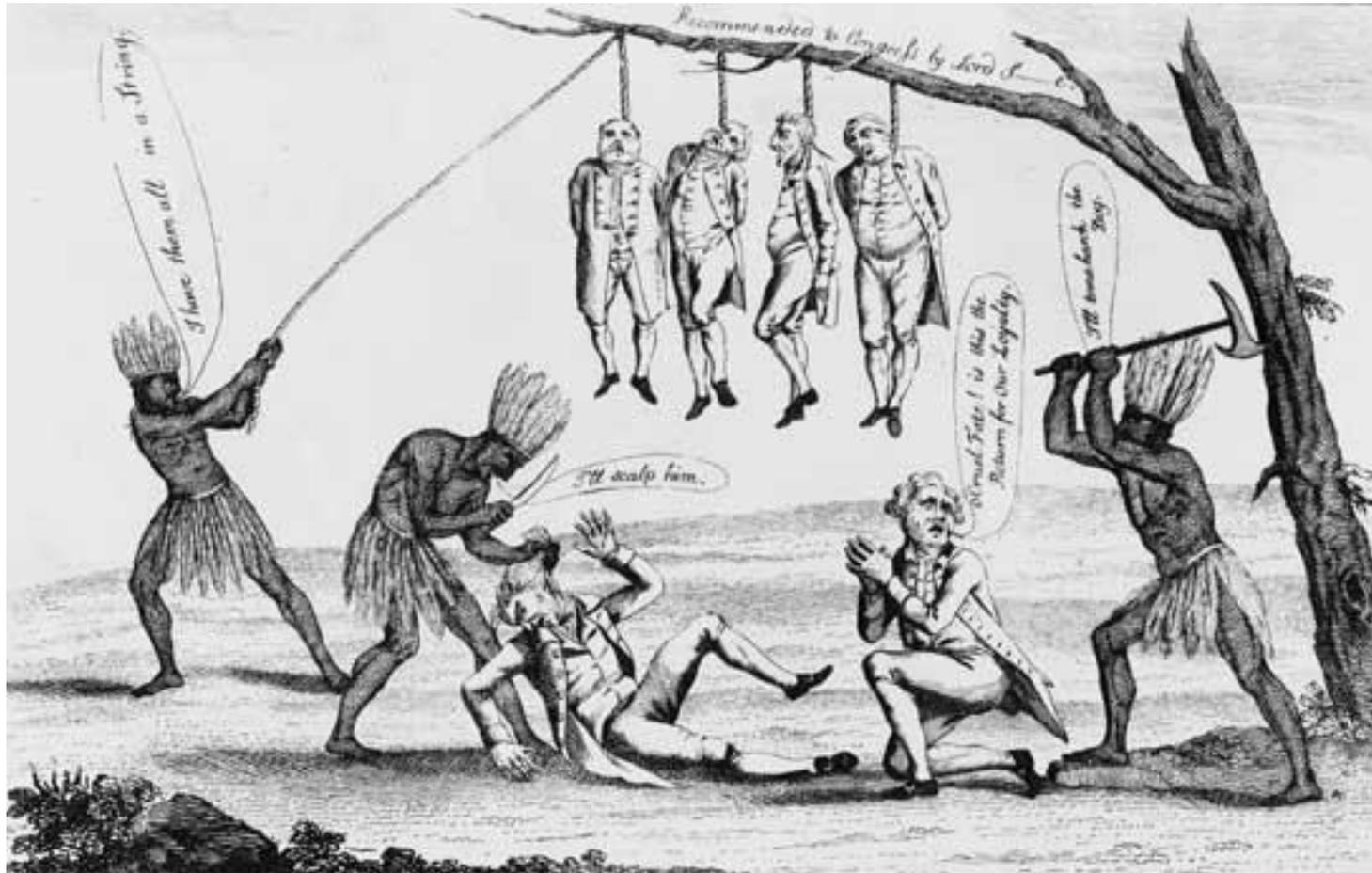
An additional 8% claimed England as their place of birth.

Many loyalist Scot immigrants had only resided in the American colonies for four years at the start of the American Revolution.

English immigrants had resided in America on average for eight years.

By comparison, many Irish and German immigrants had lived in the colonies between eleven and eighteen years

# *Motivating Factors to Remain Loyal to the British Government*



# Blind Loyalty



# Religious Principles

- Anglicans: Ministers and others believed they were bound by oath to support the King.
  - *Benjamin Pickman became a Loyalist from the "purest Principles of Loyalty to my late Sovereign," Benjamin Pickman to his wife, February 20, 1783*
  - *John Amory had not been able to take the Association Test and fight for the American cause because: "... I could not with a quiet conscience,...take an Oath that I would bear Arms against the King of Great Britain to whom I had already sworn Allegiance," John Amory to James Lovell, Providence, February 12, 1778.*

- Sandemanians

- Pacifist followers of Robert Sandeman of Scotland and Connecticut
- Sandemanian belief was the Bible commanded absolute loyalty to the Crown. Samuel Pike, a prominent Sandemanian, declared in 1766 that every Christian must be a loyal subject to civil authority, even if that ruler was tyrannical.
- Sandemanian minister Colburn Barrell declared that the Boston Massacre was the direct result of treasonous Congregationalist ministers who defied the laws of the land

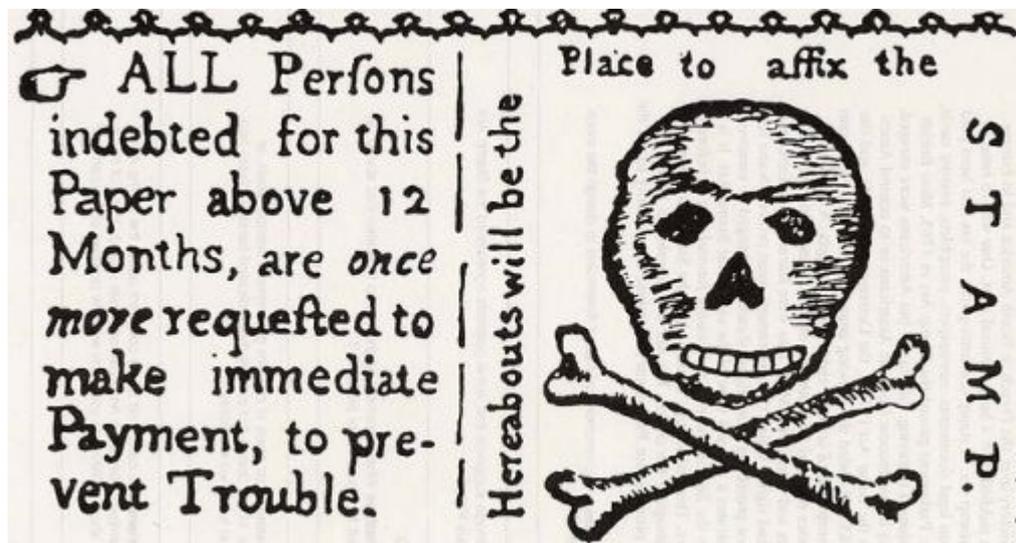
- Congregationalists

- Isaac Smith justified his loyalty to the crown upon religious principles. He argued that his position at Harvard and his role as a Congregational minister forbade him to be disobedient to his king or Parliament.

