

THE UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

The Loyalist GAZETTE

VOL. LXI • NO. 2 • FALL 2023

A NOVA SCOTIA STORY
LOYALIST HISTORY AND A 1930'S
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CONTRIBUTIONS OF
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MARITIME LOYALISTS



BY GUEST EDITOR
STEPHEN DAVIDSON

The Loyalist Quill



THE LOYALIST HERITAGE: A LEGACY OF COMPASSION

The Loyalist Heritage: A Legacy of Compassion

Since the fall of 2006, I have had the privilege of writing more than 850 articles for *Loyalist Trails*. After researching the lives of hundreds of Loyalists, I have pondered not only what their Revolutionary War experiences meant to them, but also what they mean to a Canadian with a Loyalist heritage. As the guest editor for this edition of the *Loyalist Gazette*, I would like to share my thoughts on the legacy of a Loyalist refugee heritage. (The following thoughts are purely my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the *Gazette's* editorial committee.)

As so often happens in discussing any aspect of Loyalist history, one must begin by explaining what one is **not** going to say. A Loyalist heritage does not give one the right to be an elitist.

Well-meaning Loyalist descendants have sometimes given the impression that to be of "Loyalist stock" meant that they occupied a loftier place in Canadian society. (After all --these folks have been known to argue-- Loyalist descendants were given a hereditary title by the British government.) But, in truth, a Loyalist heritage is no more (or no less) prestigious or valuable than a French, Irish, or Ukrainian heritage. It is simply *one* of the many cultural backgrounds that makes up one's own family tree and that contributes to the genealogy of an entire nation. The fact that an air of elitism sometimes

--rightly or wrongly-- clings to the word "Loyalist" has often turned away those who could otherwise be happy to identify themselves as loyal American descendants.

The phrase "United Empire Loyalist" was used to distinguish the refugees of the American Revolution from history's other Loyalists. Sir Guy Carleton, (later Lord Dorchester) granted these refugees and their descendants the right to place "U.E." (United Empire) after their names.

"U.E." does *not* refer to the Loyalists who remained in the United States. Although they were true to the crown throughout the Revolution, the majority of loyal American colonists accepted that they were on the war's losing side and became citizens of the new republic. "U.E.", rather, identifies a body of people who--because they continued to be loyal-- became refugees. In the documents of the 18th century, the Loyalists often described themselves (and were referred to by others) as either refugees or «loyal refugees». A Loyalist heritage is based upon the fact that one has ancestors who were *refugees*, not just *loyal* colonists. This is the distinguishing feature.

And not just *any* refugees. With numbers that have been estimated as high as 60,000, the Loyalists are the largest group of displaced persons in North American history. The fact that loyal Americans became *refugees* is the essential consideration when contemplating the significance of a

Loyalist heritage. We are not simply the offspring of colonists who were loyal; we are the descendants of North America's largest refugee population.

This understanding takes us beyond Loyalist descendant stereotypes. We are not necessarily monarchists, although our forebears were. We do not always place "U.E." after our names; this practice was not particularly common among our ancestors either. Transcending these stereotypes, our heritage is one that is incredibly relevant to the 21st century.

Recognizing that our ancestors faced persecution in their former country and had to seek sanctuary outside of the United States should create a legacy of compassion for any people who find themselves in similar circumstances today. A Loyalist descendant should urge his/her government to welcome the oppressed. Rather than putting up barriers, Canada should give the displaced persons of the world the opportunity to begin a new life in a safe country.

Because our ancestors often spent years in refugee settlements, we should be among the first to solicit aid for those presently living in refugee camps in the countries of the developing world. Canadian societies of Loyalist descendants should regularly sponsor settlement of deserving refugees in their own communities. In so doing, we honour our refugee ancestors.

The fact the Loyalists upset the established social order and distribution of land as they settled in Canada

and the Maritimes should guide our attitudes as immigrants from around the world come to our shores. Where the Loyalists were sometimes greeted with fear and resentment, we should greet newcomers with compassion and empathy. Yes, there will be some change to the status quo – but in the end, it will lead to a richer national life. The newcomer *can* be accommodated for it happened to our ancestors.

Even the dark side of our Loyalist heritage should leave its legacy. Loyalists, like their Patriot neighbours, were blind to the institution of slavery. The largest group of slaves ever brought

into Canada came with the Loyalists. A Loyalist descendant, then, should be wary of accepting institutions and the “status quo” just because “everyone else is doing it”. We should be vigilant to see that human rights are respected both within our country and across the globe. We should resolve not to fail our fellow man as our ancestors did.

Refugees though they were, the Loyalists valued education; within a generation of their arrival, they had created colleges and universities wherever they settled. A crucial part of being a Loyalist descendant is promoting fair access --and funding--

for the higher education of our youth. It is what our ancestors wanted for their own children.

What I have outlined may not be the typical understanding of what it means to have a Loyalist heritage. However, I think if one reviews the thoughts and actions of those who made up North America's greatest wave of refugees, one will see that we have been left a legacy of compassion, acceptance, vigilance, and education.

It is --most certainly-- a very challenging and inspiring heritage.

Think history is in the past?
You'll be surprised to discover...

June 6-9, 2024
Cornwall, Ontario CANADA

...THE STORY CONTINUES
UELAC 2024 | Immersive Experience Weekend

UELAC uelac.ca
THE UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

UELAC would like to invite you to Cornwall, Ontario in June 2024!

There is lots to explore and you were given an amazing virtual glimpse in 2021, and this coming conference will enable you to actually step into these historic places.

UELAC conference will be held in conjunction with the
Cornwall 1784 - the 240th anniversary of the Founding of New Johnstown.

Our host hotel is the Best Western in downtown Cornwall - a short distance to, well, everything!
We have also booked a group of rooms at the brand new Hampton Inn by Hilton, a mere 1/2km from the Best Western. Both hotels will be opening these reservations early in 2024 and links will be shared over a variety of social media platforms once available.



BY CARL STYMIEST UE
UELAC DOMINION PRESIDENT



Fall 2023

DOMINION PRESIDENT'S Message *and Call to Action*

I write to you today with great enthusiasm and gratitude as your newly elected President. The Annual General Meeting held on 03 June was an important milestone for our organization, and I am honored to have been chosen to lead and serve you in this role.

As I embark on this journey as President of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada (UELAC), I want to reiterate the core tenets that will guide my actions and our collective efforts during my time in office. These tenets are crucial to our continued growth, success, and the advancement of our mission.

1. Strengthen our sense of community: At the heart of our organization, we are a community of like-minded individuals committed to preserving and celebrating our rich history and heritage. I firmly believe that fostering a strong sense of community is paramount to our success. We need to create opportunities for meaningful connections among members, whether through in-person gatherings, virtual events, or social media platforms. By sharing our ideas, stories, and experiences, we can inspire and support each other in our collective mission.

2. Focus on growth: To ensure the longevity and relevance of

UELAC, we must focus on growth. We need to actively reach out to new communities and demographics that align with our values and objectives. By broadening our membership base, we will not only strengthen our organization but also amplify our collective impact. Through strategic outreach and engaging initiatives, we can attract new members who will contribute fresh perspectives, ideas, and talents to our vibrant community.

3. Advocacy as the centrepiece of our efforts: Advocacy has always been a core pillar of our association. As loyal descendants of the United Empire Loyalists, it is our duty to be active voices for the causes and issues that matter to us. We must continue to advocate for the preservation of our history, the protection of our cultural heritage, and the promotion of inclusivity and diversity. By leveraging our collective influence, we can effect positive change and secure a brighter future for generations to come.

4. Embrace innovation: In a rapidly evolving world, embracing innovation is crucial for our organization's growth and adaptability. We must remain open to new technologies, methods, and approaches that

will enable us to better serve our members and achieve our goals. By embracing innovation, we will enhance our communications, streamline our processes, and create a modern, forward-thinking organization that remains relevant and responsive to the needs of our members.

These tenets will serve as guiding principles during my tenure as President. However, I cannot achieve these goals alone. It will take the collective efforts, ideas, and commitment of each and every member to bring about the positive change we envision.

I invite you all to join me in this collective endeavor, and I encourage you to share your thoughts, suggestions, and aspirations. Together, let us strengthen our sense of community, focus on growth, enhance our advocacy efforts, and embrace innovation.

In conclusion, I want to express my deep appreciation for the opportunity to serve as your President. I am excited about the path that lies ahead and look forward to working alongside you all in fulfilling our shared vision for UELAC.

Thank you, and let us embark on this journey together.

Sincerely,

Carl Stymiest UE, President
United Empire Loyalists'
Association of Canada (UELAC)

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PEOPLE BEHIND
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Bill Russell UE



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Kings Landing Historical Settlement is a
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consists of a re-created settlement of late 18th
century to early 20th century. Photo: Alamy

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Amanda Fasken UE

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Finally receives
historical recognition





THE UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

REGIONAL OFFICERS AND BRANCH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS 2023

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dominion President	Carl Stymiest	Vancouver
Dominion Past President	Patricia Groom	Toronto
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Dominion Treasurer	Barb Andrew	Assiniboine
Dominion Secretary	Jo Ann Tuskin	Gov. Simcoe
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Regional V-P Prairie	Barb Andrew	Assiniboine
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Councillor Pacific Region	Christine Manzer	Vancouver

COMMITTEES

Dominion Archivist & Librarian	Carl Stymiest	Vancouver
By-Law & Policy Review		
Dominion Conference Chair	Barbara J. Andrew	Assiniboine
Dominion Education/Outreach	Barbara J. Andrew	Assiniboine
Dominion Finance	Barbara J. Andrew	Assiniboine
Dominion Genealogist	Peter & Angela Johnson	Bay of Quinte
Dominion Grants	Barbara J. Andrew	Assiniboine
Dominion Honorary Fellow	Vacant	
Legal Adviser	As Required	
Library & Archives	Carl Stymiest	Vancouver
Loyalist Gazette & Communications	Bill Russell	Kawartha
Loyalist Information	Doug Grant	Gov. Simcoe
Dominion Membership	Liz Adair	Assiniboine
Dominion Nominations	Patricia Groom	Toronto
Dominion Promotions	Patricia Groom	Toronto
Dominion Public Relations	Vacant	
Dominion Scholarships	Christine Manzer	Vancouver
Dominion Volunteer Recognition	Diane Faris/ Patricia Groom	Vancouver/ Toronto
Dominion Website Manager	Doug Grant	Gov. Simcoe
Dominion Parliamentarian & Protocol Officer	Greg Childs	London & Western Ontario
Standard Bearer	David Ellsworth	Col. John Butler
Dominion Systems	Rodney Appleby	160 Water Street W, Cornwall
Family Search Project	Bill Russell/Richard Parry	Kawartha/Kingston
Planning, Implementation & Training for Virtual World	Liz Adair	Assiniboine
Dominion Website Re-development	Doug Grant	Gov. Simcoe
Dominion Office Administrator	Rodney Appleby	160 Water Street W, Cornwall

ADVISORY POSITIONS - TRUSTEES

Dominion Trustee	Kevin Wisener	Abegweit
Dominion Trustee	Susan Ellsworth	Toronto
Dominion Trustee	Sandy Farynuk	Thompson -Okanagan

Published by authority of

The United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada

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Telephone (416) 591-1783 | E-mail: uelac@uelac.org | Website: www.uelac.ca | ISSN: 0047-5149

UELAC PEOPLE Behind the Scenes



BILL RUSSELL UE
UELAC SR VICE PRESIDENT

CENTRAL EAST REGIONAL COUNCILLOR

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT OF KAWARTHA BRANCH 2021-2023

DIRECTOR: BAY OF QUINTE BRANCH, NEW BRUNSWICK BRANCH

UELAC SR VICE PRESIDENT

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to our UELAC members. My name is Bill Russell UE and I was elected Senior Vice President at the Vancouver Conference.

I am married to my spouse, Meg, and we have a blended family of five children. I was born and resided in Peterborough, ON for most of my life, except for two years when I attended Loyalist College in Belleville, ON. Upon graduating I was employed by the Ontario Government as a Property Assessor with a career lasting 30 years. After retiring in 2001 I became interested in genealogy and soon discovered I had a Loyalist ancestor, Lt. George Galloway, who came with Peter Grass and settled in the Kingston area. After further research I soon found two other Loyalists, Pvt. John Munroe of the King's Rangers who settled in New Brunswick and Ensign John Babcock of the

New Jersey Volunteers who settled in Prince Edward County. I joined the Bay of Quinte Branch and with the assistance of Peter and Angela Johnson, my daughter Nicole Russell UE and I received our first certificate in March 2014.

I have held several positions over the years; I was the Central East Regional Councillor and Regional Vice President where I enjoyed meeting and working with the Branches in the region. At the Branch level, I was President of Kawartha Branch 2021-2023 and am currently a director with the Bay of Quinte Branch, New Brunswick Branch, and Immediate Past President of Kawartha Branch.

My duties as Senior Vice President of UELAC include holding positions on the Finance Board, Conference Board, and the Executive Committee as well as being the Loyalist Gazette Editor. As Gazette editor I work with a very talented team who

have provided me with expert guidance to ensure the successful production of this periodical. Our team has decided to organize each issue with a Provincial theme over the next two years. We will start with the Maritimes, followed by Quebec and Ontario in the first year and then move on to the Western Provinces and lastly British Columbia. Each issue will feature a guest editor and I am proud to announce that our first one will be historian and author, Stephen Davidson.

I look forward to meeting our members and working with the Branch and National Executives. I will do my best to promote UELAC and educate the public about the contributions of the Loyalists.

I hope you enjoy this issue and please send your feedback and suggestions to the Editorial Committee.



VOLUNTEERING IS A NOBLE ACT.

2023 UELAC DORCHESTER AWARD RECIPIENT

Barbara Jane (Lane) Andrew, UE

UELAC ASSINIBOINE BRANCH

NOMINATED BY LIZ ADAIR, UELAC PRAIRIE REGION COUNCILOR
AND THE ASSINIBOINE BRANCH OF THE UELAC

In 1999, Barb began researching her family loyalist ancestors and joined the Manitoba Branch UELAC, making the drive from Brandon to Winnipeg to attend meetings.... and remember, there was no Zoom!

She held the position of President of the Manitoba Branch for the years 2006– 2008. Following this, she became editor for the Manitoba Branch newsletter, *Loyalist Lines*.

From 2009 to 2013, Barb served as the Prairie Region Councilor, and in 2012, she was elected the UELAC Dominion Vice President. Also, during 2012, Barb undertook the volunteer role as Registrar for the UELAC Dominion Conference held at Winnipeg that year (Conference at the Confluence) and assisted the Conference development at many levels.

From 2013 to 2015, Barb was elected UELAC Dominion Vice President. Following the second term as president, Barb was further elected to serve a 3rd year as Dominion President.

In 2015, Barb helped to support the development of a new branch, the Assiniboine Branch UELAC, getting their charter that same year. The development of this Branch was to support people who may join and



attend meetings in the western parts of Manitoba. Barb accepted the role of President for the Branch in 2020, which she continues at present. Barb is also chair of the UELAC Education and Outreach Committee and has spoken at past Dominion Conferences on the subject. Under Barb's leadership, she started the Cemetery Plaque project for the Assiniboine Branch.

From 2015 to 2017, Barb fulfilled the role of Dominion Past President under the presidency of Sue Morse-Hines.

In 2020, Barb was nominated and

subsequently elected to the role of Prairie Regional Vice-President, a role she is still actively involved.

2021 was a difficult time for the UELAC Board of Directors and following the untimely death of Past President, Sue Morse-Hines, Barb assumed the role of Acting Dominion Past President to support the current President Patricia Groom.

2022 was another eventful year for Barb. In late April, she travelled to Ontario and assisted with the move of the Dominion Office, the UELAC

Library & Archives to Cornwall – this included helping Trish and Carl sort, pack and arrange for the move.

At the vacancy of UELAC Dominion Treasurer in 2022, Barb assumed the role of Acting Dominion Treasurer.

Barb has presented research topics at the branch and regional levels, and at Dominion Conference. This year

she is once again, presenting virtually, at the 2023 UELAC Conference. *"Where the Sea Meets the Sky."*

Her contributions to all aspects of the UELAC have been extraordinary to say the least and she has always been active with a keen sense for volunteering.

In 2022 Barb was nominated by the City of Brandon's Mayor, for Queen

Elizabeth II's Jubilee Award which was presented last fall. This award recognizes individuals who have made great volunteer contributions to the community in which they live.

In all she does, Barb is an enthusiastic advocate for the UELAC and definitely *'Goes the extra mile'*.

2023 UELAC DORCHESTER AWARD RECIPIENT

Gerald (Gerry) William Adair UE

UELAC SASKATCHEWAN BRANCH

NOMINATED BY: ROBERT C MCBRIDE UE AND A. JOAN LUCAS: KAWARTHA BRANCH UELAC

GERALD (GERRY) WILLIAM ADAIR UE was the Prairie Regional Vice President and the UELAC Volunteer Recognition Chairperson for the last sixteen years, having been appointed to the Dominion Council in 2002 as the Prairie Regional Councillor. Gerry took over as Treasurer for the Saskatchewan Branch UELAC in 2003 and is their Branch Genealogist.

Gerry was instrumental in hosting the UELAC Conference and AGM in Regina in 2005 and again in Moose Jaw in 2018. Gerry's philosophy in hosting these two conferences was to make them, something people could learn and benefit from, as well as being cost-effective for members attending. Gerry hosted many Saskatchewan picnics on his farm during the summer months and the UELAC flag was always flown at the end of the farm's laneway. He promoted the UELAC by attending events, designing floats for parades, and presenting UELAC information to members of the Royal Family.

Gerry's quiet enthusiasm encouraged many others to get



involved in Conference and UELAC events. He was instrumental in helping to form the Assiniboine Branch UELAC.

Currently, Gerry had thirteen proven loyalist ancestors and has written histories about them that he shares on his website. His love of research and finding ancestors to honour is evident in that he has obtained certificates for his children, grandchildren, and great-

grandchildren.

Gerry travelled across Canada from coast to coast, researching relatives, including several visits to Tamworth and Napanee, in Ontario, where the branch of his ADAIR family originated. His knowledge and interest in research have been a benefit to many throughout Canada, culminating with his editorship in 2020 of the book, *"Loyalist Descendants in Saskatchewan."* This

book begun in 2014 as the

Centennial project for Saskatchewan Branch, needed Gerry's commitment to detail, cross-referencing, and indexing family names and genealogical records for more than 32 branch members.

Completing this book was a project very close to Gerry's heart. Not only that, but Gerry has also taken on the sales and distribution of this book, a review of it appearing in the Review Section of the Spring 2022 issue of *The Loyalist Gazette*.

In recognition for his on-going excellence and participation with the UELAC, the Executive and Members of the Kawartha Branch UELAC, nominate, Gerald (Gerry) William Adair UE for the 2023 Dorchester Award.

UELAC SUZANNE MORSE-HINES UE MEMORIAL GENEALOGY - FAMILY HISTORY AWARD Gerald (Gerry) William Adair UE UELAC SASKATCHEWAN BRANCH

THE MEMBERS AND THE EXECUTIVE OF THE ASSINIBOINE BRANCH UELAC ARE PLEASED TO NOMINATE GERRY ADAIR UE FOR THE 2023 SUZANNE MORSE-HINES UE MEMORIAL GENEALOGY - FAMILY HISTORY AWARD.

"We inherit from our ancestors' gifts so often taken for granted. Each of us contains within this inheritance of soul. We are links between the ages, containing past and present expectations, sacred memories, and future promise."
– Edward Sellner

The United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada values the passion that members have for achievement in a variety of areas, but especially in the field of genealogy.

It is this acknowledgment of service, achievement, or ability that the UELAC Volunteer Recognition Committee and the UELAC Board of Directors wish to honour. This year's recipient of the newly created award is: 2023: Gerald (Gerry) William Adair UE- Saskatchewan Branch UELAC.

Gerry has long held a passion for genealogy and family history research especially when uncovering relatives who were previously lost to history. Along with his wife, the Late Pat Adair, the contributed hours of volunteer time with the



(L-R) Patricia Groom UE, UELAC Past Dominion President; Gerry Adair UE, Saskatchewan Branch; Carl Stymiest UE, UELAC Dominion President.

Moosomin Branch, Saskatchewan Genealogy Society doing research and offering workshops. The couple also undertook extensive travel throughout Ontario conducting research in the areas of Napanee and Tamworth where Gerry's ancestors resided. Along with research on ancestry, Gerry assisted Pat with uncovering information on her elusive aunt, spending hours at the archives in Toronto.

During their many research trips, Gerry was most willing to search out information for others that was not readily available online. In 2020, the Saskatchewan Branch of the UELAC produced a book entitled, *"Loyalist Descendants in Saskatchewan"*. Gerry was the main editor of this publication and took on the task of indexing family names and genealogical records for more than thirty-two branch members.

Loyalist SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTIONS TO OUR 2023 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

JACOB BREADMAN is a Ph.D. student in History at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. He has a M.A. in History from Brock University and a M.A. in Public History from Western University.

ERIN ISAAC is a PhD candidate at the University of Western Ontario. Her doctoral research examines the ways in which displaced loyalists, focalised in Shelburne, NS, attempted to assert belonging through their bodily engagements with their new environments.

Read the full biographies of these students at <https://uelac.ca/scholarship/>

Success of the 2023 Scholarship challenge is still being calculated, but we are happy to report that at press time the goal had been surpassed. \$5,341 was raised.

Thank you to the many individuals and branches for their contributions. The scholarship committee is under the care and guidance of the following

UELAC members: Timothy J. Compeau, Heather Smith, Jayne Leake and Christine Manzer.

UELAC LOYALIST SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT FUND

The year 2026 will mark the 250th anniversary of the American War for Independence and the first of many chapters of our Loyalist story. Our current and past Scholarship winners are joining others now writing new research that challenges the mythology of the American Revolution.

We acknowledge that the plight of the loyalists has been misrepresented or ignored in some popular teaching and film production. The UELAC Scholarship is a very important aspect of our organization. It is helping to ensure that the story of the Loyalists in the American Revolution and the aftermath of settlement in Canada continue to be researched and shared by Masters and PhD graduate students who apply and qualify for the scholarship money. Do you have a friend or relative doing

graduate studies in history? Please share the opportunity with them. See [Scholars Wanted](#) on the UELAC website.

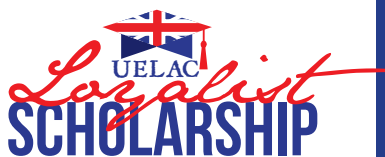
MORE WAYS TO HELP GET THE WORD OUT

The value of financial support for graduate students cannot be overstated. The difficulty in alerting qualified graduate student to apply for that financial aid is made somewhat easier with today's social media options such as Twitter, Facebook. Regular publications such as Loyalist Trails, Loyalist Gazette and branch newsletters also help to get the word out.

If you have a contact in an academic institution on either side of the border please think about forwarding the UELAC web address that contains the scholarship details. <https://uelac.ca/scholarship/>

The deadline for scholarship applications for 2024 is February 28, 2024

UELAC SCHOLARS WANTED!



The UELAC Loyalist Scholarship is available to Masters and PhD students undertaking a program in research that will further

Canadians' understanding of the Loyalists and our appreciation of their, or their immediate descendants', influence on Canada.

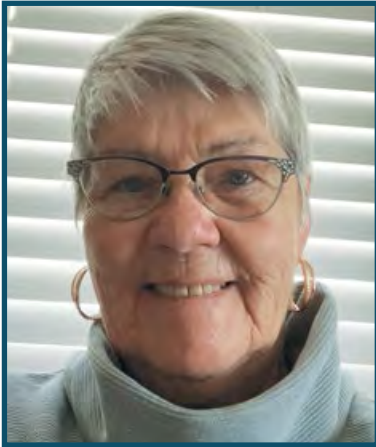
The award is for \$2,500 Canadian per year and, on approval, will be provided for each of two years for Masters and three years for PhD students.

Preference may be given to students who have taken an undergraduate degree in history, to those who are of proven Loyal-

ist descent, and to students at Universities in Canada. The UELAC reserves the right to award the scholarship in accordance with its sole discretion. Upon completion, a copy of the thesis must be presented to the Association.

The application requirements are available at
www.uelac.org

Education & Outreach



BARB ANDREW UE

In the post -COVID world we now reside in past practices of Education & Outreach committees which most certainly need to be revised and updated with regards to public engagement. To that end members of the UELAC Education and Outreach committee have been brainstorming and discussing possible innovative ways to engage folks in both the history of the United Empire Loyalists and the activities of the UELAC.

Food for thought - Perhaps a more suitable title for this committee would now be "Outreach and Engagement" focusing more on awareness leading to engagement with a spin off of increased membership.

The following are several of the ideas that have come to the top of our brainstorming sessions that will be on the list of considerations for further investigation in the upcoming year.

We are all aware that most of UELAC branches and the Board of Directors are utilizing online platforms such as ZOOM for meetings in order that all members are able to attend and participate. Might one of the committee's initiatives be to also use such platforms to offer an online-guided tour of our Dominion Office and Archive in order to engage both members and other interested parties who are unable to visit the venue in person?

Should the committee be more proactive in advertising existing online resources such as Loyalist

Trails and the Loyalist Directory? What form should the advertising take to get the most bang for the buck and to engage the most age categories?

Prior to taking on any of these initiatives, we must understand who the target audiences will be that we are trying to engage prior to investing time and finances.

The committee is also currently considering a set of measurable objectives that would monitor the success of any project taken on such as vision and outcome.

There will be plenty of research and discussions taking place in the upcoming months by the members of the committee to develop a plan that will provide a clearer road map leading to more public engagement, education about the Loyalists and the UELAC as well as increased interest in membership in the association.

Barb Andrew UE

Committee Chairperson

**An Amazing
Volunteer**
Offers their gift of time
INSPIRES HOPES & DREAMS
Enjoys Helping Others
ENCOURAGES TEAMWORK
IS SELFLESS, GENEROUS & KIND
EXTENDS A HELPING HAND
& Makes a difference

The UELAC Board of Directors and the UELAC Volunteer Recognition Committee

Wish to Congratulate and
Thank ALL UELAC Volunteers
for their hard work, commitment,
and continued support to
the life of the United Empire
Loyalists' Association of Canada.



BY STEPHEN DAVIDSON

A NOVA SCOTIA STORY

LOYALIST HISTORY AND A 1930'S ROAD TRIP THROUGH NOVA SCOTIA

After driving around Nova Scotia with her camera and notebook, Clara Dennis wrote down her impressions of her home province in the 1934 book, *Down in Nova Scotia: My Own, My Native Land*. As she photographed the province's scenery, Dennis also interviewed the people that she met on her travels, preserving bits of history that might otherwise have been lost to posterity.

Dennis was ahead of her time for recognizing and appreciating the Black history of Nova Scotia. In addition to telling her readers about African enslavement within the province and the exodus of free Blacks to Sierra Leone, she also took time on her road trip to speak to the descendant of a Black Loyalist. In so



➤ Replica of Black Loyalist survival pit from 1783..

doing, she recorded stories that up to that time had only been preserved in the oral history of Nova Scotia's Black community.

Although she did not name the Black Loyalist descendant in her book, the Black Loyalist Heritage Society (BLHS) would later identify him as John Farmer. Thanks to the stories that were passed down through the Farmer family, posterity has an amazing glimpse into the experiences of Canada's earliest free Black settlers.

Calling his Loyalist ancestor "Grandfather," John Farmer shared the following stories with Clara Dennis. "Slaves were used hard. If anything went wrong, they were tied up and lashed, then their backs

were bathed in pickle. Grandfather had it done to him in slavery. He and grandmother, who were named Jupiter and Venus by their owners, were brought to Nova Scotia as slaves. Grandfather always liked Nova Scotia better than the South; he said there was better doin's here. And it was Nova Scotia that gave Grandfather his freedom.

After he became free, Grandfather built a house for his family – two girls and four boys he had. Nova Scotia was a wood country, and his house was of logs with moss stuffed between the logs. After Grandfather got earnin' he built a frame house. He owned two houses in his lifetime."

As a result of the work of Debra Hill, genealogist, and historian with





the BLHS, documentary evidence has been found to reveal more of the story of John Farmer's ancestors. They left New York City for Nova

Scotia's Port Mouton on board the Diannah on November 30, 1783. The 35-year-old Jupiter travelled with his wife Phillis (also known as Venus). He had escaped his master in New Brunswick, New Jersey in 1777; Mrs. Farmer had escaped her New Jersey enslaver in 1776.

Both Black Loyalists worked in the British army's Wagon Master General Department, and both had their emancipation recognized with General Birch certificates. They were free when they came to Nova Scotia. Jupiter and his wife relocated to Birchtown following the fire that destroyed Port Mouton in the summer of 1784.

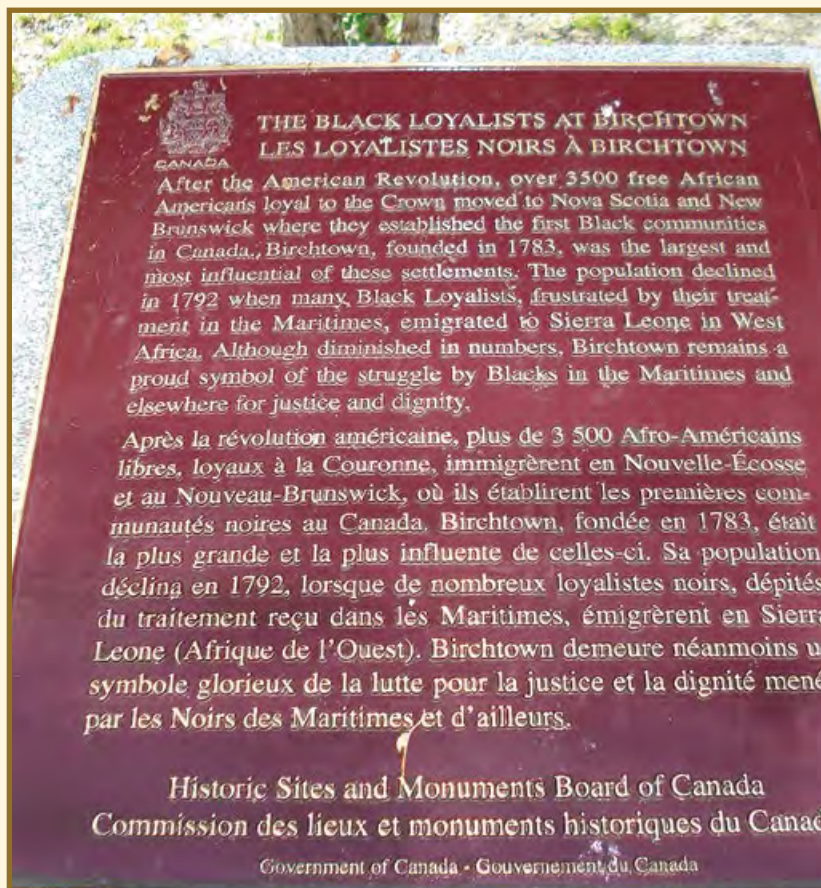
The contributions of Loyalist women have, until more recently, been overshadowed by the attention given to their husbands, fathers, and sons. It is remarkable that the Farmer family's oral tradition included stories of their Black Loyalist female ancestor. Clara Dennis recorded the following from her conversation with John Farmer:

He described Jupiter's wife as a "smart woman." In addition to

carrying for her family, she went out to work "by the day." She was also a knitter. She bought wool, carded, and spun it and made countless socks for her own people and to sell. "She also helped Grandfather work the ground here among these

rocks, Ah've heard father tell. They must have had the strength of oxen to move those rocks. They didn't have cattle to haul the rocks out. They made hand-barrels and hand-barrelled them out. You can see the symptoms {sic} of the walls yet along there."