- Roman Catholics

- Following the aftermath of the French and Indian Wars, the concept of Roman Catholics openly practicing their religious beliefs in New York deeply concerned their Congregationalist and Anglican neighbors. Worse yet, many Catholic priests openly welcomed black slaves and local Mohawks into their parishes and churches.
- Members of the New York Provincial Congress warned early in the American Revolution, “the indulgence and establishment of Popery all along the interior confines of the Protestant Colonies tends not only to obstruct their growth, but to weaken their security.”

# Economic Principles





- Patronage
  - William Woolton, Thomas Hutchinson and Andrew Oliver naturally sided with the English government because their respective colonial posts ensured potential profit.

- True Economic Dependency
  - Loyalists such as John Amory feared economic losses if they ended business relationships with England. Amory was among the merchants who protested against the “Solemn League and Covenant of 1774,” suspending all commercial business with Great Britain. A business trip to England, which he coincidentally made during the Battle of Lexington, definitely made him a “Tory” in the eyes of his countrymen
  - Joseph Hooper (“King Hooper”) of Marblehead. Wealthy merchant dependent on trade with England
  - Tenant Farmers of Albany County, New York were dependent upon their loyalist land lords for continued economic success.

# DESIRE FOR LAND

- Economic opportunity in the form of recruitment bounties attracted many to the loyalist cause.
- As early as 1775 recruiters for the Royal Highland Emigrants, a corps of loyalist Scot Highlanders, promised 200 acres of land to prospective soldiers.
- In March 1777 the governor of Quebec promised loyalists who “shall continue to serve His Majesty until the rebellion is suppressed and peace restored ... His Majesty's bounty of 200 acres of land.”

- Recruiters in Bergen County, New Jersey, were even more generous, promising 200 acres of land for each adult male, 100 acres for his wife, and fifty acres for each child. Promises of land were also made by loyalist officers.

- Ebenezer Jessup, lieutenant-colonel of the King's Loyal Americans and a large landowner, pledged 24,000 acres of his land to those who “would serve faithfully during the War ... and 20,000 more to such of my officers as should merit the same by their good conduct.”

# Cultural Allegiance

- In New York:
  - Following the conclusion of the French and Indian War, many Scottish veterans from the 42nd, 77th, and 78th Regiments settled in the Albany area.
  - Scottish settlers were known for their unquestionable loyalty to the Crown. In a society where clan ties were often paramount, many Scottish residents in the Albany area viewed King George III as their Laird or clan chieftain.
  - Most Albany County Scots refused to sign “association” documents or loyalty oaths put forth by the Tory Committee due to the fact such documents were viewed as breaking an oath of allegiance to the King.
  - Captain Alexander McDonald, formerly of the 77th Regiment, warned “I am determined to be true to the trust reposed in me and discharge my duty with honour . . . as long as I live.”

# Public Safety



- Majority of Loyalists saw the crisis of 1760s and 1770s not as a political issue, but a PUBLIC SAFETY issue. The majority chose to remain loyal to England and Parliament because of a desire for law and order.
- Most Loyalists detested the mob rule that spread from cities to the country side and abhorred the lack of order.
- As tensions grew between the colonies and England, many colonists attempted to remain neutral. However, as radicals in Boston, New York and other locations seized power, neutrality became impossible.

- Samuel Curwen, Judge of Admiralty, complained Whig “tempers get more and more soured and malevolent against all moderate men, whom they see fit to reproach as enemies of their country by the name of Tories, among whom I am unhappily (although unjustly) ranked.” Journal of Samuel Curwen, May 4, 1775
- Dr. William Paine gave up his neutrality and declared himself a loyalist after he experienced "too many abuses" and "insults" from Patriots.

# The Declaration of Independence

- Justus Sherwood

# The Cruelty of Oppression: Rebellion Reaches Albany County



“History abounds with instances of nations driven into madness by the cruelty of oppression; it is the singular situation of us at present that we have been made mad by an impatience of all legal restraint and wanton abuse of power.”

– Alexander Robertson, *Albany Gazette*, November 25, 1771

- By 1775, the seeds of rebellion had seeped into New York's Albany County. Although initially slow to respond, many Albany County residents ultimately turned against their Tory neighbors.

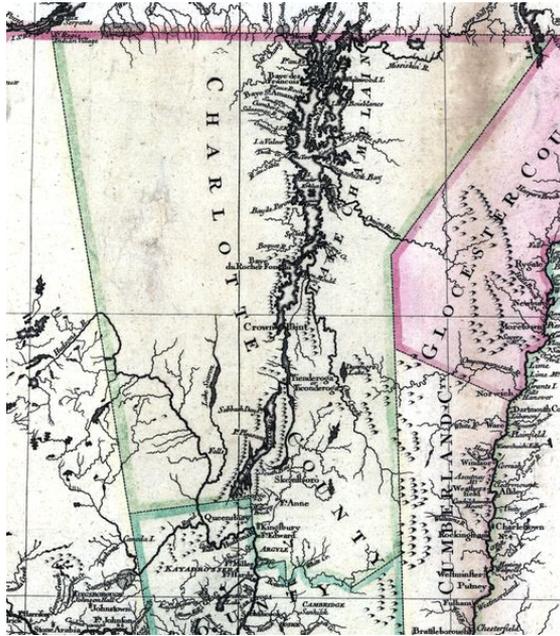
- Armed night watches roamed the streets of Albany, the county seat, in an attempt to intimidate those loyal to the King and English government.
- Organized “committees” disrupted meetings held in Albany's town hall between the Tory leaning mayor and his aldermen.

- Tories who openly criticized or challenged the rebels' motives were quickly arrested and sent off to prison.
- Merchants such as James and Alexander Robertson were all but helpless as mobs incited by the Tory Committee first shut down their print shop, then their newspaper, the *Albany Gazette*.

By the Fall of 1776, conditions in Albany County had deteriorated to the point that many Tories started to flee northward towards Canada so as to avoid continued persecution.



# The Hampshire Grants



- Following France's defeat in the French and Indian War, the Hampshire Grants was flooded with New Englanders, Scottish and Irish immigrants, New Yorkers and veteran soldiers of the French wars all seeking new economic opportunities.
- Prominent loyalists, including Daniel McAlpin and Ebenezer Jessup, acquired large tracts of land within the territory.

- However, when settlers arrived with land titles in hand, many found conflicting titles to the same land held by other settlers.
- New York colonists were alarmed when they discovered New Hampshire settlers creating townships further and further westward, while New Hampshire colonists objected to encroachments by New Yorkers.

- Violence erupted and became so prevalent that British soldiers stationed at Crown Point were ordered into the Hampshire Grants to subdue both factions.
- By April 21, 1773, New Hampshire grantees infiltrated Crown Point and set fire to a barracks chimney. The fire quickly spread and ignited the garrison's magazine. After the resulting explosion, the New Englanders descended upon the fort and plundered it.

- Communities became sharply divided, competing militia and paramilitary organizations were raised, bloody skirmishes flared up and a mass evacuation of Charlotte County loyalists to Canada occurred.