The Farmer family lore also held the memories of the early days of the Black Loyalists' experiences in Birchtown and nearby Shelburne. "A lot o' Black people came with the whites to Shelburne. Some o' the Blacks were escaped slaves, some disbanded soldiers. Ah've heard father say there was an old Col. Black {Blucke} – a man o' colour—among them. The government gave them land and they planted themselves heah in the woods. You can see the remains of their habitations back heah yet.





Many o' the Blacks are buried around heah, but not even a stone marks where they lie." "Father often told about them – what a hard time they had livin.' They had nothin.' They had to get their bites wherever they could. They had to tear up the ground and plant what they could. After they cleared the land and riz what they could, they would walk to Shelburne to work at buildin,' blacksmithin,' lumberin' – anything they could git. For pay they were given pork or meat or anything by them they hired with."

"It was this way, it was: if you worked, you got whatever them that hired you thought was right and not very much o' that. The winters were awful cold heah, but there was plenty o' wood and they built fireplaces for themselves out o' the rocks and stones. Ah've heard father tell when the Black people first saw the snow, they thought it was sugar."

Records at the BLHS note that Jupiter Farmer died in April 1835 in his 87 th year – a remarkable age given the hardships he had to endure throughout his lifetime.

After her conversation with John Farmer, Clara Dennis explored the woods where he had indicated that

the Black Loyalists had their first homes. There she met the current owner of the land, a man she did not identify. All she discovered were holes in the ground. Could these truly have been used as Black Loyalist shelters?

"That's all they ever were," said the owner. "I've heard grandfather tell about them. The government gave the Negroes land here, but they had no houses, not even log cabins. They just dug a hole in the ground and put a little peaked roof over it. They chose a hill for their purpose because the ground was drier. The peak roof would shed the water when it rained.

There was a small trapdoor in one

a fact of Nova Scotia's history that was unknown outside of the Black community until 1998. Sixty-five years after Dennis' visit to Birchtown, archaeologist Laird Niven excavated a habitat such as Farmer described. It was a depression measuring five feet by five feet and was about 20 inches deep.

Although this "pit house" was built as a temporary measure, the evidence Niven discovered suggested that they were used for more than one year. Evidence from the 1998 archaeological dig verified what had only been retained in the oral history of Black Loyalist descendants dating back to 1783.

Clara Dennis' conversation



side of the roof and the Negroes entered the house by dropping right down through. And that was the Black man's home – a hole in the ground with a roof over the hole. The Negroes managed to exist the first year or so for the government gave them supplies, but it was a terrible deprivation when these supplies stopped."

The existence "pit houses" was

with John Farmer underscores the importance of drawing upon oral traditions --as well as documentary evidence and archaeological discoveries-- when constructing an accurate history of the Loyalist era. All three sources together reveal a much richer story than is possible by relying on just one alone.



BY BONNIE HUSKINS

Dr. Bonnie Huskins is an Assistant Professor at the University of New Brunswick at Saint John, and an Adjunct Professor and Honorary Research Associate at the University of New Brunswick at Fredericton. She teaches courses in the American Revolution and Loyalist history; Canadian history; immigration history; gender and women's history; British Atlantic World; and pirates and piracy in world history. Her research interests include community formation amongst Loyalist newcomers to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia; Loyalist women; Loyalist freemasonry; 18th-century sociability; biography; and the use of diaries as historical sources. Recent publications include (with Michael Boudreau) *Just the Usual Work: the Social Worlds of Ida Martin, Working-Class Diarist* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2021); "From a Cosmopolitan Fraternity to an Imperialist Institution: Loyalist Freemasonry in Canada in the 1780s-1790s," in *Atlantic Studies*, Vol. 16, issue 3 (2019); and "'New Hope' in Shelburne: loyalist dreams in the journal of British engineer William Booth, 1780s-90s," in Rebecca Brannon & Joseph Moore eds, *Loyalty & Revolution: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Calhoun* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2019). Dr Huskins has just submitted a book prospectus to Boydell Press entitled "Engineering, Emotion, and Empire: The Professional and Social Worlds of British Military Engineer William Booth, 1748-1826."

THE HARDSHIPS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF LOYALIST WOMEN IN NEW BRUNSWICK

When you think of a "Loyalist," what image comes to mind? Nineteenth-century commentators often gendered Loyalists as male. As the Reverend T. Watson Smith noted in 1888: "...we have come to use the term *Loyalist* as a masculine appellation only."¹ Even in present-day Saint John, New Brunswick, the public is greeted at Reversing Falls by a dapper fellow known colloquially as '*Loyalist man*.' (See figure). The academic and popular literature on women in the American Revolution has certainly grown, but the research on Loyalist women remains thin. To rectify this gap, I am collecting stories of Loyalist women who resettled in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. While the project will mainly focus on untold stories, it is important to begin with female Loyalists who are better documented. Hannah Ingraham and Polly Dibblee are two of the most well-known Loyalist women in New Brunswick history. We know about Polly from family correspondence and government and personal sources generated by her story of hardship and loss.² Hannah, as an elderly woman, dictated her childhood memories to a neighbour.³ Her reminiscences are thus mediated by the mists of memory, as well as multiple transcribers and editors. Regardless, since women rarely "*tell their own stories in their own words*,"⁴ these sources are thus very valuable.

Hannah and Polly may be known to some, but we gain insight by applying new lenses to their stories, such as

the intersection of gender and war. Lauren Duval has commented that "men and women experience warfare as gendered subjects. Putting gender at the center of our study of war can help us



understand new perspectives and gain a fuller understanding of what it was like for men and women to endure the revolution as well as its consequences.⁵ Another lens we should consider is that of violence. Holger Hock argues that the American Revolution was awash in violence, much of it gendered, and emotional as well as physical.⁶ Moreover, the hardships faced by these women took many forms in wartime and in exile, including frequent



➤ The public is greeted at Reversing Falls by a dapper fellow known colloquially as 'Loyalist man.'

illnesses, deaths of family members, and destitution. It is important not to undervalue these hardships, but we must move beyond the stereotype of the *"stoic, long-suffering, self-sacrificial, [Loyalist] female."* Not only did women weep,⁸ but they also contributed to the process of community formation by ensuring the survival of their families and helping to construct pioneer settlements. We will use these lenses to examine the lives of Hannah Ingraham and Polly Dibblee in two sections: Lived Experience during the American Revolution; and The Challenges of Resettlement.

Loyalist women performed exceptional deeds during the war such as carrying intelligence, helping refugees escape, operating safehouses and acting as nurses and camp followers. A few families even accompanied provincial regiments on campaign, witnessing the cries of the wounded and the death and capture of their loved ones.⁹ That is not the case with the women profiled here. To understand their roles, we must re-centre the theatre of war from the front lines to the family and the household.

We might be tempted to think that women lived as *"passive observers"* in their 'homespaces,' well apart from the revolutionary activity.¹⁰ However, recent scholarship on the revolution posits that households were significant to the revolution.

The war disrupted households. Many women were often alone as the men frequently left due to the danger they faced as Loyalists or to take part in combat. This meant that women faced additional duties, whether it be taking responsibility for the farm or keeping a business running. By focusing on the household, we also see how revolutionary violence seeped into everyday life. Families experienced *"new levels of violence"* aimed at their person and property. Patriot forces often surveilled and targeted female-led households, robbing, plundering, and confiscating property.¹¹ Often women had to flee with children in tow to seek refuge behind British lines or to join their husbands. Being subjected to these gendered forms of violence, Janice Potter-MacKinnon argues that Loyalist women's experiences "posed

challenges far greater than those facing most Patriot women." During and after the revolution, female Patriots could *"speak with pride"* of their accomplishments in helping to win the war, unlike Loyalist women, many of whom were forced into exile.¹²

The surveillance of women and their households suggests that Patriots viewed the women who stayed behind as a threat to American security. By the late 1770s and early 1780s, many states began to pass acts that not only banished male Loyalists but their wives. For example, the Vermont Council explained that Loyalist women were *"dangerous persons to society and instruments of Great Mischief to this and the United States of America."* It is revealing that Vermont referred to women as 'persons.' Indeed, soon statutes defining treason began referring to treasonous *"persons"* (which encompassed women) or to *"he or she."*¹³ So, despite the legal tradition of *couverture*, which dictated that women's legal rights and identity were largely subsumed by her husband, female Loyalists were conceptualized as dangerous political actors and as persons, at least in terms of penalties.

LIVED EXPERIENCE DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Hannah Ingraham was only three years old in 1776, so she gives voice to the thousands of female children who also experienced the upheaval of the revolution. Her Loyalist parents Benjamin and Jerusha Barrit Ingraham lived on a farm in Concord New York when the American Revolution broke out. Hannah immediately faced separation from her father, who fled to the surrounding forest when local Patriots began a roundup of suspected traitors. There he joined a band of Loyalist partisans. On 5 October 1776, Hannah witnessed the arrest of



➤ Hannah lived in this room with her brother Ira and his family on Bear Island. The house still stands, restored to its 1840s condition at King's Landing historical site.

her father when he came home for a visit. Under threat of imprisonment, he escaped five days later and returned to the partisans. When the onset of winter made hiding in wooded areas difficult, the partisans made their way to British-held territory and there Benjamin enlisted in the Kings American Regiment. Hannah recalls: *"Mother was four years without hearing of or from my father, whether he was alive or dead; anyone would be hanged right up if they were caught bringing letters. Oh, they were terrible times!"* While Benjamin was away, the Ingrahams' 93-acre property was confiscated. The seizure of property functioned as a deterrent to other Loyalist families and provided state governments with hard currency to finance the war. Hannah notes: *"We had a comfortable farm, plenty of cows and sheep, but [the Patriots] took it all away and sold the things, ploughs and all, and my mother*

was forced to pay rent for her own farm. What father had sown they took away, but what mother raised after she paid rent they let her keep." The King's District Committee of Safety also arrested Hannah's 63-year-old grandfather Benjam and sent him to 'Fleet Prison' aboard ships anchored in the Hudson River, where, like the other Loyalist prisoners, he would have been subjected to severe treatment. Hannah explains: *"They took my grandfather prisoner and sent him on board a prison ship. Mother rode fifty miles on horseback in one day when she heard it to go to see him and take some money to buy some comforts. He had a paralytic stroke when he was there, and he never recovered, poor grandfather."* On 4 October 1777, Benjam pledged allegiance to the United States and was released. In the meantime, Jerusha and children were constantly humiliated and threatened by American soldiers, who *"used to fire at a tree, and wish it was Ben Ingraham."*

After spending seven years in the Kings American Regiment, Benjamin made his way home when the regiment disbanded in 1783 and told the family that they were to go to Nova Scotia. As they prepared, the household was suddenly surrounded by Patriots, and Benjamin was again taken prisoner. Hannah's uncle tried to intercede, *"But no [the intercession was unsuccessful]... and I cried and cried and I cried enough to kill myself that night"* When morning came Benjamin was released and they packed up five wagon loads and travelled to the Hudson River where they boarded the transport, and along with other disbanded soldiers of provincial regiments were evacuated from New York as part of the Fall Fleet that reached Saint John on 4 October 1783. As Hannah noted in her memoir: *"I was just eleven years old when we left our farm to come here."*

Polly Dibblee's family was also subjected to emotional and physical hardship, humiliation, property confiscation, and multiple forced displacements. Polly was born to Martha Samuel Jarvis of Stamford Connecticut. In 1763, at sixteen years old, Polly married Fyler Dibblee, a Yale University graduate and attorney. Fyler, along with Polly's father and her two brothers, declared themselves Loyalists. On 26 September 1775, the newspapers carried what was probably an enforced confession and apology from Fyler. After the Continental Congress declared independence, Polly's father and two brothers fled to Long Island. In October, after an act was passed declaring that anyone who betrayed the state or the United States was subject to the death penalty, Fyler joined his in-laws, leaving Polly and the children behind. By the spring, Polly and the family had joined Fyler, but shortly after arriving their possessions were stolen, even the children's hats. Even the children were being targeted. The Dibblees fled to New York City protected under a flag of truce. Eventually they returned to Long Island, settling at Oyster Bay. But still they were not safe. On 26 April 1778, a galley and four whale boats entered the bay and raided the Dibblee's home and dragged Fyler back to Connecticut where he was imprisoned for six months.

The war had significant impacts on Polly's family of origin. Polly's brother Samuel was imprisoned in New York and her father died of pneumonia in a New York jail. Left alone, Polly's mother and sisters experienced the confiscation of their property. In their words, they were *"of Common Necessary's, turned....from the Possession of Houses farms Stock &c. and Left...to Experience every degree of Indigence and Distress, amid the Insults of their Lawless Banditties."* Indeed, Polly's aunt, Amelia, passed away at the age

of 24, due to an “*apoplectic fit*.” Fyler’s sister Mary was, in the words of her father Ebenezer, driven “*wholly Insane*” by fright. There are other accounts of Loyalists “losing their senses” and having to be monitored by family and neighbours or of “*insane Loyalists*” being sent to hospital.¹⁴

Fyler was eventually released from prison in a prisoner exchange and returned to Long Island. The family migrated to West Hills, where they were once again plundered, despite Polly being visibly pregnant with their sixth child. After the birth, the family were again displaced to South Hempstead.

THE CHALLENGES OF RESETTLEMENT

After a long voyage, including “*a bad storm in the Bay of Fundy*,” the Ingraham family arrived in Saint John, which was essentially a refugee camp. Hannah records “*It was a sad sick time... We had to live in tents; the government gave them to us and rations too.*” Because they had arrived with the fall fleet “*It was just at the first snow then and the melting snow and rain would soak up into our beds as we lay. Mother got so chilled and developed rheumatism and was never well afterwards.*”

From Saint John, the Ingrahams travelled up the Wolastoq (St. John) River in a schooner and were nine days before finally arriving at Pointe Sainte Anne or what would become Fredericton. They landed at Salamanca Point, located on the present-day Salamanca River trail. A memoir penned by a woman in the same party, Mary Fisher,¹⁵ adds the following details:

How we lived through that awful winter I hardly know. There were mothers, who had been reared in a pleasant country enjoying all the comforts of life, with helpless children in their arms. They clasped their infants to their bosoms and tried by the warmth of their own bodies to protect

them from the bitter cold...

Many women and children, and some of the men, died from cold and exposure. Graves were dug with axes and shovels near the spot where our party had landed and there in stormy winter weather our loved ones were buried. We had no minister, so we had to bury them without any religious service, besides our own prayers.

The Ingraham family lived in a tent until Benjamin got their house ready. One morning, Hannah records:

“when we awoke, we found the snow lying deep on the ground all round us, and then father came wading through and told us the house was ready...Father carried a chest, and we all took something and followed him up the hill through the trees... It was not long before we heard him pounding, and oh, what joy. There was no floor laid, no chimney, no door, but we had a roof at last. A good fire was blazing on the hearth, and mother had a big loaf of bread with us, and she

romanticization in this account, but the hardships faced by the family made them appreciate the small blessings in life.

Hannah records many other examples of community building. She remembered that when they arrived in Fredericton there was no church (they ended up worshipping in the Kings Provisioning Warehouse). In Hannah’s memoir we also read about the finishing of their log cabin, her father buying the first cow in the settlement, the arrival of more neighbours including gentry and disbanded soldiers, and the development of an informal economy as the Ingrahams sold butter and cream and Benjamin sold his labour. During the first winter, Hannah attended school on snowshoes and the next winter hauled her brother to school on a hand sled because he had chopped his toe off while cutting wood.

Hannah lived with her parents until her father died in 1810. She then



> Loyalist Provincials burial ground.

boiled a kettle of water and put a good piece of butter in a pewter bowl, and we toasted the bread and mother said ‘*Thank God we are no longer in dread of having shots fired through our house. This is the sweetest meal I have tasted for many a day.*’

There may be an element of

moved in with her brother Ira and his family to Bear Island, on the outskirts of Fredericton. Ira’s house still stands, restored to its 1840s condition at King’s Landing historical site. Here Hannah lived in a small room off the kitchen. Hannah died when she was 97 years old in 1869. She lived long

nough to see the age of photography (see image).

The Dibblees sailed from New York aboard the vessel *Union* in April 1783 and dropped anchor in Saint John in May. The family was optimistic as Fyler's skills as a lawyer were in demand. He became a magistrate and was named as a peripheral agent of the *"Agents and Directors"* which distributed town lots. However, the first winter was difficult for the Dibblees as it was for many Loyalists. Fyler had gone into debt, having borrowed money from neighbours and from Polly's younger brother, Munson Jarvis.

Although the family enjoyed the wedding of their eldest son in the spring, Fyler fell into a depression probably due to several factors: his wartime experiences; debt (perhaps the shame of it and maybe he feared debtors' prison after his wartime imprisonment experience); also, the *"Agents and Directors"* group was under scrutiny for misconduct. The dominant form of middling masculinity in this period dictated that men be financially solvent and support their families, so this pressure undoubtedly also contributed to his state of mind. There is evidence of other Loyalist men in Quebec who suffered *"severe psychological strain"* due to worry about their families.¹⁶

Fyler committed suicide on 6 May 1784, leaving behind his wife and six children. According to a petition for financial assistance filed for Polly by her brother: *"whilst the Family were at Tea, Mr. Dibblee walked back and forth in the Room, seemingly much composed; but unobserved he took a Razor from the Closet, threw himself on the bed, drew the Curtains, and cut his own Throat."* Polly's hardships were not over. A legal issue with Fyler's estate was over-shadowed by a fire that swept through Saint John and burned down the Dibblees' house in 1785. Later

that year, Polly received a land grant in Kingston. Two of her adult children received lots near their mother, so Polly and her younger children built a log cabin there. To make ends meet, she sold to her brother one half of her deceased husband's lot. She also asked her brother William for financial assistance. Even though he was not financially secure himself, William helped Polly because *"she has suffered beyond the ability of human nature to bear. How she has lived is a mystery."* He was concerned that Polly and the children were living on *"Potatoes alone."* Polly responded in November 1787:

I assure you, my Dear Billy, that many have been the days since my arrival in this inhospitable country, that I should have thought myself & family truly happy could we have 'had potatoes alone.' My children cried 'Mama, why don't you help me and give me bread?' O gracious God, that I should live to see such times under the protection of a British Government for whose sake we have done and suffered everything but that of dying.

Brother Samuel, after visiting Polly's log cabin in 1788, described it as a *"miserable habitation....log Hutt the ground was its Floor, a fire in the centre of the room surrounded by the Family instead of a chimney, it exhibited a scene of absolute Poverty & Distress."* Perhaps because it lacked a chimney, the cabin eventually burned to the ground in a fire.

Polly resided with son Walter at Manguerville but then sailed up the Wolostog River to live in the new settlement of Woodstock with son William. Polly's hardships were not quite over: her 29-year-old son, Ralph, passed away in 1799 and her eldest, Walter, died in 1817. Brother Munson died eight years later. Polly passed away in May 1826 at the age of 79 in Woodstock.



CONCLUSION:

The lives of Hannah Ingraham and Polly Dibblee illustrate what may be gained by examining the intersection between war and gender. Even though Hannah and Polly were not on the front lines during the revolution, their households were theatres of war in their own right. The American Revolution severely disrupted households, as family members could be separated for years at a time with no news of whether their loved ones were alive or dead. Female householders, older relatives and children were also subjected to harassment and confiscation of property. And the challenges continued in exile, especially for Polly who lost her husband to suicide, her home and cabin to fire, and suffered from severe destitution. Hannah's memory of incessant crying after her father's arrest, Fyler's suicide, and Polly's acknowledgement that her family had *"suffered everything but that of dying,"* signifies the emotional toll that the revolution and exile had on these families. Nonetheless, they were not merely victims. Ultimately their strength and tenacity contributed to the formation of community in New Brunswick, by laying down roots and helping to establish settlements like Fredericton and Woodstock, and by ensuring the survival of their families in a time of great upheaval.

PLEASE SEE [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/LOYALIST-WOMEN-NB-NOTES](https://tinyurl.com/loyalist-women-nb-notes) FOR THE ENDNOTES FOR THIS STORY.

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What to include in your submission?

- Your full name (and pseudonym if applicable)
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RESEARCH AND TEACHING: THE LOYALIST COLLECTION AT UNB LIBRARIES

WRITTEN BY:

MICROFORMS COLLECTION STAFF, UNB ARCHIVES & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS (lib.unb.ca/microforms)
DR. BONNIE HUSKINS, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK AT SAINT JOHN

In the quiet corners of the Harriet Irving Library at the University of New Brunswick, many family mysteries have been solved, research projects have started and finished, and loyalist lives rediscovered. *The Loyalist Collection* at UNB Libraries is the largest gathering in North America of primary sources centered on loyalists. The collection consists of British and Colonial North American sources (including the British West Indies) predominantly covering the date range of 1750 to 1850. The focus of the collection is the years leading up to the American Revolution; the years of the war; and the post-Revolution period, particularly concentrating on the resettlement of loyalist refugees, mirroring the experiences of loyalists during their lifetimes.

The Loyalist Collection acts as a central hub for loyalist research, maintaining copies and links to all major sources and indexes pertinent for the study of loyalists, as well as providing direction to other locations where useful resources may be found. Most sources held within the collection are microformat, holding over 3,400 microfilm reels and 700 microfiches, but also includes limited digital format which are accessible on-site. Where material within the collection has been digitized by



➤ Microfilm from *The Loyalist Collection* and microform scanner. (Image courtesy of UNB Libraries).

another institution, links are provided to that resource within *The Loyalist Collection* catalogue record.

COLLECTION HISTORY AND CONTENT

Librarian Kathryn Hilder was the original creator of *The Loyalist Collection* and oversaw the collection from 1978 until her retirement in 1998. At this time, the collection

came under the capable care of Christine Jack as Manager of Microforms until 2022. *The Loyalist Collection* had its origin in the late 1960s with the formation of the Programme for Loyalist Studies and Publications. In 1982, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) awarded the UNB Libraries a grant to expand the microfilm collection of loyalist materials

and to enhance UNB Libraries' other resources which support loyalist research. The awarding of this grant coincided with the New Brunswick Bicentennial in 1984 and the founding of the University of New Brunswick in 1785, both events being a direct result of loyalist settlement. With additional support of funding from the United Empire Loyalists' Association in 2004, and contributions from private citizens, the collection continues to grow.

The Loyalist Collection is divided into five categories: Church, Family, Military, Public—subdivided into Great Britain, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, United State, and Jamaica—and Special Collections. Key primary documents for loyalist studies include loyalist claims to the British Crown, land petitions and land grants, government correspondence, military muster rolls, settlement lists, wills and probate records, court records, church records, letters, account books, memoirs, diaries, journals, and maps.

Other valuable resources available via *The Loyalist Collection* website include the *Atlantic Loyalist Connections* collaborative blog and *New Brunswick Loyalist Journeys*, a digital project which recreates the stories of loyalists utilizing Geographic Information Systems technology and the resources found within *The Loyalist Collection*. The Research Help page features handouts to help with research and paleography, as well as subject guides for researching Health and Medicine, Religion, Piracy and Privateering, Black History, and the British West Indies within *The Loyalist Collection*. Also found on the collection website is the *Marianne Grey Otty Database* in



➤ Material from *The Loyalist Collection*. (Image courtesy of UNB Libraries).

which transcribed, Anglican Church records from the Gagetown, New Brunswick area from 1786-1841 make accessible lists of marriages, baptisms, and deaths.

TEACHING WITH THE LOYALIST COLLECTION

Various undergraduate and graduate courses at the University of New Brunswick have used *The Loyalist Collection* to provide students with experience locating, using, and analyzing a wide range of primary sources in loyalist history. "History 3402: American Revolution" and "History 3403: Loyalists" have employed scaffolded assignments to build the students' skill set and knowledge about the loyalists. This type of multi-layered approach is only possible with the collaboration of Microforms Collection staff, who assist the professor and students at each step of the process. The scaffolded assignment usually begins with background reading to help students choose a general research

topic. Then Microforms staff provide them with an orientation to *The Loyalist Collection*, including how to use the Finding Aids and thus choose their primary sources. From there, students are shown how to use microfilm and microfiche readers and scanners; how to scan and copy their materials; how to transcribe 18th-century cursive writing; and how to read and interpret primary sources critically and creatively. These sources could range from diaries to muster rolls and land grants. Students then compose a proposal, indicating how they plan to integrate their primary sources into their final research papers.

These courses have also used the *New Brunswick Loyalist Journeys* story map as a learning resource. Students have found that the story map provides them with a renewed appreciation for the geographical mobility of the loyalists, as well as the value of biography as an historical approach. They have also been provided with the opportunity to

write pieces for the *Atlantic Loyalist Connections* collaborative blog, using sources from *The Loyalist Collection*. Writing a blog is a different skill than writing a traditional research paper. Some students have even submitted their blogs to *Atlantic Loyalist Connections*, which gives them a sense of what is involved in digital publishing.

Allowing students to delve into

assert that the skills one acquires in the Humanities, such as working with *The Loyalist Collection*, are “equally as important, and in many ways, have greater transferability and longevity.” (<https://cha-shc.ca/teachers-learning-bl/using-the-loyalist-collection-in-the-classroom-integrating-professional-skills-development-in-history-courses/>). Moreover, by integrating primary

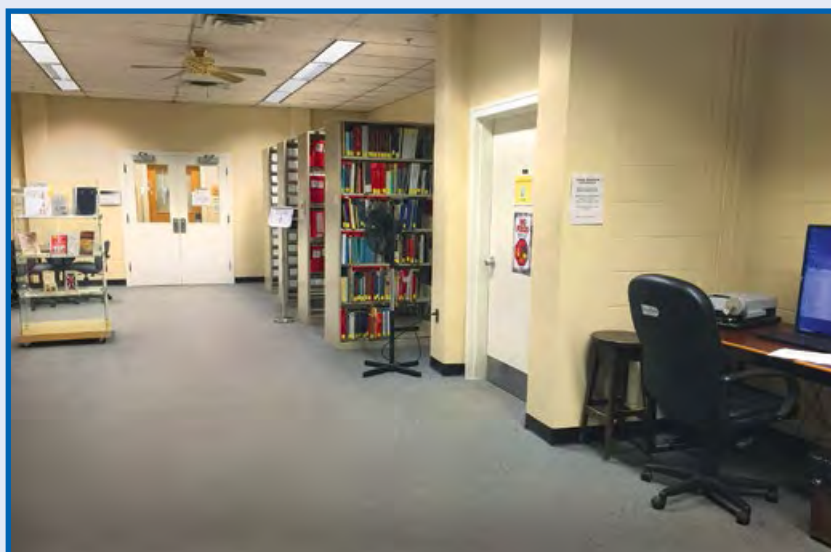
Category or Creator of a record and get catalogue searching advice from the tip page.

The Loyalist Collection is open to any researchers for self-service on the fifth floor of the Harriet Irving Library whenever the building is open. Please note that **research appointments are required** to receive staff assistance when visiting the collection. Microfilm readers and scanners are located within the collection space, and digital scanning of images is free if you bring your own memory stick. Many useful reference books and indexes are available in hard copy for in-library use as part of the collection.

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For assistance in using *The Loyalist Collection*, please contact the Microforms Collection staff at UNB Archives & Special Collection through email mic@unb.ca. In the case that researchers are unable to travel to Fredericton, New Brunswick, inter-library loans of microfilm for short terms are available. Remote assistance such as limited searching (up to one hour) and digital copying (up to ten pages) by staff may be available.

It is always good practice to make appointments at archives, libraries, museums, and other repositories when doing research, as this allows



➤ The Loyalist Collection space at UNB Libraries, Harriet Irving Library, Fredericton, New Brunswick. (Image courtesy of UNB Libraries).

The Loyalist Collection gives them a better sense of what professional historians do and helps them to develop the skills that define history as a discipline: research, critical thinking, and effective written and oral communication. In a blog entitled “Using the Loyalist Collection in the Classroom,” Professors Bonnie Huskins and Wendy Churchill argue that “in the rapidly changing employment environment,” students benefit from “knowing how to apply the skills they acquire in classrooms to their everyday lives and careers.” While STEM disciplines receive most of the attention in providing applied work experience, Huskins and Churchill

and secondary sources, students acquire more appreciation for and interest in the loyalist era.

COLLECTION ACCESS, COPYRIGHT, AND RESEARCH ADVICE

Although much of the collection is unindexed, the catalogue contains many valuable finding aids which have been created at UNB Libraries and are freely available online at loyalist.lib.unb.ca.

Examples of finding aids indexes, lists of documents, shelf lists of reels, summaries of contents, and sample transcriptions of documents. You may browse the collection by

staff time to locate documents and do background research to find the most useful sources, creating a better experience for everyone. Not all institutions have large staffing or have all documents in immediately accessible locations, which should be kept in mind by researchers. Be as precise as possible when sending research queries. For example, specify the catalogue record with citations in which you are interested or the focused research question you are trying to answer.

The Loyalist Collection has facilitated all levels of research on a wide variety of topics: Black Loyalists, Hessians, colonial medicine, complex family histories, group and individual biographies, legal history, military history, privateering, archaeology, slavery, religion, literature, imperialism, and colonialism to name a few, and the collection remains a deep well of sources just waiting to be drawn upon.



➤ Page from *New Brunswick Loyalist Journeys*, a project which recreates the stories of loyalists of the American Revolution utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology and the resources found within *The Loyalist Collection*. (Image courtesy of UNB Libraries).



➤ Masthead of *Atlantic Loyalist Connections*, a collective blog that shares research experiences involving *The Loyalist Collection* and relations within the British Colonial Atlantic World. (Image courtesy of UNB Libraries)

LIST OF RECOMMENDED BOOKS ON MARITIME LOYALISTS – LEAH GRANDY

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BY ANDREW MACLEAN

Andrew MacLean is the writer of Backyard History, a weekly newspaper column running in a dozen Maritimes newspapers. He also hosts the Backyard History Podcast and has recently announced the Backyard History TV Show in conjunction with Cultivation Pictures and Bell Fibe, coming in Autumn 2024. His first book Backyard History: Forgotten Stories from Atlantic Canada will be released by Friesen Press in Autumn of 2023.

Benjamin Franklin is a major figure in the American cultural mythology of the birth of the United States, and his face is found today on the American \$100 bill. His will includes some mysterious lines about “worthless” lands he owned in Nova Scotia.