- By 1777, much of the Hampshire Grants near Fort Edward and along the shores of Lake Champlain were “marked with Devastation, and of the many pleasant habitations ..., some were burnt, others torn to Pieces and rendered unfit for Use, and but a few of the meanest occupied: the Inhabitants in general having been forced to leave their once peaceful Dwellings to escape the Rage of War. Thus this once agreeable and delightful Part of the Country now displayed a most shocking Picture of Havock and wild Desolation.”

- Unlike loyalists and patriots in other parts of New York and New England, allegiances to the crown or congress in the Hampshire Grants was often dictated by land claims and economic opportunity rather than social, cultural or religious principles. According to Paul R. Huey, contributing author of The Other New York: The American Revolution Beyond New York City 1763-1787, at the outset of the war, many inhabitants of the Hampshire Grants were more concerned with their respective land grants than the revolutionary crisis.

# The Rise of McAlpin's Corps of American Volunteers



At the outset of the American Revolution, two veteran officers of the French and Indian War recognized the deteriorating situation in New York and New England and attempted to organize an appropriate response.

Captain Alexander McDonald and Major William Edmeston quickly approached their fellow veteran officers and soldiers and started to recruit men who would assist General Howe in his military operations. Unfortunately, the work of both men was quickly discovered and they were forced to flee north to Canada. As a result, the responsibility of raising and creating a loyalist corps in the Albany County area fell upon Captain Daniel McAlpin.

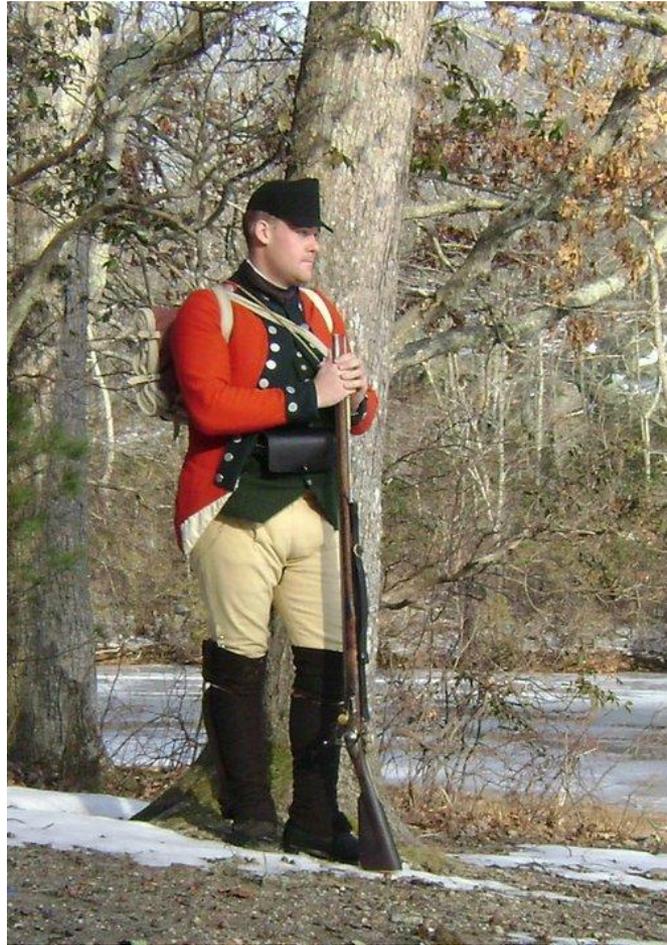
# Daniel McAlpin

- After forty years of service in the British Army, Captain Daniel McAlpin retired from the military and settled in the Town of Stillwater, New York with his wife Mary and three children.
- In May of 1774 he owned approximately one thousand acres of land located on the west side of Saratoga Lake (in the present Town of Malta).
- McAlpin was embroiled in a bitter dispute over an additional six thousand acres of land that he had acquired along the Connecticut River in the Hampshire Grants (Vermont). McAlpin hoped Crown authorities would rule in his favor.

- Recognizing the inherent risk of losing his six thousand acres, McAlpin attempted to delay joining the rebel cause for almost a year.
- However, by June 1776, McAlpin's delay was called on by local "patriot" leaders. He was forced to reject attempts to recruit him. McAlpin was promptly arrested and sent to a jail in Albany.

- In August, 1776, General Schuyler intervened on behalf of McAlpin and ordered him released. In support of this order, Schuyler declared “little or no harm might be expected from him.”
- Following his release, McAlpin returned to his homestead and initiated a campaign to recruit a corps of soldiers who would aid the Crown in its goal of suppressing the American rebellion.

# Jessups' Corps



- In September 1776 McAlpin coordinated with Peter Drummond and Neil Robertson to recruit men for the British Army stationed in Canada. By mid-October 1776, McAlpin had successfully recruited fifty-six men.

- These men were quietly dispatched to the Edward and Ebenezer Jessup, a pair of local Tories brothers who were recruiting and smuggling men to Canada to fight for the crown. Once with the Jessups, the recruits began a thirty-six mile journey to General Carleton's army stationed at Crown Point.
- Upon arrival, the recruits were immediately accepted into the British Army, placed on the appropriate pay rolls and forwarded to Canada.

- Carleton was less than receptive and worse, unimpressed. From his perspective, the Tory refugees posed a drain on critical supplies and finances slated for his troops.
- More importantly, he believed these men should have remained at home waiting for the arrival of a British army of liberation.  
(Carleton to Phillips, October 29, 1776.)

- “I informed your Lordship that this Army had been joined at Crown Point by parties of the loyal inhabitants of the adjacent Provinces, who had fled from the persecution they were suffering in the places of their residence; during the winter their numbers have increased considerably; a body of near a hundred came here under the conduct of a Mr. Jessup of the province of New York, his brother and several other men of some note in the neighbourhood of Albany. They have all been sent to Sir John Johnson's Corps, but being of a different part of the country, they desired not to be drafted into that Regiment.”

- As a result, the men were enlisted into Ebenezer Jessup's Corps of the King's Loyal Americans and stationed at St. John's and Isle aux Noix. By January, the corps was at Point Clair, southwest of Montreal, and consisted of three companies commanded by Edward Jessup, Jonathan Jones and Ebenezer Jessup.



# Troubles Encountered

- From its inception, it was clear that Jessup's Corps was in desperate need of clothing and equipment. As a result, General Carleton ordered Major James Gray of the King's Royal Regiment of New York to acquire clothing for Jessup's men and encouraged the major to locate “some cheap uniform clothing”.

- By January 11, 1777, Major Gray had purchased “on behalf of Messr Jessup and his followers” approximately eighty coats. As Gray would later complain, the coats were “the cheapest that could be got, at Montreal, very Common red stuff turn’d up with Green as Red seemed to be their favorite colour, and being got rather than any other I gratified their taste.”

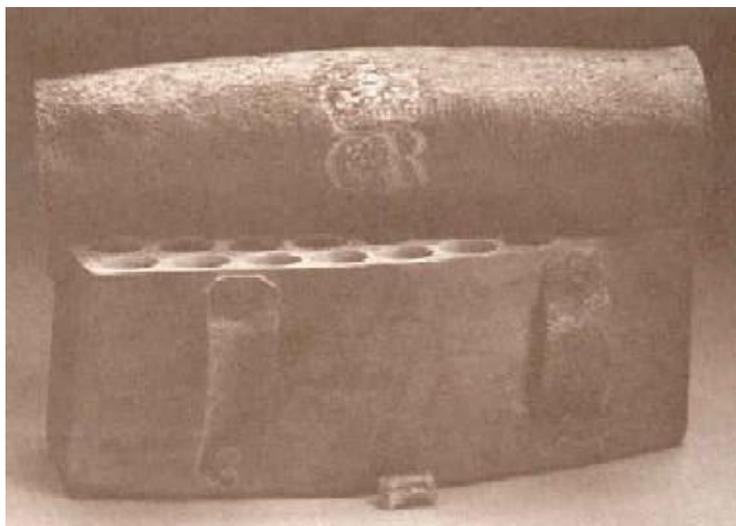


- Clothing was not the only issue with the men forwarded by McAlpin to Jessup. Many of the recruits arrived in Canada unarmed. As a result, the British government was forced to secure weapons and equipment for Jessups' men.

- According to research conducted by Jim Kochan, Burgoyne and Carleton nearly exhausted the supply of firelocks (muskets) stored at Quebec in the summer, 1776 by arming provincials under the command of Johnston, Canadian militia and recruits from the Royal Highland Emigrants.
- Although it appears the supply was replenished at some point in 1777, Burgoyne nearly depleted it again in September, 1777 when he received almost one thousand stands of British and French arms slated for unarmed provincials under his command.

- Due to a significant shortage of muskets, Carleton ordered Jessups' Corps to be equipped with Model 1728 French infantry muskets left over from the previous war rather than Second Model infantry muskets.

- It also appears that McAlpin's men enrolled in Jessups' also received partial "stands of arms" in the form of belly boxes and belting.



*Colonel Edward Jessup's cartridge box and  
waist belt, British 1770's leather over  
hardwood block, waist belt leather, 21.6 cm x  
11.5cm (Fort George National Historic Park,  
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario)*

- However, bayonets were in short supply. As McAlpin would later assert, many from the Corps of American Volunteers during the Burgoyne Campaign were equipped with “Old French muskets without baynets.”
- It is unknown what additional equipment Jessup’s men received.

- Unfortunately, while in Canada, Jessup's Corps proved to be a constant source of frustration for the British commanders in Canada.
- In March, 1777, Major Gray complained "those men join'd Jessups Core gives me more truble then I ever had."
- The next month, the major bitterly asserted "I have been thirty Years a soldier, but never had so much trouble as with those fellows; I have try'd every Method to please them, & to show them the Generals good intentions towards them."

## *Daniel McAlpin's Recruits*

- While McAlpin's first set of recruits were in Canada under the command of Colonel Jessup, Captain McAlpin was still at work in Albany County drafting additional men for the King.
- Despite being forced to flee from his home by rebel mobs and hide in nearby woods for over two weeks in February, 1777, the Tory leader was still able to successfully recruit over 570 men.

- Unfortunately, local rebels quickly learned of the plot. A bounty of \$100 was set for the capture of McAlpin and four of his ringleaders. Captain Tyrannis Collins of the Albany County Militia was ordered to arrest McAlpin and “carry [those] who were supposed to be disaffected to the country, as prisoners to Albany.”

- Realizing he had been exposed, McAlpin was forced to flee to the safety of Canada with less than thirty of his 570 recruits. The band of men retreated west towards the Adirondack Mountains and the safety of the Jessup's lands; hot in pursuit were a combined force of Albany County militia and a regiment of Green Mountain Boys.

- It appears this band of recruits was armed and equipped, for a skirmish erupted when the pursuers finally caught up with Daniel McAlpin.
- “There was a battle fought by . . . some loyalists against rebels from Schenectady and some Yankees in which we lost one man, five wounded and eleven taken prisoners which were confin’d in Albany.”
- McAlpin and his men were forced to remain in hiding until Burgoyne’s army arrived at Fort Edward in August, 1777.



# William Fraser's Recruits

- When Captain McAlpin was forced to flee, he turned to William Fraser to continue the recruitment of loyalists.
- However, a rebel spy learned of the recruitment scheme and reported it to Colonel James Gordon, commander of an Ulster County militia regiment. Gordon, in turn, mobilized his regiment to arrest Fraser and his recruits.

- Fraser and his men attempted to escape. They were captured at Jessup's Little Falls.
- Their arms and equipment were seized and later sold for profit in Albany.
- The group was marched back to Albany and promptly thrown into a jail below town hall.

- “They were not treated as prisoners of war, but handcuffed like ordinary criminals . . . the rebels did not undertake to feed their prisoners and it was custom for [Tory families] to come every day to the gaol with provisions.”

# The Great Escape

- Fraser's wife arrived at the jail with her husband's daily provisions.
- Inside a loaf of bread was a file and coil of rope. After some effort, Fraser and twenty of his men were able to break free of their shackles, remove at least one of the iron bars on the jail's window and escape.
- Unarmed and without provisions, the men fled from Albany towards Fort Edward. Like McAlpin and his men, Fraser's company was forced to remain in hiding until the arrival of General Burgoyne.



- Ann Novil, a Pennsylvania loyalist, acted as a guide during the 1777 Burgoyne expedition from Canada.
- Frances Child, helped British and loyalist prisoners being held in southern New York escape
- Hannah Tomlinson “aided and assisted upwards of 100 Prisoners of War in making their escape into the British lines.” (Petition of Ann Novil; Petition of Frances Child; Petition of Hannah Tomlinson.)

- Most loyalist women, however, stayed within their communities behind enemy lines, where they were a valuable military asset of the British and a thorn in the side of the Patriots.
- As loyalist men fled to the safety of British lines, there was a theoretical belief held by men regarding the treatment of Tory women and children as innocent bystanders. As Captain Alexander McDonald opined “surely the people [the Patriots] has not got so barberously mad as to Mollest or hurt a poor innocent woman and still more Innocent poor Children.” (Alexander McDonald, April 14, 1776.)

- Many male loyalists assumed, under the theories of *feme sole trader* and deputy husbands, that if their spouses were left behind, personal and real property would be carefully protected from seizure or destruction.

- Unfortunately, both views were rejected by the enemy. Patriot committees and colonial governments concluded that unless there was evidence to the contrary, the families of fleeing male loyalists shared in the guilt.
- By joining the enemy and participating in the often vicious raids on frontier communities, the men had tainted not only themselves but also their families.

- Women who had either participated in the war themselves or were married to men who had were subjected to various forms of punishment, the most common and devastating being the confiscation of their property. Looting and destruct of loyalist property were also conventional. Likewise, many women also faced imprisonment and violence at the hand of local mobs.

- Loyalist Sarah McGinnis of New York, her daughter, and her granddaughter watched as the Patriots sold all of their possessions, “except what would scantily support them in victuals and clothes,” at public auction. After this, the women were imprisoned in a local fort and so badly treated that Sarah's granddaughter later died. Sarah and her daughter “escaped at night with only what they could carry on their backs.” Sarah was forced to leave behind a son “who was out of his senses and bound in chains ... and who some time afterward was burnt alive.” (Claim of Sarah Kast McGinnis, Audit Office 12, vol. 27.)