Benjamin Franklin’s last will and testament includes the intriguing lines: “To my son, William Franklin, late Governor of the Jerseys, I give and devise all the lands I hold or have a right to in the Province of Nova Scotia ... The part he acted against me in the late war, which is of public notoriety, will account for my leaving him no more of an estate he endeavoured to deprive me of.”

That begs the question: why did Ben Franklin, that preeminent figure in the American Revolution, own land in Nova Scotia in the first place?

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN’S “WORTHLESS” NOVA SCOTIA LAND BY...



➤ The final portrait of Benjamin Franklin, painted by Joseph Siffred Duplessis, which appeared in ‘The True Benjamin Franklin’ by Sydney George Fisher published in 1898 (public domain).

The idea that there were thirteen –and only thirteen– American colonies that rose in a revolution to overthrow British rule beginning in 1776 is seen as rather sacred today.

However, there was a 14th colony that was teetering indecisively on whether or not to join the Revolution.

And that 14th colony was Nova Scotia.

Technically that 14th colony was also New Brunswick, which back then was still a part of Nova Scotia, and would only become separate in 1785.

While there were other colonies nearby –certainly more than 14– only Nova Scotia seriously considered joining the Americans.

Tiny Saint John Island (PEI), French-speaking Quebec, and isolated Newfoundland didn’t share the close ties with America, and never came close to joining the American Revolution.

Nova Scotia, on the other hand, had close ties with what is now the United States. According to *Smithsonian Magazine*: “An estimated three-quarters of Nova Scotia’s population of 20,000 at the time of the Revolution were New Englanders.”

Many New Englanders had moved there after the Expulsion of the Acadians, when the British offered extremely cheap lands to New Englanders in an effort to repopulate the land.

There was something of a frenzy of land buying in the mid-1760s in particular, when large numbers of what we would call Americans moved to Nova Scotia.

One of these Americans who owned land in Nova Scotia was none other than Benjamin Franklin, who was a Founding Father of the United States, a diplomat, an inventor, a scientist, a prolific writer, a civic leader, an advocate for education, a printer, and an entrepreneur.

He was other things too, really quite an impressive fellow, and all the more so because he had arrived in what is now the United States at age 17 with essentially nothing. By the time of the Revolution was a self-made millionaire.

His Nova Scotia lands, however, remained undeveloped.

The land he owned in Nova Scotia was located somewhere around East Hants, roughly near where Enfield is today.

It was a rather massive tract of land, covering some 20,000 acres. He had applied for the land grant in 1765 from the Privy Council in Nova Scotia.

Unlike many of the people buying land, he wasn't unfamiliar with Nova Scotia. He'd actually organised Halifax's first ever regular mail service to England a decade earlier.

It's not entirely clear what his plans were to do with his Nova Scotian land.

Like many Americans, he seemed to have been caught up in a brief 1760s frenzy of land purchasing in Nova Scotia.

A man of many interests, he seems to have lost interest in his project as soon as he got the land.

Honestly though, it's difficult to hold this against him. He sent in his application to get the land in 1765. It took two years for the Privy Council in Nova Scotia to acknowledge they had even received his letter.

By the time he had received a reply in 1767, he had moved on to other interests, and was probably even rather surprised to receive word that he was now the owner of 20,000 acres of land in Nova Scotia.

He wasn't necessarily alone in that. In fact, many of the New Englanders who had bought land in Nova Scotia during the land buying frenzy of 1765 seemed bewildered by what to do with it.

The entire plan had not been all that well thought out in the first place.



Though the Revolution was still years away, and the United States were still colonies themselves, the future-Americans had some sort of vague imperial ambitions of starting their own colony in Nova Scotia.

The whole plan cooled quickly when it was realised that starting colonies was expensive.

Benjamin Franklin's parcel of land was on the opposite side of the Shubenacadie River from where

“it would not be an exaggeration to say that he was annoyed with Nova Scotia, calling it “a wasteful exercise in nepotism”

Enfield is today. Rather than moving to Nova Scotia himself, he hired someone named Mr. Hall to take charge of the grant, and to operate a hotel on his land called Wayside Inn.

Ben Franklin was not particularly enthused by Nova Scotia and didn't ever actually move there. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to say that he was annoyed with Nova Scotia, calling it “a wasteful exercise in nepotism,” and saying that it was “mere jobbs [sic] for the benefit of ministerial favourites.”

Intriguingly, however, Franklin wasn't necessarily singling out Nova Scotia, but in fact wrote the exact same thing about Georgia. He declared that Georgia was also too British, and

that it, like Nova Scotia, would never become an American state.

Georgia is, of course, an American state today, which illustrates the fluid nature of loyalties at the time.

American historians have been debating for the last 200 years why Georgia joined their revolution, but Nova Scotia never did. Where there are plenty of answers available, the most obvious -and likely the most upsetting for proud Canadians- is that Nova Scotia probably would have joined the rebellion if only the Americans had tried a little harder to entice them.

Or, at the very least, if they'd been a bit more competent in their efforts to attract the Nova Scotians to their cause.

Shortly before the outbreak of the American Revolution, General George Washington did in fact dispatch two spies to Nova Scotia to assess how likely they were to join him. However, they got lost.

Perhaps illustrating just how mysterious the Americans found Nova Scotia to be, the two spies landed in what was then called Sudbury County Nova Scotia. Today we call that part New Brunswick, which at the time was very sparsely populated. Instead of finding themselves in metropolitan Halifax, the spies found themselves lost in the foggy Bay of Fundy, and soon gave up and went home.

Later, a delegation of Nova Scotians who supported joining the revolution visited General Washington personally to beg him to send forces to support a pro-American uprising they'd planned. While Washington

did briefly meet the delegation, he was preoccupied by a new British fleet in Boston.

Washington refused to send troops to Nova Scotia, claiming that would make them look like aggressors when they were fighting for independence. He wrote: "I apprehend such an enterprise to be inconsistent with the principles on which the Colonies have proceeded."

This wasn't exactly accurate. The Americans had already invaded Quebec, and still partly occupied it even as Washington penned that note. His problem seems to be that the Quebecers had defeated the Americans, and he couldn't risk another defeat in Nova Scotia just as there was a new British fleet arriving in Boston.

The Nova Scotian delegation returned home without promises of American military support. Without American military support, their subsequent uprising in Nova Scotia/New Brunswick, called Eddy's Rebellion, met with swift defeat.

Despite the defeat, the uprising and the close connections between New England and Nova Scotia show the personal impact of the Revolution on individuals and families.

Nowhere was this clearer than with Benjamin Franklin's own family.

While Benjamin Franklin was a top leader of one side of the conflict, his only son William was a top leader of the other.

William Franklin is a mysterious figure, mostly because his father obscured his origins. Benjamin Franklin was famously quite the womaniser, and it is unclear who his son's mother is, but she was certainly not his wife.

Despite the son not being legitimate, Benjamin accepted him and raised him as his own. However, in what seems like an effort to make him seem more legitimate, the father obscured the son's birth year, so we have no idea of his true age. He was

certainly considerably older than Benjamin said he was though.

This has led to some interesting mythology which isn't necessarily accurate. Ben Franklin's experiments with electricity are well known in American culture, and there are dozens of famous portraits in the finest American art galleries showing

“Washington refused to send troops to Nova Scotia, claiming that would make them look like aggressors when they were fighting for independence.”

an old Ben with William as a little boy when they did the famous kite experiment.

William was indeed with his father during the experiment with electricity, but he was certainly not a little boy. He would have been in his twenties by then.

As they grew older, the father and son went in opposite directions, politically speaking.

William grew up to become the Governor of New Jersey, while his father was the Governor of Pennsylvania.

After the Revolution began, the son would stay loyal to the British while the father became a leader of the rebels. The son was thrown into prison for two years, while his father was living a luxurious lifestyle in Paris, acting as a top diplomat for the revolutionaries.

William would eventually be released in a prisoner exchange swap, and completely unfazed by his imprisonment, promptly became a leader of the British in New York. He ran a spy network until the war's end, when he fled to England, never

to return.

Like many families who were torn apart by that war, the father and son would never truly reconcile.

A few years before his death in 1790, Benjamin wrote to his son William: "Nothing has ever hurt me so much and affected me with such keen sensations as to find myself deserted in my old age by my only son, and not only deserted, but to find him taking up arms against me, in a cause wherein my good fame, fortune, and life were all at stake."

The granting of the Nova Scotian land to his son William in his will should be seen as a part of this failure to reconcile.

It was intended as a passive aggressive slap in the face. Benjamin Franklin had died extremely wealthy. When he wrote his will, and divided his vast estate, the only thing he left to his son was Nova Scotian land.

He had never done anything with it, had never developed it, and wasn't even entirely sure that he actually owned it anymore since the terms of his buying it was that he would move there within ten years of receiving the land.

And so, Benjamin Franklin's worthless Nova Scotia land -- as he called it-- works as a metaphor, as a symbol of the deep divisions that tore apart countries and families alike, a conflict which came closer to seeing Nova Scotia join the United States than many Canadians might be comfortable with.

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BY BRIAN MCCONNELL, UE

THE DILIGENT RIVER MONUMENT

There is a Monument in Nova Scotia which perhaps more than any other I have seen captures the heritage of the United Empire Loyalists. Since 2006 with my wife Ann, I have prepared 72 videos about historic sites and cemeteries of the United Empire Loyalists which can be viewed on *YouTube* including one about this Monument.⁽¹⁾ We also visited cemeteries and gravesites throughout Nova Scotia, many of which are included in six books I have authored.⁽²⁾ However, until recently I had not visited one like this which was constructed and maintained by descendants. Over time it has come to be a symbol of the heritage of a community.

East of the town of Parrsboro, in the County of Cumberland, in Nova Scotia is the community of Diligent River, a name shared with the nearby river. The Diligent River Monument located there is a testament to the loyalty and perseverance of the United Empire Loyalists who settled the area in the 1780s and also marks the gravesite for some of them.

When I visited in August 2023, located on the West side of the Ramshead Road, approximately 100 feet south of Cottage Road, was a sign which read "Diligent River Monument". It was nailed to some trees and about 60 feet west of it, across a partly cut field, was the



Monument.

On the East side is a plaque that reads:

NEAR THIS SITE LIVED
LIEUTENANT EHzEAR TAYLOR
A FELLOW OFFICER AND ONE
OF THE ORIGINAL GROUP
OF LOYALISTS WHO
SETTLED THE AREA.
IMPRESSED BY THEIR
DILIGENCE AND INDUSTRY,
GOVERNOR PARR NAMED THE
COMMUNITY DILIGENT RIVER
DURING HIS VISIT IN 1785.

Lieutenant Taylor was born on March 2, 1749, in Westport, Fairfield County, Connecticut and served during the American Revolution with other Loyalists in support of the British Crown. In about 1775 he married Susannah Nash and when they arrived in Diligent River had three children, Ebenezer, William, and Catherine. In 1783, Captain Samuel Wilson and other Loyalists came to Partridge Island which is connected by a peninsula to the mainland and present day Parrsboro. There they waited until their land grants were surveyed. He was granted for his military service as an officer Lot No. 70 of 500 acres. The lot was about seven miles long and ran from the Minas Basin up to the Glasgow Mountains.



In “Historical Notes – Parrsboro and Vicinity” a history written in 1900 by D. G. Taylor it is noted that “Mr. Taylor built his first hut near the bank of Diligent River out of logs to be had even for a floor. He peeled spruce trees and made a floor of bark. He was so diligent to have a home that the place was called Diligent River.”⁽³⁾

Next to the grant of land to Lieutenant Taylor was one made to his son named John Parr Taylor after the Governor of Nova Scotia. The Halifax Herald Newspaper of February 20, 1899, reported that he was Parrsboro’s first male child and stated, “As a fitting reward for his early arrival Governor Parr gave him his name and a grant of land at Diligent River.”⁽⁴⁾ A more detailed account in “Historical Notes – Parrsboro and Vicinity” indicates “the Governor and Major (Moore) went hunting through the forest and coming to Diligent River they found Captain Wilson and Lieutenant Taylor. At the latter’s house was an infant not yet named. The Governor said to Lieutenant Taylor “Name the boy for me and I will grant him five hundred acres of land.”⁽⁵⁾

The Land Registry notes that John Parr Taylor owned the lands until November 4, 1805, when he conveyed them by Deed.⁽⁶⁾ His father, Lieutenant Taylor had already disposed of his property at Diligent River in 1794 and assumed residence at West Brook, Cumberland County. There he was conveyed one thousand acres by Deed which interestingly

begins:

“This Indenture made the 12th day of December in the thirty fourth year of the reign of Our Sovereign Lord George the third, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith and in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four...”⁽⁷⁾

On the West side of the Diligent River Monument is attached an old headstone that is inscribed:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF CAPT. SAMUEL WILSON,
WHO FOUGHT FOR HIS KING
THROUGH THE AMERICAN
REVOLUTION
HE DIED AT THE AGE
OF 82 YRS. HIS WIFE MARY
CLARK, HIS DAUGHTERS
SARAH AGE 16 YRS. MARY,
WIFE OF ROBERT SALTER.

In the book “Loyalists & Planters of Minas Basin” by Robert W. Salter, published by Acadian Printing in 1983, he confirms the Diligent River Monument marks the Loyalist gravesites. It notes “Captain Wilson, his wife and daughters lie in a family burial plot near the shore, overlooking the harbour of Diligent River. Over their graves stands a large sandstone cairn topped with a heavy steel cross. On one side of the cairn is a marble plaque telling the Wilson particulars. On the other side is a bronze tablet

telling how the community of Diligent River received its name.”⁽⁹⁾ The book also includes a photograph of Remembrance Ceremonies held on July 2, 1983, at the Diligent River Monument which is identified as the location of the “graves of early settlers.”⁽¹⁰⁾

During the 1980s Robert W. Salter, author of “Loyalists & Planters of



➤ The Monument is made of stone with a steel cross on top.

Minas Basin,” restored the monument and also placed the sign near the road. As recalled by his son Alex Salter, “my father Robert Wilson Salter rebuilt the monument... The original monument was in bad repair, and he took it on to replace it. He replaced the old cross which was badly bent. He also moved the metal plaque which has the story.”⁽¹¹⁾

Captain Wilson was granted Lot No. 70, adjacent to Lieutenant Taylor. He was born in South Kingstown, Rhode Island on January 21, 1747, and is listed in a Muster Roll taken on Lloyds Neck, Long Island, New York on December



joined the British at Rhode Island in 1777, continued with the British, took a warrant from Colonel Wightman to raise a Company and raised his quota in consequence of which he was appointed Captain.

When Captain Wilson settled at Diligent River he founded a store and commissary for half pay officers and others. Before the American Revolution he had been a businessman in Rhode Island and his Diligent River Store provided food, clothing, spirits, and services including making small loans for travel by ferry across the Minas Basin to Windsor and purchases. He also had ox teams and horses for hire. In 1815 he was appointed a Justice of the Peace in the township of Parrsboro, then a part of the County of Kings.⁽¹⁴⁾

Mary Wilson, daughter of Captain Wilson, married Robert William

Salter in 1811. He had come to Diligent River in 1809 to teach in a new school and boarded at Captain Wilson's home. Later he went into business with the Captain, eventually buying it out from him.

On June 14, 1825, Captain Wilson conveyed his property at Diligent River to his son – in – law Robert Salter.⁽¹⁵⁾ This land included the lands where the family was buried, and the Diligent River Monument located.

This article was prepared on September 8, 2023, by Brian McConnell, UE, a Retired Lawyer, Author, Heritage Volunteer and President of the Nova Scotia Branch of the UELAC. He can be contacted at brianm564@gmail.com

PLEASE SEE UELAC.ORG FOR THE ENDNOTES FOR THIS STORY.