- In the case of the loyalist Empy family, Philip, husband and father of eleven children, was subjected to “many insults and abuses from rebels.” When Philip and his three sons escaped from prison, the local Patriots turned their eyes to his wife and seven other children. Mrs Empty and her children were imprisoned and all of their real and personal property was confiscated. Mrs Empy and her family were eventually released. But when she returned to her home, she was “beat and abused” by “4 men” who left her on the road. Although she was rescued by friends and taken to Schenectady, she later died. (Philip Empy Petition, March 1, 1780.)

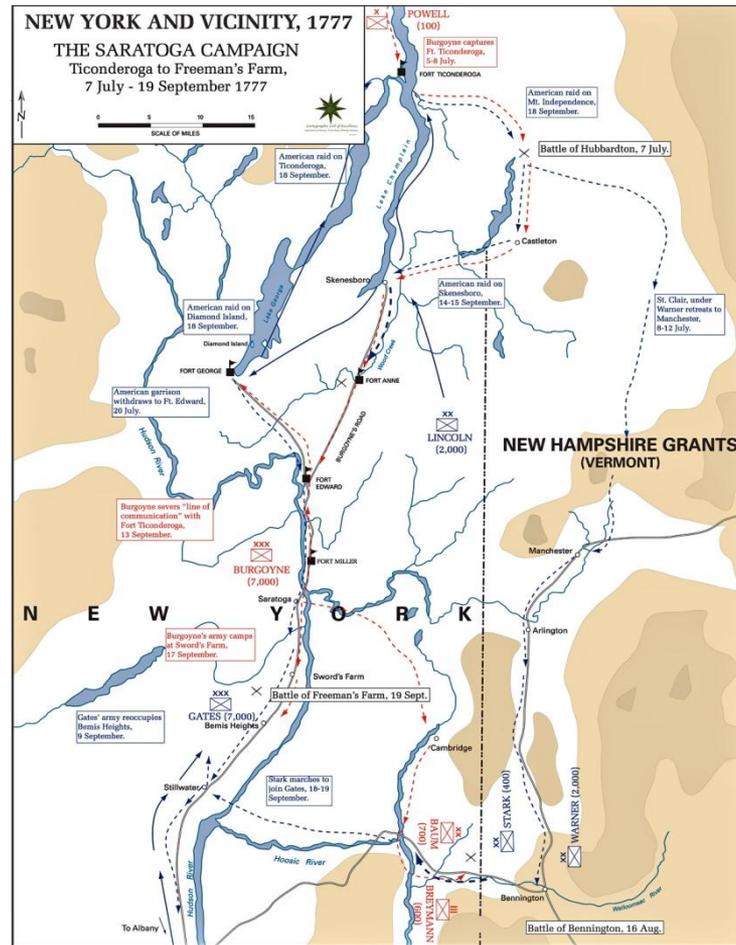
# The Sins of the Husband....

- Shortly after his escape, Daniel McAlpin's property was seized and his wife and family were arrested. They were taken to a bare hut and locked inside.
- Hoping that the hardship would break Mrs. McAlpin and induce her to beg her husband to honorably surrender, the rebels subjected her to repeated threats and taunts.
- Mary McAlpin refused to comply and instead responded her husband "had already established his honour by a faithful service to his King and country."

- Mary and her daughter were “carted” through Albany and pelted with food and foreign objects.
- According to the Reverend Munro, “Mrs. McAlpin was brought down to Albany in a very scandalous manner so much that the Americans themselves cried out about it.”
- A second account stated “when Mrs. McAlpin was brought from the hut to Albany as a prisoner with her daughter . . . they neither of them had a rag of cloaths to shift themselves.”

- “For heavens sake, my dear Mr. Munro, send me some relief by the first safe hand. Is there no possibility of your sending for us? If there is no method fallen upon we shall perish, for you can have no idea of our sufferings here; Let me once more intreat you to try every method to save your family; my heart is so full it is ready to break; adieu my Dearest John, may God Almighty bless pre serve and protect you, that we may live to see each other is the constant prayer of your affectionate tho' afflicted wife ... P.S. The Childer's kind love to you.” (Mary Munro to John Munro, undated letter, HP, A 748.)

# Come Gentlemen Tories, Firm, Loyal and True: The Burgoyne Campaign

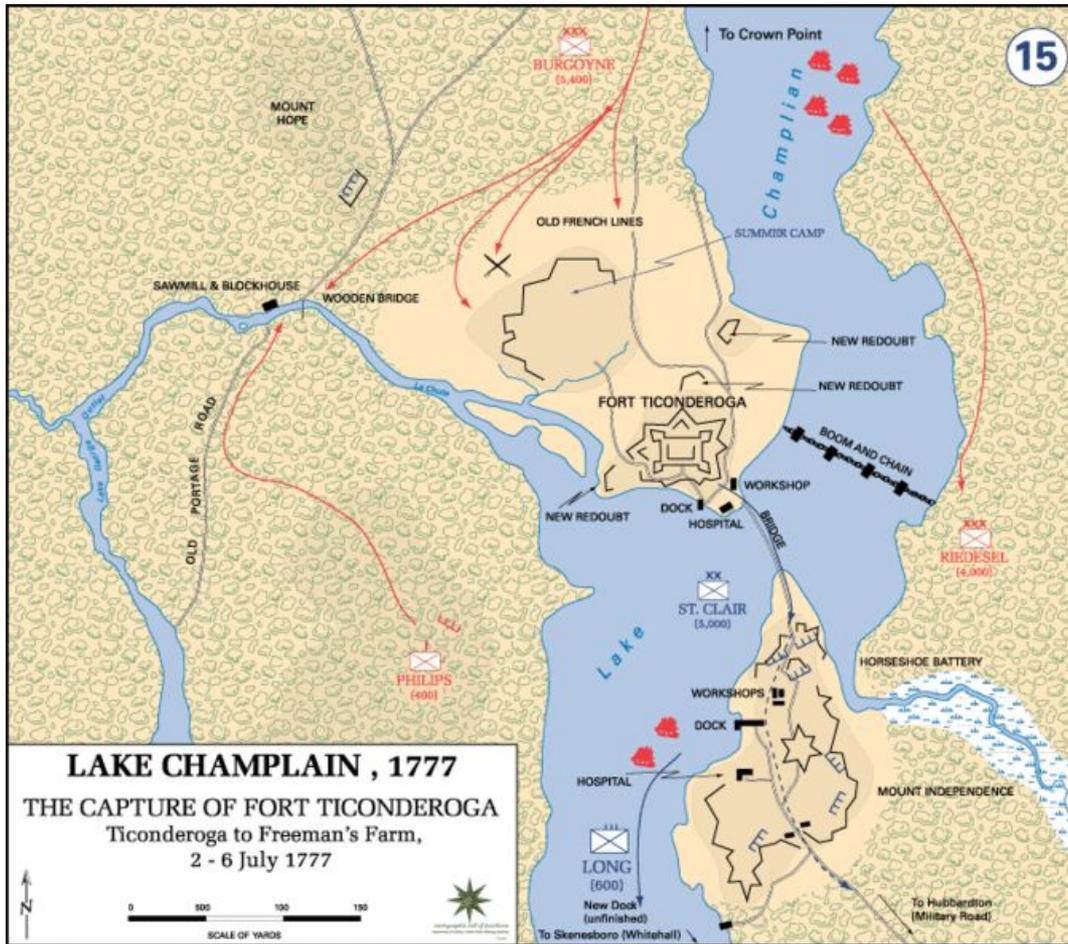


# Jessup's Corps

- General Burgoyne, in an order dated June 18, 1777, indicated “The Provincial Corps of Peters and Jessop are also out of the Line”
- Initially, it appears that Captain Ebenezer Jessup's Company and possibly Captain Jones' Company of the King's Loyal Americans were assigned to the rear of the column and ordered to escort the army's horses, carriages and provisions *overland from Canada to Crown Point.*

- The task proved to be a logistical nightmare as “more than half of the Carriages were broken.”<sup>57</sup> As the supply convoy advanced, the problem only worsened. With sick horses, poorly constructed carts and difficult roadways, the convoy fell further and further behind Burgoyne’s army.