27, 1779, as in Lieutenant Colonel Wightman's Regiment of Loyal New Englanders.⁽¹²⁾

A description of the part played by Captain Wilson in the American Revolution was presented in a memorial made by his agent Charles Cooke as part of a claim for losses as a Loyalist. It stated he was "a zealous supporter of the British Crown in consequence of which all his property has been confiscated." His losses included 140 acres of farm land.⁽¹³⁾

On March 29, 1786, the following was in part recorded:

Evidence on the Claim of Samuel Wilson, late of Rhode Island

Claimant Sworn

Saith he is a native of Rhode Island, lived at North Kingston when Trouble broke out – from the first took part with British Government, took no oath but one of neutrality, in order for him to recover a debt. Understood this met with Lord Percys approbation. Continued at North Kingston and assisted many of the Loyalists to escape to the British then at Rhode Island. Claimant being apprehensive of being taken upon made his escape and



➤ The Monument appears on a Survey Plan completed on March 4, 2020. It is shown in the northern section of lands of Michelle R.A. Terfry as part of PID 25185364.⁽⁸⁾

LIFE'S QR

BY: MICHAEL BROOKE/TORONTO
& JENNIFER BLAKELEY,
SALES MANAGER
LIFESQR.COM

At every Remembrance Day, Canadians of all ages recall the past and pay tribute to all those who served. Sadly, there are numerous people who gave their lives defending their country whose stories were lost over time. But sometimes, long-forgotten stories rise to the surface and unleash a torrent of emotions. These stories help connect that past to the present.

For Catharine Craig, a writer, the journey of discovery and remembrance started with a great uncle. "Growing up, I recall my grandfather telling me that he and his brother had once built a plane. But strangely enough, I didn't even know this man's name," explains Catherine. As she was to discover, her great uncle, Len Ware, had died tragically at 30. He was killed during a training exercise in the United Kingdom, preparing to fight in World War Two.

Catharine decided to trace her ancestry, which led to her discovering more about this unknown great-uncle. "I did a DNA sample, and my husband was the one to point out that Len was part of my family." Remarkably, she was able to find out that her great-uncle had a son by the name of Michael. "My great-uncle never saw Michael," explains Catharine. "His wife



remarried, and the family didn't remain in contact." It was only when Michael's wife got interested in the family's ancestry that prompted him to reconnect with his roots.

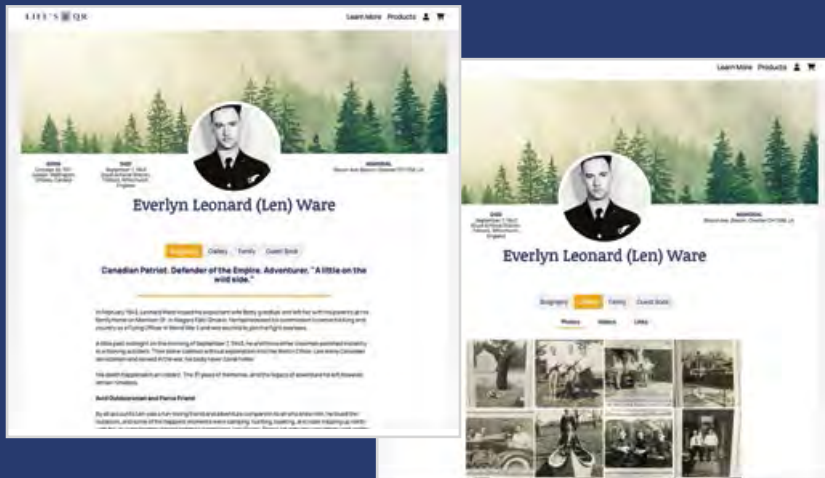
"My grandfather and his brother were extremely close, but growing up, I never knew about any of the stories," says Catharine. These stories needed to be embraced, and my great-uncle needed to be remembered." Finding out about a cousin she never knew she had has helped close some of the loops

related to grief and trauma.

Catharine felt saddened knowing her grandfather had experienced a tragedy like losing a close sibling. "I couldn't help but put myself in Betty's shoes. I can't imagine being pregnant and being left with my in-laws as my husband went overseas to fight in a war far away. I can only imagine that her entire life fell apart the day she got that telegram. I was happy she remarried, and Michael had the father that raised him (who he considers "dad"), but so sad that Len never made it home to hold his child."

Catharine explains, "When you dig into the past, something pulls you in deeply. I empathetically identified with my great-aunt, who had a baby at home and had received a letter that her husband was never coming home." Beyond this, Catharine says she began to understand the heavy loss her





grandfather and his parents had to deal with.

"My great uncle was both handsome and adventurous," notes Catharine. "He seemed so full of energy and joy. The more I looked through old photos and all the

pieces of your family's experiences can be lost over time - especially the more painful ones."

Catharine has diligently collected dozens of photos and archives of her family and has spent numerous hours capturing stories. "The process of doing this work feels more like a service and a calling," explains Catharine. "It is unlike any writing assignment I've ever done. It's work that I feel needs to be done to honour those who have become before us."

Thanks to a unique product called Life'sQR, Catharine has kept Len Ware's memory alive for current and future generations. "Quick response codes are printed on stainless steel. The codes allow people to point their cell to access a website quickly," she explains. The QR signs are placed next to headstones and memorials, incorporating an interactive digital tribute page where people can leave their thoughts.

Stories, photos and even videos can be part of the page; uploading them is as easy as using any social media platform. The interface allows all current and future generations to discover their ancestor's life story and legacy. "Life's QR is truly a doorway into another dimension of experience. While I was writing, it was certainly as though Len and the

characters in his life were alive and well."

Catherine believes that having an online memorial that can be easily updated to add new information is incredibly important. "My family was gifted with the story of a long-lost relative, and it was truly an emotional experience. It's truly an honour to celebrate those who came before me and know their lives will always be remembered."

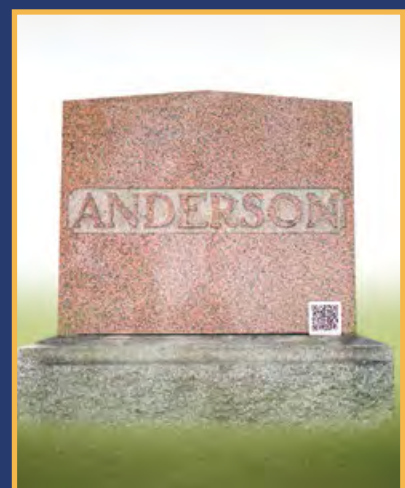
Jennifer Blakeley is the founder of Life's QR (www.LifesQR.com). The ability to capture and preserve memories for the 21st century and beyond was the main goal in starting the company. "Our team put a lot of thought into every stage. We wanted to ensure the interface was easy to navigate and the stainless steel QR codes would stick to various surfaces."

"All over Canada, some monuments and gravestones are over a century old. Unfortunately, visitors have great difficulty reading them due to the outdoor elements, which is tragic," laments Jennifer. "But adding a QR code to a faded monument brings a person's legacy back to life and this impacts both current and future generations."



activities he was involved with, the more I liked him." Catharine was concerned about Len's son's reaction to her writing. She had never met Michael in person or even never spoken to him.

One critical insight that Catharine shared concerned the idea of preserving family histories. "Unless you have a diligent family historian, the multi-dimensional



UELAC CONFERENCE 2023

01 - 04 JUNE, 2023 BRITISH COLUMBIA

MEMORIES AND MOMENTS: A GLIMPSE INTO THE 2023 UELAC HYBRID CONFERENCE, “WHERE THE SEA MEETS THE SKY”

BY 2023 UELAC PACIFIC REGION CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

The 2023 United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada (UELAC) Hybrid Conference brought together members and enthusiasts from across the country. Hosted in Richmond/Vancouver BC, the four Pacific Region branches (Vancouver, Chilliwack, Victoria, and Thompson-Okanagan) organized an eventful and memorable conference, promoting the shared history and heritage of the United Empire Loyalists. This essay aims to highlight some of the highlights of the conference through captivating photographs and descriptions.

Along with the regular 'in-person' attendees, the 2023 UELAC Conference offered eleven Virtual Guest Speaker Presentations, 31 May – 04 June. These were well attended and are offered to members and guests and can be viewed at uelac.ca

Two of the most successful venues were the Display/Sales Room and the Hospitality Suite. The Pacific Region pulled-out all the stops when it came to these daily events.

From Wednesday 31 May to 04 June, the successful Pacific Region Hospitality Suite was well attended and enjoyed. Camaraderie, snacks,



and beverages were well received by all attendees, following the day's events and activities.

Thursday was meeting day for Branch Genealogists (morning) and Membership Chairs (afternoon) with a scrumptious lunch provided by each group and served by the hotel. Additionally, 'cookies' were provided by Membership Chair, Liz Adair, Prairie Region Councilor, and Dominion Membership Chair.

WELCOME RECEPTION:

The conference began with a delightful and warm welcome reception, where attendees had the opportunity to meet each other and reconnect with old friends. The cheerful ambiance, plenteous d'oeuvres and delicious food trays including a chocolate fountain, and ice-cream treats set the stage for the days to come, fostering a sense of community and camaraderie among participants.



➤ 2023 Conference registration table and UELAC promotions table.



➤ Display-Sales Room- Conference Registrar, Christine Manzer UE, Chilliwack Branch President, Marlene Dance UE, Margaret & Glenn Smith UE- Volunteer Coordinator and Conference Committee Members

TOUR #1: VANCOUVER CULTURAL TOUR

The conference offered two all-day exciting tours, including lunch on Friday. The first tour took participants to Vancouver's Jewel in the city, Stanley Park. Amidst the lush greenery and stunning views, attendees discovered the park's rich history with a special stop to honour the Pauline Johnson Memorial monument, and its significance for the First Nations communities. Afterward, a guided tour at the Museum of Vancouver provided insights into the captivating Pacific Coast First Nations Story.

TOUR #2: HISTORIC VILLAGE OF STEVESTON:

Historical enthusiasts were treated to a fascinating tour of the historic Village of Steveston in Richmond, BC. With ties to Loyalist ancestors [the Steeves Family of New Brunswick), the fishing village became a living reminder of the past. Participants explored its heritage buildings, Gulf of Georgia BC

Cannery, and later in the afternoon the British Columbia Britannia Shipyards, engaging with local historians, and discovering the stories that shaped the community.

FRIDAY EVENING BANQUET:

The conference's Friday evening banquet was a fun affair, with attendees enjoying an exquisite meal and entertainment provided by the talented Blackthorn group. The lively music and captivating performances created an unforgettable atmosphere, fostering new connections and making lasting memories.

This was an evening of fun and entertainment. Beside the Blackthorn Group, one BC Heritage Fair Winner presented her Heritage Fair presentation. Other activities saw the presentation of two Pacific Region members receiving their UE Certificates followed by the Phillip E. M. Leith Memorial Award to two worthy Pacific Region Members- Sandy Farynuk UE, Thompson-Okanagan Branch and Wendy Clapp, Victoria Branch.



➤ Hospitality Suite Fun





> Genealogists & Membership Chair Meetings:



> Welcome by TownCrier, Ben Buss.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM):

Saturday commenced with the Annual General Meeting of the UELAC. The AGM provided a platform for members to discuss important matters, elect new members to the UELAC Board of Directors, and share their enthusiasm for preserving and promoting loyalty to the Crown.

GALA BANQUET:

Saturday evening's Gala Banquet was graced by the presence of esteemed guest speaker Steven Lewis Point OBC, former Lieutenant Governor of BC and Chancellor for the University of British Columbia. His address highlighted the significance of BC Loyalist Day, which he had previously proclaimed annually in 2012 while serving the Province of British Columbia as Lt. Governor. The evening concluded on a joyous note, with members enthusiastically participating in memorable Scottish dances.



> Welcome reception speakers.



> Welcome reception - Jakob Knudson - Metis dancer.



> Stanley Park Totem Pole.



> National Historic Sites- BC Gulf of Georgia Cannery & Britannia Shipyards, Steveston, British Columbia

SUNDAY SERVICE AND BUFFET LUNCHEON:

Sunday's activities began with a meaningful Sunday Service centered around the theme of "Truth and Reconciliation." Attendees reflected on the importance of acknowledging historical injustices, working towards healing, and understanding. The conference concluded with a celebratory wrap-up buffet luncheon, honoring the 225th birth anniversary of King George III.



> President, Thompson-Okanagan Branch Sandy Farynuk UE, Dominion President, Trish Groom UE, Diane Faris UE & Carl Stymiest UE, Co-Chairs, Phillip E. M. Leith Memorial Award (Missing- Wendy Clapp, Victoria Branch).

CONCLUSION:

The 2023 UELAC Hybrid Conference in Richmond/Vancouver, BC, proved to be a remarkable gathering of United Empire Loyalists and history enthusiasts. The events and activities organized by the four Pacific Region branches left an impression on all attendees, fostering a deep appreciation for the shared heritage and history of the United Empire Loyalists.

*Loyally,
The 2023 UELAC Hybrid
Conference, "Where the Sea Meets
the Sky," Committee*

QUEENS COUNTY HERITAGE, GAGETOWN, NB

LOYALIST OF THE DAY

EBBETTS, MACALPINES AND COREYS

Dropped at the mouth of the St. John River during the warm months of 1783, the Loyalists were provided with basic provisions – blankets, tents, clothing, and tools. The first winter, however, dealt a huge blow to the struggling refugees. Many lives were lost due to the frigid cold and lack of nourishing food. For those that survived, the prospect of land grants, stands of lumber and firewood, and abundant hunting and fishing held the promise of a better life. Though they knew it would not be built overnight, Loyalists recognized the opportunity to construct a new society and economy, and many were already accustomed to migration, resettlement and hard work.

From 1784 until well into the 1790s, Loyalists moved up the St. John River to Hampstead, Wickham, Gagetown and the Grand and Washademoak Lakes. Conflict naturally arose between the pre-Loyalist settlers and the Loyalists over land titles, eventually bringing about the controversial re-granting of most lands in favour of the Loyalists.

In the first years, the Loyalists made do with whatever could be made by hand. Wooden tools and utensils were common. Settlers grew linen and wool on the farm and wove it into clothing and blankets. Blacksmiths soon set up their trades providing cooking pots, griddles and grills. Settlement along the waterways soon enabled a thriving river trade to develop, bringing access to finer tools and equipment such as tin moulds for candles and pewter serving bowls from Saint John or from far away



➤ Wooden mortar, c. 1800, purchase, 2010.

London.

The cradle comes to Tilley House from the estate of Leora Simpson. Visitors to the Court House and those who attended the Gagetown School from the 1960s-1990s will remember Miss Simpson's collection of stuffed birds. The cradle has Ebbett family connections through Miss Simpson's mother, Elizabeth Ebbett (1832-1814) and dates to the 1790s. The base wood is actually pine, grained and painted to look like fine mahogany. Inside the cradle is an early 19th century hand-woven blanket, typical of the fabric made and used by the Loyalists. The child's ladder back chair was made by a member of the Loyalist Merritt family, Queenstown.