- Captain Edward Jessups' Company served with General Fraser's Advanced Corps. As a result, it appears elements of Jessups' Corps was present when Ticonderoga fell but not for the Battle of Hubbardton.



- A detachment of about five hundred and sixty men of the Advanced Corps led by Brigadier-General Fraser managed to clear and take post on a rising ground near Ticonderoga known as Mount Hope by noon of July 2nd. An American force had been stationed there and retreated as the British approached.
- In an effort to cut off their retreat, Captain Alexander Fraser and his Company of Select Marksmen, some Indians and Jessups' were sent out. Fraser nearly overtook the retreating Americans, but his Indians, who were inebriated, fired too soon without causing any loss to the fugitives.
- By the time Captain Fraser actually managed to restore order, the fleeing soldiers were under the protection of their own lines. In coming too close a general fire was brought to bear upon Fraser's party. Several Indians were killed and wounded, and in attempting to extricate the Indians the Marksmen also suffered some casualties

- At Ticonderoga, British casualties were: Lieutenant Houghton, 2 privates of the Marksmen (both from the 62nd Regiment), **1 private of Jessup's unit** and 3 Indians wounded. In addition 1 Indian was killed and a 1 private of the Marksmen (from the 47th Regiment) taken prisoner. *Lord Francis Napier's Journal of the Burgoyne Campaign.*

# Was Jessup's Present at Hubbardton?

- NO!!!
- Although secondary sources assert Jessup's was present at the Battle of Hubbardton, no primary source exists confirming that the unit was present at this engagement. Instead, evidence suggests that the corps was still attached to Alexander Fraser's Select Marksmen and was still in the Otter Creek region conducting raids when the Battle of Hubbardton took place.

# Fort Edward

- On July 30, 1777, General Fraser's Advanced Corps arrived at Ford Edward. Immediately, the General dispatched a party of Native Americans to locate and escort Daniel McAlpin and his recruits safely into camp.
- Over the next few days, other Tories, including William Fraser and his men, trickled into camp "wishing to serve either for the duration of the campaign or until the end of the war."

- 30th July we remov'd to the height one mile on the other side Fort Edward near the Road leading to Albany, the Rebels advanc'd post one mile in our front. Same evening the Indians, and Jessop's Corps of American Volunteers, attack'd their advanc'd post, and drove them on the other side of Hudson's River with the loss of one Man only. Same Night the whole Rebel Army retreated ; such is the natural bravery of our Indians, for they know nothing of the Art of War, they put their Arms into a Canoe, and swim over the River, pushing the Canoe before them, and many of them carried their Fuzees in their mouths, with their powder horns ty'd upon their Heads.

- “They came as they could, some from prisons, and some from committees . . . naked and barefoot, but with good hearts; no money being given to clothe them.” *Haldimand to Colonel John Peters, October 27, 1780.*
- According to period accounts, only one third of the loyalists joining Burgoyne at Fort Edward were armed and equipped.

- According to Thomas Anbury, an ensign in the 24th Regiment of Foot, many of the loyalists at Fort Edward were equipped with a “blanket, a haversack that contains his provisions, a canteen for water, a hatchet . . . accouterments, arms and sixty rounds of ammunition.”
- As with Jessup’s Corps, it is likely these Loyalists were armed with 1728 French infantry muskets.

# Politics of Command

- With McAlpin's Arrival at Fort Edward, McAlpin's Corps of American Volunteers was formally established.

- While the British army rested at Fort Edward, General Fraser assisted McAlpin with the organization of his corps of volunteers.
  - Recognizing McAlpin's Corps was significantly short of recruits, General Fraser first ordered the forty-two of the original fifty-six men recruited by McAlpin and enrolled in Jessups' Corps to be transferred back to McAlpin's command.
  - These men were drawn from Captains Edward Jessup, Jonathan Jones and Joseph Jessups' Companies.

- On August 16, 1777, General Fraser further ordered a bateaux company attached to Jessups' Corps and composed of Captain Hugh Munro and forty men reassigned to McAlpin's Corps.

- Ebenezer Jessup became enraged and repeatedly protested to the transfer.
- The Response from McAlpin?
  - The loyalist leader appointed two of his own men to serve as subalterns to Munro. More importantly, he swelled the bateaux company's ranks with his own men to ensure the unit would remain loyal to him.

# August 1777

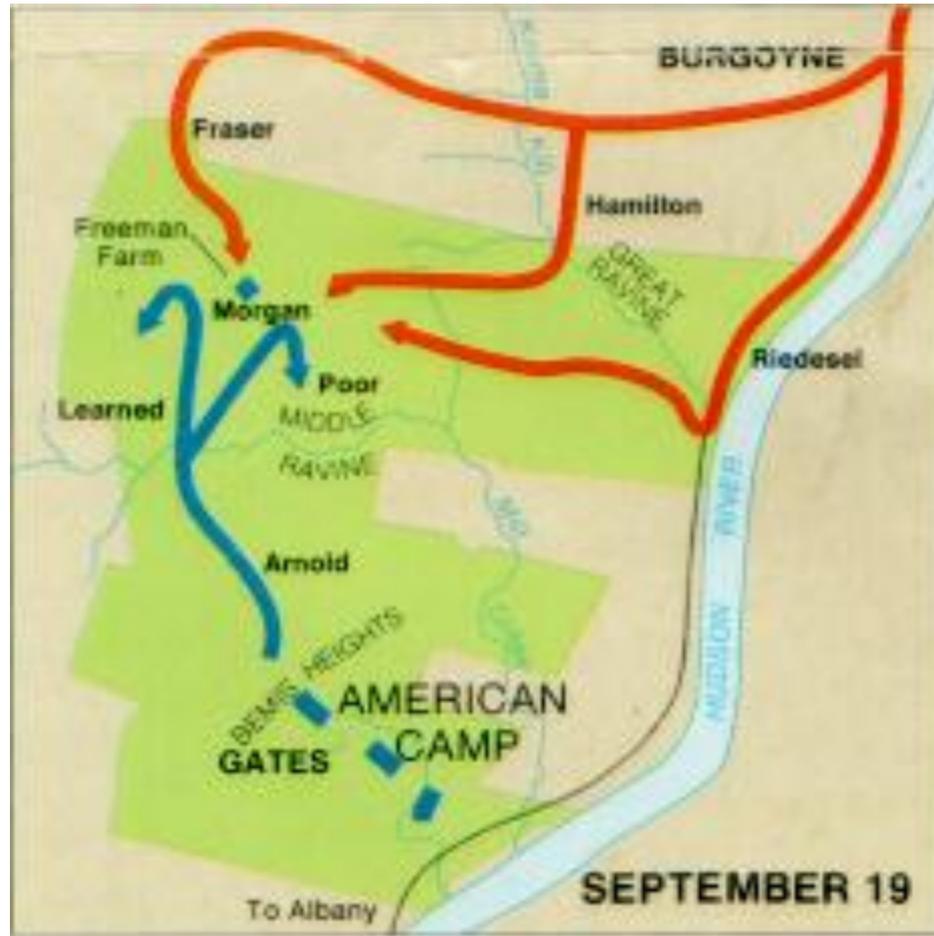
- McAlpin's men are assigned to foraging duties and clash with rebel forces just south of Fort Edward.
- Munro's bateaux company, under the protection of McAlpin's volunteers, transported supplies overland and by water from Fort Edward to Burgoyne's army, still moving south. The "current is exceedingly rapid. Some places the bateau men were obliged to set up with poles and drag the boat by the painter . . . sometimes for whole days up to the waist in water or mire."

- Complicating matters, rebel patrols continuously attacked the convoy in an attempt to disrupt the supply line. No less than seven of McAlpin's men were captured during the month of August.



- By the beginning of September, Munro's Company had delivered a month's supply of food and provisions for the army.
- In turn, Burgoyne's force resumed its march southward.
- Munro's bateaux company was ordered to shadow the Hessians as they advanced down a road adjacent to the Hudson River.
- The remainder of McAlpin's Corps was assigned to the advanced corps under the command of General Fraser.

# Battle of Freeman's Farm



- Burgoyne sends out three (3) reconnaissance columns to probe the American lines.
- On 19 September 1777 the British reconnaissance columns made contact with the American Light Infantry Corps under Colonel Daniel Morgan and the Continental Brigades of Brigadier Generals Ebenezer Learned and Enoch Poor.

- The Americans initiated skirmishing at about noon with the expert marksmanship of Colonel Morgan's Virginia Riflemen, picking off officers around a cabin on Freeman's Farm.
- The ensuing battle raged back and forth until nightfall, when the American forces were finally forced to break contact.
- At the close of the battle, Lieutenant General John Burgoyne, commander of the British forces at the battle, held the field.

- During the battle, General Fraser held the loyalists assigned to his command, including McAlpin's, in reserve.
- With the tide of battle going back and forth throughout the day, Fraser ultimately ordered McAlpin's Corps forward. During the ensuing battle Lieutenant Peter Drummond was captured.

- “Capt. Drummond had the Misfortune to be taken prisoner in the field of Battle on the 19th Sept 1777 when he was exerting himself in the Execution of his duty & he has Since Sufferd much being a long time Confined in Irons in a dungeon.”

- Other casualties of McAlpin's Corps are unknown.

# The Aftermath of Freeman's Farm

- Significant drop in temperature, coupled with driving rains and poor weather.
- September 25, 1777 McAlpin's Corps was issued 168 blankets to make capotes, thread, material for 168 cloth leggings, thread for cloth leggings, 133 pairs of shoes, 168 "head coverings" and 164 pairs of mittens.



- As a result of battlefield casualties sustained at the Second Battle of Freeman's Farm, many British regular regiments experienced a decrease in combat strength. To rebuild his regiments, on September 21, 1777 General Burgoyne ordered the loyalist units under his command to draft a percentage of its men and turn them over to these depleted units. Specifically, "one hundred and twenty brave men of courage and fidelity, from the provincial corps of Jessup, Peters, M'Alpin and M'Kay, are to be incorporated, for this campaign only, into the six British regiments, in the proportion of twenty to a regiment."

- Over the coming days, many of the men from McAlpin's Corps were drafted into 9<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 47<sup>th</sup> and 62<sup>nd</sup> regiments. Although it is possible the loyalist drafts were issued updated arms and equipment, they were never issued regimental clothing.

- McAlpin's men remained with Fraser's advanced corps and were relegated to fatigue duty.
- Between September 20<sup>th</sup> and October 6<sup>th</sup>, General Burgoyne's troops erected a strong line of field fortifications that included, on the site of much of the fighting of 19 September, the Light Infantry (Balcarres) Redoubt, named for Alexander Lindsay, earl of Balcarres.

- McAlpin's most likely assisted in the construction of Balcarres Redoubt.
- Upon its completion, the fortification was “at least one hundred fifty chains [in length]. The walls in some places were six feet high. Eight cannons . . . were mounted in embrasures.”



- When not working on the fortification, most of McAlpin's Corps probably encamped at the Breymann Redoubt.
- Munro's bateaux company remained positioned alongside the Hudson River

- A select number of McAlpin's men were chosen for a much more dangerous mission. According to Sergeant Joseph Beaty, he and other members of the American Volunteers were ordered to infiltrate the American lines "in order to conniture the works and know what number of cannon and how supplied with provisions."

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Saratoga

- No direct evidence McAlpin's Corps of American Volunteers participated in this engagement.
- However!!
  - Joshua Pell Jr., a volunteer with the 24th Regiment of Foot, states “Canadian Volunteers and Provincials” joined Fraser in a probing expedition and “form’d the column of the left marching thro the wood, where the engagement of 19 September was fought.”

- John F. Luzader, author of *Saratoga: A Military History of the Decisive Campaign of the American Revolution*, indirectly implies that the loyalists assigned to Fraser's advanced corps, including McAlpin's, accompanied him on the probe and may have engaged elements of Poor/s New Hampshire Brigade in the opening shots of the 2nd Battle of Freeman's Farm that erupted southwest of the Balcarres Redoubt.

- We do know it was highly unlikely McAlpin's was present in Balcarres' Redoubt when the battle commenced.
- If McAlpin's was present with Fraser, the unit may have withdrawn into the redoubt following General Fraser being shot.
- Despite several attempts to take the fortification, the Americans were repulsed.



# The Retreat to Canada

- October 8, 1777, the British earthworks were abandoned in favor of nearby hills located along the Hudson River.

- On October 8, 1777, Captain Munro was ordered to collect the army's provisions and follow the retreating army via the Hudson River. Unfortunately for Munro, the bateaux became the rebel's prime target.

- “A few bateaux and scows were passing along as I arrived . . . they were loaded with military stores, the baggage of the officers and the women who followed (the British army). A few well-directed shots brought them to the bank. A rush took place for the prey. Everything was hauled out and carried back into a low swampy place in the rear and a guard placed over it . . . the poor females, trembling in fear, were released and permitted to go in a boat to the British army, a short distance above on the other side of the river . . . such a group of tanned and leather visages were never seen before . . . poorly clad . . . and their persons war-torn and weary.”

- “We all kept distance . . . for fear of the cannon that were placed on the other side of the river on a high hill . . . the soon discovered [us] and saluted us with a cannon ball.”

- “One day, wearied of living in this manner, I told some of the soldiers' wives if they would join me, I would find out a way to get some provision cooked—seven of them joined me. I spoke to some of the soldiers that were invalid, and told them if they would make up a fire back in the woods, and get a large kettle hung on, we would fill it with provision, and cook it, which would last us some time. They consented to do it for a guinea ; they went to work and built up the fire, hung on the kettle, and put water in it, then we women put in what we pleased ; we soon filled it with a variety ; it began to boil ; we all kept a distance from the fire for fear of the cannon that were placed on the other side of the river on a high hill; they soon discovered our fire, and saluted us with a cannon ball; it struck and broke our kettle to pieces, and sent the provision in the air.”