The iron griddle belonged to the Charles MacAlpine family. Charles MacAlpine (1770-1852) was born in Glasgow, Scotland, the son of Peter MacAlpine (born c.1726) and Elizabeth Watters (born c.1732). The MacAlpines came to New Brunswick with the Loyalists in 1783 and initially settled on Lower Musquash Island, south of Gagetown. In 1794 Charles married Christean Balmain (1771-1863) and had twelve children that intermarried with other Loyalist families. More than likely after the first major freshet "spring flooding" in the St. John River valley, the family removed itself to higher ground on Otnabog Lake, Hampstead Parish, where the family remained until the late 20th century. A brother, John,



➤ Griddle, c. 1800, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Wallace McAlpine, 1967 (1967.27)



➤ Cradle, c. 1790, gift of M. Patricia Jenkins, 1967 (1967.62) and ladder-back armchair, c. 1830, gift of Benjamin Merritt, 1967 (1967.117)

settled at the Narrows, Washademoak Lake. When Christean died in 1863 at the age of 92, her obituary in the Religious Intelligencer read:

d. Cambridge (Queens Co.) Tuesday 2nd inst., at h[er] son's residence, Christian w/o late Charles MacALPINE, age 92. She was born at Glasgow, Scotland and emigrated to this Province with the Loyalists at which place she resided until her death; being the mother of 12 children, 81 grandchildren 46 great grand children, one great great grandchild. On Friday 5th her body was confined in the narrow house confined for all living, in hopes that her spirit was basking in the sunbeams of immortal light, in the presence of her saviour. Sermon by Rev. John Reed, Wesleyan minister of Gagetown.

The six-mould candelmaker was used by the Gideon Corey family, New Canaan. Gideon Corey was born 21 March 1757 at East Greenwich, Rhode Island, the son of Thomas Corey and Elizabeth Drake, and died 14 July 1823. It is believed that prior to coming to New Brunswick with the Loyalists, Gideon married Abigail Clark, daughter

of Loyalist Elisha Clark, also of Rhode Island. After arriving in New Brunswick, the Coreys settled in the upper reaches of Washademoak Lake and the Canaan River; frankly the upper reaches of Queens County far away from the more populous settlements at Gagetown, Hampstead, Jemseg and Wickham. Their choice of location, however, was perhaps not that unusual. The waters of the lake and river were navigable in the summer and good for ice travel in the winter and at that time, who knew how settlement would develop.

The Coreys were evidently successful, having eleven children who married into several other families in the neighbourhood, and obviously easy trade allowed for acquiring a time-saving tool like the tin candle maker. Fancy homes made their candles from beeswax, however more usual were candles made from a cheap and available substance called tallow, a fat from sheep and cows.

String would be threaded through the holes and tied in knots at one end, the fat melted and then poured into the mould. When it hardened, the knots of the wicks were cut and the candles removed. Although a very dirty and smelly source of light, it was cheap, coming right off the farm.

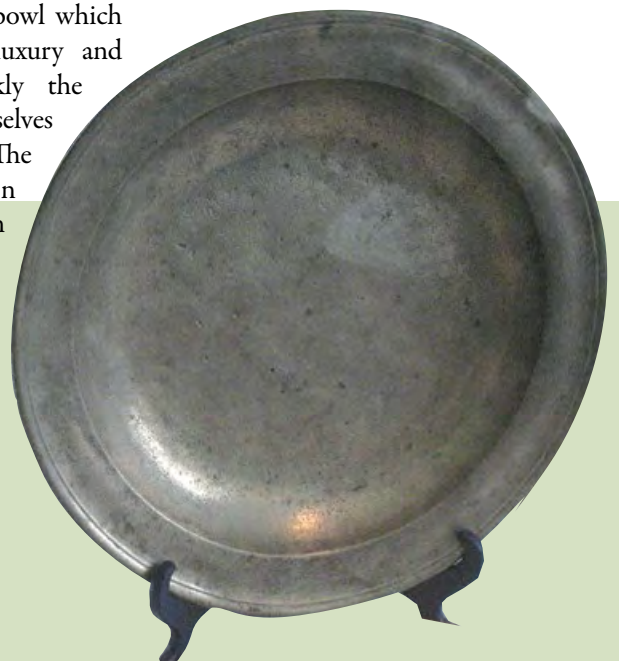
And finally the pewter bowl which qualifies as a bit of a luxury and indicative of how quickly the Loyalists established themselves socially and economically. The bowl was made in London by Townsend & Compton between 1801 and 1811. It is clearly marked on the back with the maker's marks and stamps. Certainly the river and the



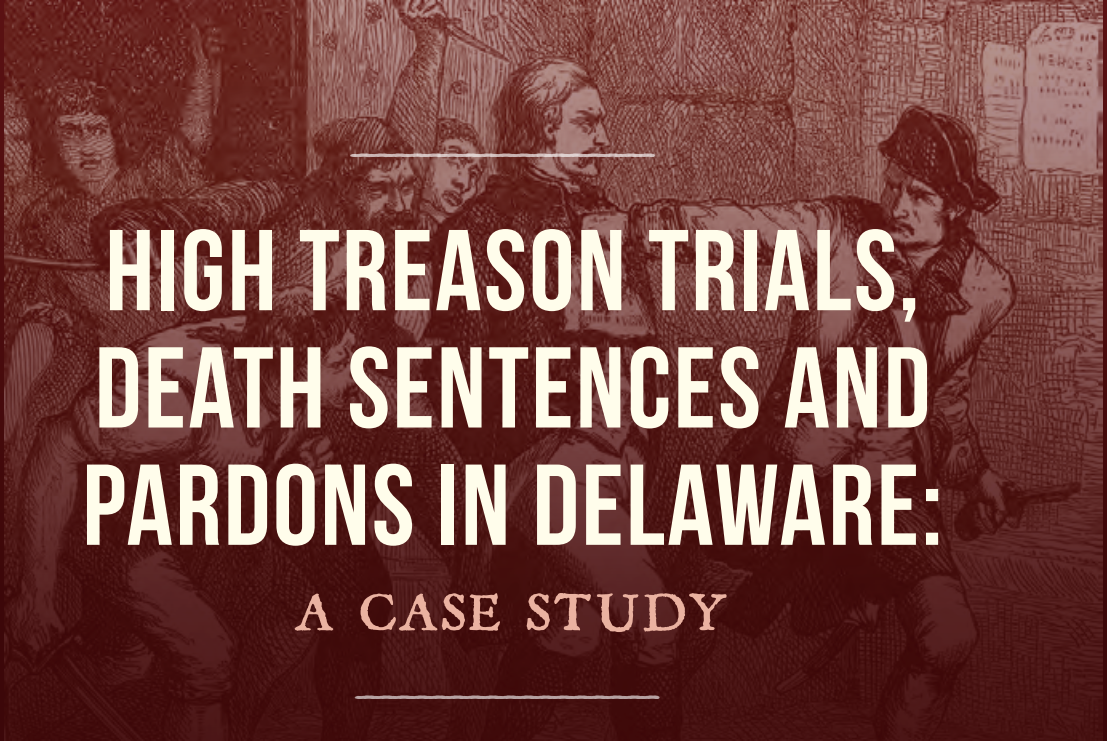
➤ Candle mould, c. 1800, gift of Rev. E. Gideon Corey and J. Blois Corey, 1975 (1975.42.1)

port of Saint John allowed for a lively import business, with items coming to Queens County from all over the world. The bowl was also well used, given the pits and cracks on its surface!

To learn more about the daily life of the Loyalists or to see some of the items above in person, visit the Loyalist Legacy exhibition at the Tilley House.



➤ Pewter bowl, 1801-1811, Collection of Queens County Heritage (2008.26)



HIGH TREASON TRIALS, DEATH SENTENCES AND PARDONS IN DELAWARE: A CASE STUDY

PETER RICHMOND, TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN; BERTRAND ROEHNER, SORBONNE UNIVERSITY, PARIS

Peter Richmond of Dublin's Trinity College and Bertrand Roehner of Paris' Sorbonne University became interested in the treason trials of Loyalists during the American Revolution. They discovered that the number of pardons granted to Loyalists as reported in primary sources differed from those later claimed in a succession of secondary sources. In this exclusive condensation of their research, the two scholars consider the mass trials of Loyalists in Delaware who were charged with the capital offense of treason.

In the crisis that led to the Declaration of Independence, the colonial judicial system was largely made inactive through mob obstruction. Courtrooms were closed, and many judges were compelled to leave the country. Naturally, such a state of lawlessness could not be maintained for long. In October 1777, new civilian courts were established, the first of which became operational in New Jersey. A key component was the courts of Oyer and Terminer, which were

tasked with trying the most serious felonies and, in particular, high treason crimes.

Needless to say, when reading that 101 out of 105 Loyalists sentenced to death were pardoned, careful historians would wish to see the primary source on which such a statement relies. Is that not a reasonable expectation when the fate of over a hundred Loyalists is involved? In those cases that determined the fate of dozens of accused Loyalists, one would expect historians to do their best to assure their readers that their statements can indeed be trusted. In order to start a discussion, we must give positive evidence at least in a few cases.

For that purpose, we will target specially selected cases that are characterized by a group of Loyalists in Delaware who were convicted of high treason and collectively sentenced to death. The state of Delaware was selected for this investigation because, with its estimated population of only 37,000 in 1780, it was the smallest of the 13

rebellious colonies. It also had several Loyalist insurrections: the so-called Black Monday in May 1776, the Sussex County insurrection of Spring 1777, the Clow Rebellion of 15 April 1778, and the Black Camp Rebellion of 15 August 1780.

In his account of the rebellions, historian Harold Hancock writes: *"As was usually the case in Tory insurrections in Delaware, no one was killed or hurt"*. The historian's statement is surprising because there were actually at least 6 fatalities, 5 of which are mentioned by Hancock himself.

The incidents occurred throughout the course of the American Revolution. On 5 March 1778, Patriot Captain Kirkwood hanged a Tory in arms and burned the house of Loyalist Captain Johnson. In March 1778, two Patriot soldiers were shot and killed in an effort to arrest the Tory leader Joshua Hill. An attempt (by the same Captain Kirkwood) to arrest William Johnson, also a Loyalist leader, ended in failure but -- in an act of vengeance-- the Patriot



soldiers hanged Samens, one of Johnson's servants, and burned his house. In 1782, Joseph Moore, one of the sheriff's deputies, was killed during the attempted arrest of the prominent Loyalist leader Cheney Clow. In May 1783, Clow was indicted for murder and sentenced to be hanged. The fact that Clow's execution occurred four years later was due to successive postponements by vacillating governors. Tory Jack, a notorious Loyalist outlaw, was caught in Wilmington and hanged on an apple tree.

In the Delaware Archives, we find 16 persons listed for treason in Kent County, none of whom can be found in the index of Hancock's book. The two main leaders of the "Black Camp Rebellion" of August 1780 were Bartholomew Banyum and William Dutton. Naturally, one would be interested in their fate. Regarding Banyum, one learns that he was eventually arrested in 1786.

Whether or not he was tried is not said. Equally unknown remains the fate of Dutton.

We now come to the question of the pardon of Delaware Loyalists.

In November 1780, eight Loyalists were tried for high treason and sentenced to be hanged. Hancock writes, "on 4th November 1780, they were all pardoned by the general assembly and the sentence was not carried out". The account by Hancock says that 8 pardons were granted on 4 November 1780; this conflicts with the account based on the Delaware Archives, which states that 7 pardons were granted in January 1781.

In spite of the aforementioned uncertainties the statement given in Hancock has been repeated subsequently without further qualification. The following instances can be mentioned.

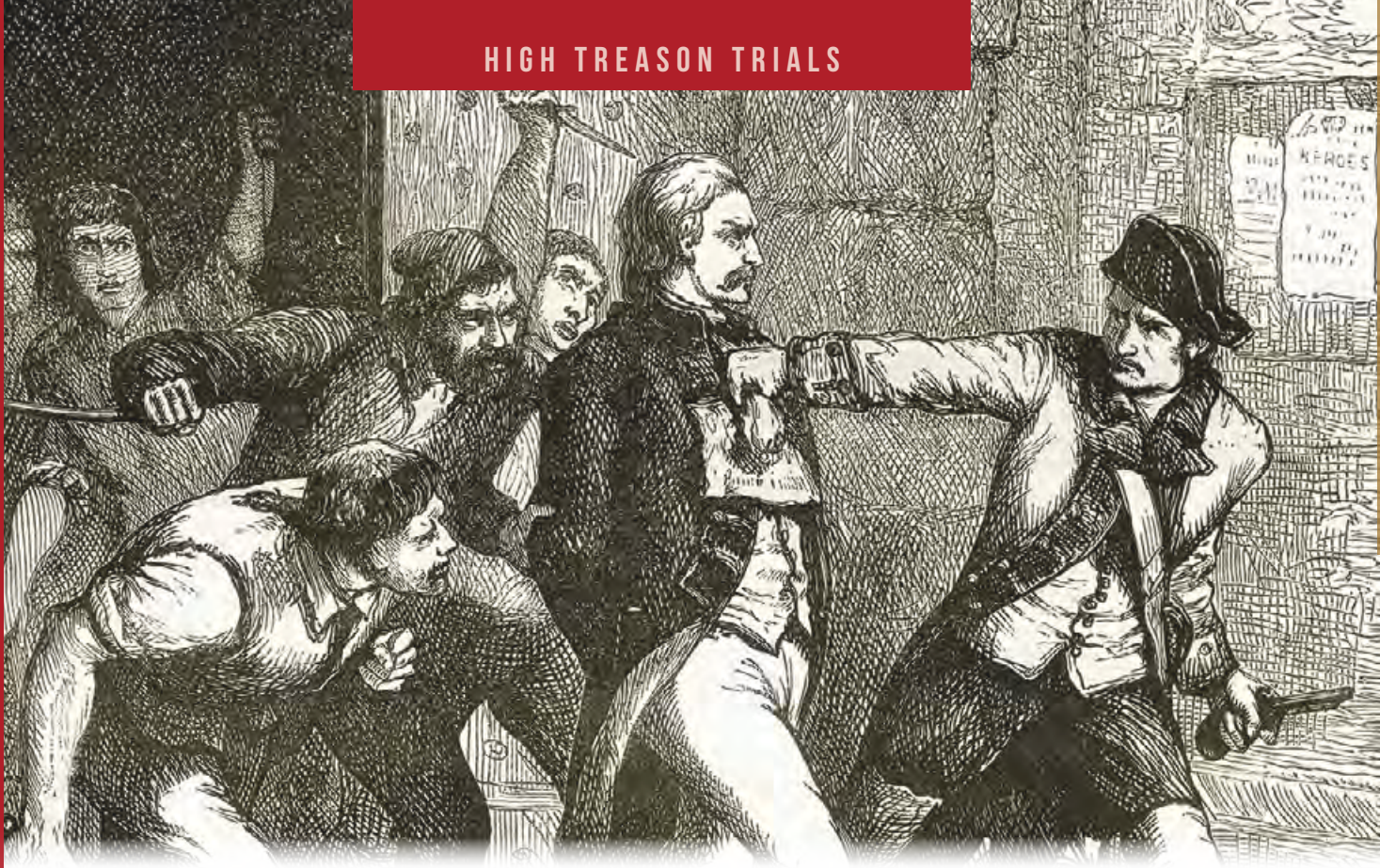
The first extract is from a recent book by Carlton Larson: "No

executions ensued, however, as all 8 men were pardoned". The reference given in support is the 1977 book by Hancock.

The second extract is from the *Wikipedia* article entitled: "1780 Black Camp Rebellion". It reads: "... no death sentences were actually carried out, and the Delaware General Assembly pardoned all of the participants on November 4, 1780." The reference on which this extract is based is a book published by Hancock in 1976. This demonstrates a recognized process that leads from accepting accounts unsupported by primary sources to the formation of enduring myths. (Marie Antoinette's infamous "quote" to "Let them eat cake," immediately comes to mind. No such words were ever spoken by the much-maligned French queen.)

No matter which version of the number of Loyalist who were granted pardons is correct, we need





to understand why the two versions are so different. Only then will it become possible to offer a reliable account.