- On October 14, 1777, with his army surrounded at Saratoga, Burgoyne ordered all of his loyalist troops, including the drafts, to depart on their own for the safety of Canada.
- By October 17, 1777, many loyalist soldiers had deserted and fled north.

- On October 11, 1777, Burgoyne ordered remaining elements of Native Americans and McAlpin's Corps to take possession of the army's military chest and transport it back to Canada.
- On October 25, 1777, rebel militia intercepted McAlpin's party and a large skirmish erupted. When the battle ended, fifty of McAlpin's men were captured or left behind as casualties.

- Nevertheless, McAlpin was able to push past the enemy and successfully reach Canada with the military chest.

# The Aftermath: “Loyalists in Great Distress”



- In early 1778, McAlpin was promoted to major and was given the arduous task of overseeing the flood of refugees who poured into Canada following Burgoyne's defeat.

- The constant stream of incoming refugees shocked the sensibilities of even the most hardened British officer. As St. Leger noted, a group of loyalists arrived at Niagara “almost naked . . . they had been so long hiding in the woods that they were almost famished . . . 50 more are on their way but so weak they can scarcely crawl... they are a set of poor forlorn people. . .who cannot help themselves.” (St. Leger to Matthews, September 19, 1781. )

- Although loyalists first resided with local French colonists in the Quebec Province, under McAlpin's guidance a loyalist refugee settlement was first established at Machiche, near Three Rivers. Conrad Gugy, a native of the Netherlands and a companion of Haldimand, was named superintendant of the site. As more refugees streamed in, additional refugee camps were established in Sorel, Chambly, Quebec and Saint John's.

- A survey of Machiche was conducted by the British Government in 1779 and revealed that of the one hundred eighty refugees, one hundred twenty one were *children*. (“List of those Loyalist refugees living at Machiche in 1779.”)
- Conrad Gugy complained to Haldimand that the children at Machiche were severely malnourished and many mothers were depriving themselves of their own food in an effort to keep their children alive.

- The British approach to providing assistance to loyalists in Canada was similar to governmental policies towards the poor in England.
- Incoming loyalists were questioned to determine what trade or profession they possessed and then were dispatched to specific locations to seek employment.
- Destitute loyalists, including the sick, infirm, children, women with infants and cripples, were placed on public assistance.
- However, “public assistance” in the 18<sup>th</sup> century differed greatly from modern practices. Under 18<sup>th</sup> century British policies, those on public assistance received only bare necessities at minimal costs. More importantly, those on assistance were expected to work in exchange for their assistance.

- At many refugee camps, women and children were expected to make “blanket coats, leggings at cheaper rates than the Canadians.” To keep expenses low, loyalist women and children were mustered once a month so they could be inspected and determine whether or not they still qualified for public assistance (Regulations as to the Lodgings and Allowances for Loyalists , March 6, 1782.)

- Living quarters for loyalist refugees was cramped at best. In December 1778 one hundred and ninety six refugees at Machiche were assigned living quarters in one of twelve buildings. The following year, over four hundred refugees were placed in one of a mere twenty-one buildings. Historical documentation suggests these structures were only eighteen by forty feet in size. (“List of Loyalists and Their Families lodged at Machicheat This Date”, December 2, 1778; Gogy to Haldimand, November 16, 1778.)

- Throughout the fall months of 1778, British officials likewise struggled to supply the loyalists with rations, candles and blankets. By 1783, over three thousand loyalists were in need of basic clothing, including over three thousand pairs of stockings and shoes and sixteen thousand yards of linen and wool. The following year, British officials warned that several refugees had died “owing as they think for the want of provisions and clothing.” (Gugy to Haldimand, October 30, 1778; Gugy to Haldimand, November 8, 1778; Gugy to Haldimand, November 16, 1778.)

- The treatment of Africa-American loyalists during the American Revolution, including those in Canada, was especially problematic.
- British authorities encouraged slaves to profess their loyalty to the Crown in exchange for freedom. However, once escaped slaves reached British lines, African-Americans found that the promises were not always fulfilled.
- Some were taken prisoner and either claimed as property by their captors or sold for profit.
- Likewise, British officials consistently maintained that former slaves of loyalists had to be returned to their masters.
- Only a few were allowed to serve as soldiers.

- Many loyalist officers protested the treatment of African-American loyalists and expressed their “sensible feelings [we] have for [our fellow Creatures]”. One officer, Daniel Claus, asserted that African-American soldiers were often of great help to scouting and raiding parties. He then noted sadly that sixteen blacks he had brought in as recruits “for their loyalty ... now are rendered Slaves in Montreal.”

A. Clark  
Wood Cutter  
at Shelburne  
Nova Scotia  
1788  
W. P. M. 1788



- From the refugee perspective, most were horrified at their living conditions and lack of provisions. As one group of loyalists opined, “we shall not be able to overcome the Seveir and approaching hard winter ... [in] a Strange and Disolate place where [we] can get nothing to Work to earne a Penney for the Support of Each Other . . . much more the Bigger part of us Without one shilling in our pockets and not a Shew on our feet.” (“Petition by His Majesty’s Faithful Subjects Emigrated Under the Conduct of Captain Michael Grass from New York to This Place”, Sorel, September 29, 1783.)

- To contain the impact of refugees on the Quebec Province, British authorities restricted loyalists and refused to let them travel outside of their respective camps. As a result, refugees quickly discovered that they could not supplement their meager supplies with trips to neighboring towns and villages. Services, including laundry, were subject to price fixing under the threat of being removed from public assistance. Likewise, requests to sell goods, including alcohol, to complement their meager living conditions were summarily denied.

- “The loyalist women receiving rations are to wash for the non-commissioned officers and men of the volunteers at four coppers a shirt and in proportion for other things.”  
(Haldimand to Lieutenant French, July 14, 1780.)

- An even greater concern amongst refugees was the presence of camp fever which was quickly spreading through the refugee sites.
- Other deadly diseases present at the camps included malaria, small pox and pneumonia. Loyalists chaffed at the government's downplay of the camp conditions and the assertion that their complaints were "frivolous".

- According to a letter from Gagy to Stephen DeLancy, inspector of the loyalist camps, he was “well aware of the uniform discontent of the Loyalists at Machiche . . . the discontent . . . is excited by a few ill-disposed persons. . . . the sickness they complain of has been common throughout the province, and should have lessened rather than increased the consumption of provisions.”

- As years passed and loyalists continued to be confined inside refugee camps, families and individuals collapsed under the psychological burden. Long term absences of loyalist men on military missions only exacerbated the situation.
- There was one recorded incident of infanticide at Carleton Island where a mother killed her newborn. Marriages crumbled, alcoholism rose, suicides increased and emotional breakdowns became commonplace. In short, death and tragedy surrounded the loyalists in Canada.

“They Have Sacrificed All They Had  
for Their Loyalty”

# An Opportunity for Revenge: The Raid on Johnstown

# 1781: The Final Year of McAlpin's Corps