In this paper, we have described cases where secondary sources appeared faulty. Can one find others? The present paper is not the end of the story but rather an invitation for further exploration. Discussions with a number of archivists convinced us that, so far, the judicial aspects of the American Revolution have not attracted great attention.

This can be seen by the fact that words such as “arrests,” “number of state prisoners,” “trials” (by state courts or court martials), “executions,” “pardons,” or “court of Oyer and Terminer” do not often appear in book indexes. Carlton Larson recognizes these omissions in the introduction of a recent study. Actually, the fact that each state had its own judicial system (e.g. for pardon attribution) is one of the main difficulties for those who wish

to research this topic.

In conclusion, we emphasize that still other cases are waiting for investigation, something that will become possible as soon as the required primary documents have been identified and retrieved. In studies that focus on the northern states for 1776-1781, there are multiple mentions of death sentences issued by courts of Oyer and Terminer. In several cases, they took the form of group sentences, involving dozens of prisoners. Most of them, however, are followed by the statement that pardons were liberally granted. This resulted in less than a handful of Loyalist executions being carried out.

We hope that this paper will encourage similar studies. Needless to say, on our side we will also keep our eyes open and track any cases with clear evidence.

This article is noteworthy beyond the fact that as European scholars Richmond and Roehner have no personal or academic connection to Loyalist history. Rather than being historians, the two colleagues are physicists who each have an interest in cliophysics -- the scientific analysis of recurrent historical events using the methodology of experimental physics. They took almost two years to collect 283 cases of Loyalist executions to identify patterns related to this aspect of the American Revolution.

To read the complete paper on Loyalists' high treason trials, death sentences, and pardons, visit <https://tinyurl.com/treason-trials>. Richmond and Roehner have examined mass trials (and pardons) in New York, Delaware and New Jersey, providing three appendices with the names of the Loyalists who faced the death penalty and a detailed bibliography to substantiate their research.



CHRIS HAY UE

LOYALIST BATTLE OF BENNETT'S ISLAND

FINALLY RECEIVES HISTORICAL RECOGNITION

Against incredible odds, Bennett's Island, the site of an important Loyalist battle of the American Revolution finally received long overdue official historical recognition on May 18, 2023. Although Bennett's Island, also spelled Bennet's, is officially listed as a battle site of the American Revolution, its military role had never been thoroughly researched, the last published story of the battle appearing in the book *Historical Discourse: Delivered at the Celebration of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the First Reformed Dutch Church*, New Brunswick, NJ, Richard H. Steele, 1867.

Since the historical importance of the battle site was mostly recognized only by amateur historians, the history of this location was overlooked in the 1950's when it was developed into what became the largest landfill in New Jersey. This later created a definite barrier to historical recognition as a large portion of the primary battle site had disappeared. However, remarkably, some of the surrounding areas such as Lawrence Brook, where the bridge to Longfield's farm was

seized in battle, and the neighboring greenbelt along the Raritan River remained relatively untouched. It was this that inspired the continued efforts to achieve full recognition for the site with the installation of a historical plaque.

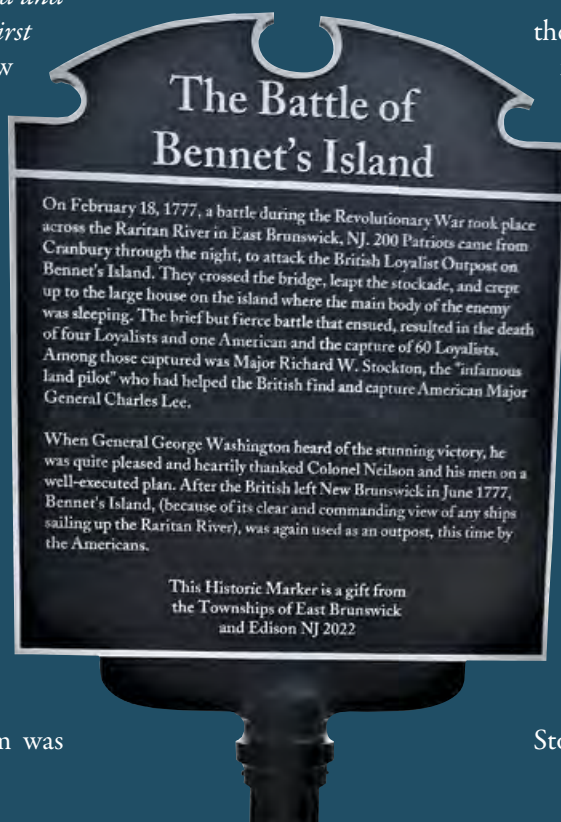
The location of the original battle site at East Brunswick, 3 miles east of New Brunswick, in Middlesex County, New Jersey also posed an obstacle due to the island having had several different names over the years and with the lack of those

names appearing on vintage maps to help identify it. Fortunately, this would be resolved in 2017, when a New Jersey historian made a key discovery of a 1762 John Dally New Jersey map at Princeton University. This was the first map listing the exact location of Bennett's Island, formerly called Lawrence Jr. Island, and so detailed that it even showed the exact orientation of the main house. The 1762 map provided much needed historical verification of this elusive island location.

On or around February 17, 1777, the Americans received key British intelligence from an escaped Bennett's Island informant.

Under the command of Colonel John Neilson of the 2nd Middlesex Militia, plans were quickly devised for a pre-dawn surprise attack on February 18, 1777, at the British outpost of Bennett's (Lawrence) Island, high above the Raritan River. Neilson's orders were to disarm this strategic, new British post and to capture its commander Major Richard W. Stockton.

Richard Witham Stockton was born May 19, 1734, to a prominent Princeton, NJ family and was a first cousin to Richard Stockton Esq., a signer of the





Declaration of Independence. Maj. Stockton and his brother Joseph had remained loyal to the crown. Joseph was to die in military service as a British guide while Maj. Stockton was to settle in New Brunswick, Canada until his death on May 08, 1801.

On January 14, 1999, I received a certificate proving my descent from my Loyalist 5th great-grandfather Major Richard Witham Stockton of the New Jersey Volunteers. I had been researching him for some time but could find little new information about his military service. However, while searching some rare book sites on the internet I made an incredible discovery. I had only seen a few family history books with information on both the Stockton and Neilson families of New Jersey. I suddenly came to a bookstore site advertising a rare one-of-a-kind book titled *Colonel John Neilson and the Revolution in New Jersey* by George W. Dress,

New York University, June 1961. It was actually a bound one-of-a-kind, never-published thesis. In 1973, the Bronx Campus of New York University, where the thesis was held, was sold and its books dispersed. Although quite pricey, I thought it was worth the gamble just to know even a little bit more about the man who had captured my 5th great grandfather.

It turned out this thesis was based on a little-known military order book of Colonel John Neilson located in the Neilson family documents at Rutgers University. This order book described fully the names and roles of both the soldiers and the events of the battle – a definite goldmine of information which led to even more information in American Revolutionary War Pension Records. My research into the specifics of the battle and the actions of the key participants took off.

During my research into Maj.

Stockton's military background, I found a remarkable amount of information regarding his capture at Bennett's Island, but no real indication of why American military officials so wanted him. I was also fascinated that Major Stockton was mentioned in several letters from George Washington including the announcement of Stockton's capture which was read aloud to Congress. Another amazing discovery was about to reveal the important historical connection of this battle to yet an even more significant event of the American Revolution.

In 2014, I received a Christmas gift of a copy of the book *Kidnapping the Enemy* by Christian McBurney, Westholme Publishing, 2013. Upon reading it, I finally discovered some new information regarding the long-suspected involvement of Major Stockton in the extraordinary capture of the American General Charles Lee, second in command to General George Washington.



FISH - KILL, February 27.
 Extract of a letter from an officer at Morris-Town,
 dated February 21.

"I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that a few days ago a party of General Putnam's division, attacked and defeated a party of Tory soldiers, in Munmouth, killed a number, and took about 40, with their arms, and one Major Stockton, an infamous Tory, who commanded them. [The above Major Stockton, is the identical villain that betrayed his Excellency General LEE into the hands of the enemy.]

Independent Chronicle
 Boston, Massachusetts
 March 6, 1777

While in command of 3,000 troops, General Lee unexpectedly decided to spend a relaxing night away from his troops with only a small guard at Widow White's Tavern in nearby Basking Ridge, NJ. The following morning, December 13, 1776, while on a scouting patrol deep into enemy territory, a small troop of 38 British Dragoons learned the location of General Charles Lee from an informant. Led by Colonel William Harcourt and with then Capt. Richard W. Stockton as their guide, the patrol, realizing the vulnerability of General Lee, made a split-second decision to attack and capture him.

This was done swiftly, with great precision, and soon after the patrol celebrated what was ultimately the capture of the highest-ranking American officer ever captured in the American Revolution. British troops relied heavily on local Loyalist guides as they moved through the countryside and, for his role in the capture of General Lee, Stockton was promoted to Major. This finally explained why Maj. Stockton, known as the renowned or infamous "Land Pilot," was wanted so badly by American military officials.

Newspaper articles at the time immediately suspected Maj. Richard W. Stockton, in the capture of General Lee, but Stockton never admitted to it either after his own capture or even after the cessation of the war. Christian McBurney, an American Revolutionary War author from Washington, DC, had noted in his book that he personally could not fully verify Stockton's role as no official military records from either side had been found to confirm it. In December 2015, I decided to contact McBurney myself as I had some new British military proof for Richard W. Stockton's role as a Loyalist guide. McBurney was very



interesting. We subsequently agreed to work together for a chapter in his new book *Abductions in the American Revolution*, McFarland, and Company, 2016. This story told, for the first time, the verified role of Maj. Richard W. Stockton in the abduction of the American General Charles Lee.

We then collaborated for a story for the online *Journal of the American Revolution*. Our story "The Battle of Bennett's Island: The New Jersey Site Rediscovered" was published on July 10, 2017. We waited for any interesting feedback to follow. A few comments appeared but provided no new details to assist us in our research. I then published several stories in *The Loyalist Gazette*: the Spring 2017 issue featured a cover story "Major Stockton's Secret Unlocked after 240 Years" and the Spring and Fall 2019 issues ran a two-part story "New Jersey's Forgotten Revolutionary Battle".

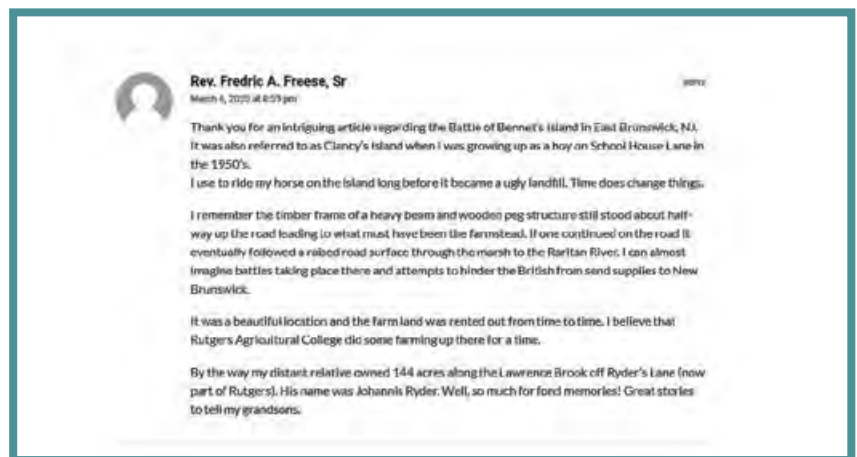
We were a very small group of historians working on this early research and realized that we could use more help to advance our project. I suggested a Daughters of the American Revolution member who had contacted us following our

Journal story. When contacted she was very interested in joining our group along with her cousin. There were now four of us in the group, including three who were actually descendants of soldiers in the Battle of Bennett's Island – two Patriot and one Loyalist descendant.

It was around this same time in March 2020, that I decided to check a fact in our journal story. Scrolling down to the bottom of the story, much to my amazement, I found a new comment by Rev. Fredric A. Freese Sr., added three years following the publication of the story. We all now desperately wanted to contact him to learn about his connection to this historic site and to invite him to

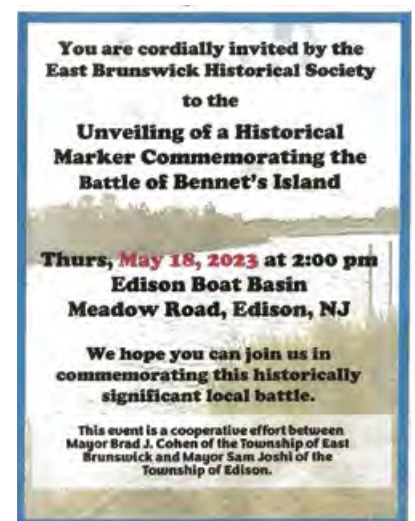
the sister of Richard Witham Stockton, and amazingly we are also both personally linked by marriage to Colonel John Neilson, thus to both Commanders in the battle.

Now—with one final addition--our group of six dedicated historians from Canada and four US States adopted the name *Patrons of the Heritage and Battle of Bennett's Island*. Our goal was to create the first comprehensive report on the Revolutionary War battle site to be titled *Battle of Bennett's (Clancey) Island, NJ Project - History and Geography to Present: Summary Reference Report* along with a quest for historical recognition in the form of a plaque to follow.



join our group as well.

After some challenging searching, we were finally able to contact Rev. Freese in Florida who was delighted to join our group although he stated that he had no family connections to the Battle of Bennett's Island. However, he had lived near and explored the battle location as a youngster in the 1950's before the site became a landfill. Incredibly, we were to discover later that Rev. Freese is actually related to me through marriage, through Ruth Stockton,



Upon completion of our report, we applied for historical signage but, as we had long expected, an historical sign at or near a landfill was simply not a popular option or something that people would really visit. An alternative suggestion was then made to place a sign alongside the Raritan River and across from the island, and this proposal immediately received much more interest. The term *viewscape*, a site viewed from a distance, is often used at less accessible locations such as the Navaho Cliff Dwellings or Mount Rushmore. This idea was also well received as the proposed plaque location was already easily accessible and only the greenbelt surrounding the landfill would be visible across the Raritan River.

The only challenge now was the rather unusual fact that the battle site and the proposed sign location were in two different Townships of Middlesex County, NJ so formal approval for the historic plaque would now be required from both townships. Formal approval for an historical marker was soon forthcoming from both the Townships of East Brunswick, the location of the actual battle site now known as Clancey Island, and from the Township of Edison, the location of the Boat Launch, the proposed site for the signage directly across the Raritan River.

A formal historic plaque unveiling for the Battle of Bennett's Island was held on May 18, 2023. In attendance were the mayors of both townships, representatives from both the Sons of the American Revolution and the Daughters of the American Revolution, local historical societies, as well as several of the individuals involved in achieving the site's formal recognition. The quest for historical



signage of this forgotten battle prior to the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution in 2026 had now been accomplished by a small, determined, and dedicated group of historians who had each made a significant contribution towards achieving its historical recognition.

It is most unusual for there to be historical recognition of a Loyalist battle including the recognition

of a Loyalist participant featured prominently on the plaque. Loyalist Major Richard Witham Stockton should be remembered for his key role as the guide who safely assisted British troops in the capture of General Charles Lee and whose military prowess concerned the Americans so much that it led to his own unfortunate capture at Bennett's Island.

DID YOU KNOW?

The only battle between rebels and British forces in what is now present day Nova Scotia was fought at Fort Cumberland (today's Fort Beausejour National Historic site) in November of 1776.



*Replica of Black Loyalist survival pit from 1783,
at the Black Loyalist Heritage Museum.*



Birchtown, Nova Scotia