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THE MISSISQUOI LOYALISTS

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*Relative to the Loyalist settlement at Missisquoi Bay in the spring of 1784, there is an unusual amount of contemporary, documentary evidence. As it happened, this settlement did not meet with the approval of the provincial government, and there ensued a rather spirited correspondence between Quebec headquarters on the one hand, and the Loyalist settlers and local military authorities on the other. Through the courtesy of the Public Archives Office at Ottawa, it has been possible to obtain copies of the more pertinent of these letters. Acknowledgment is due to the excellent treatise by W. H. Siebert on a similar subject, The American Loyalists in the Eastern Seigniories and Townships of the Province of Quebec, in pointing to the existence of this correspondence.*

*An attempt has been made to give a short sketch of the antecedents and background of these settlers, illustrated by the personal experiences of Peter Müller, as perhaps typical of the vicissitudes encountered by an American Loyalist in Canada, and thanks are due Miss Agnes Bradley of St. Armand who has kindly furnished certain family records of her ancestor, an early settler on that seigniorie. The paramount importance of the Burgoyne Campaign in bringing about the migration of the New York Loyalists to Canada has necessitated some treatment of the Loyalist participation in that campaign.*

*Owing to the fact that the title under which the settlement was made proved defective, and as the situation was further complicated*

*by other conflicting claims and grants, it has been thought desirable to include a brief account of the earlier Indian, French, and English settlements in the immediate vicinity.*

T. C. L.

## CHAPTER I. *The Champlain Frontier*

IT is a well-known fact that during the American Revolution, New York State was a stronghold of Loyalism. While a difficult matter to estimate with any degree of certainty, available records would seem to indicate that the Loyalists may have constituted an actual majority of the total population, and the statement has even been made that New York furnished more men to the British forces engaged in this war than to the American.

What was true of the state as a whole applied equally to the then recently settled region extending from a point a few miles above the city of Albany to Lake Champlain. This area lay directly across the old war trail that ran through the Champlain Valley from Canada to the Hudson, and within easy striking distance of the French fortified posts at Ticonderoga and Crown Point; consequently, during the entire period of the Colonial Wars it had been unsafe for occupation.

The fall of Quebec in 1760 removed the menace of the French and Indians, and the region above Albany was soon opened for settlement in the manner usual to the colony. The lands were granted in large tracts to speculators: the Cambridge Patent of 31,500 acres in 1761, the Anaquassacoke Patent of 10,000 acres in 1762, the Wilson Patent for 8,000 acres in 1765, and others in like manner. These speculative proprietors in turn disposed of their holdings as rapidly as possible, usually by means of long-term leases on easy payments.

The tenants who leased these lands included large numbers of recent immigrants from Europe, some Scotch and Irish from the British Isles, with many Germans from the Rhine provinces. There was one small group of these new arrivals who could have been classed as of either Irish or German derivation. They were from Limerick County in Ireland, the descendants of refugee Germans from the Palatinate who had been colonized in Ireland during the reign of Queen Anne in an attempt to promote the Protestant interest in that kingdom. Due to the ministrations of John Wesley, these Irish Palatines had become zealous Methodists. The exactions of land-

lords eventually rendered living conditions in Ireland so difficult that in 1760 Phillip Embury, a lay preacher, conducted a party of his neighbors to New York City for the purpose of establishing there a linen industry. Cheap land on the frontier proved more attractive than the fabrication of linen, with the result that in 1773 Embury negotiated from James Duane, lawyer of New York City, a perpetual lease covering lands in the Camden District of Charlotte County on behalf of himself and the following associates: David Embury, Paul Heck, John Dulmage, Edward Carscallen, Peter Sperling, Valentine Detler, Abraham Binninger, Nathan Hawley, Elizabeth Hoffman, and Peter Miller.<sup>1</sup>

Peter Miller had been a weaver by trade. He had not come with the original party but had sailed from Ireland with his family in April, 1769, and on the long voyage to America one of the small children had been lost overboard. Soon after landing at New York City he had removed to Charlotte County and in 1773 participated in James Duane's lease to Embury to the extent of 125 acres. In the year following he secured, on a lease forever from Ryer Schermerhorn, an additional 210 acres just across the Battenkil in the Cambridge District of Albany County. The rent of the Cambridge farm was not to begin until five years after the date of the lease; it amounted to £7 annually in "York currency." By 1776 Peter Miller had made considerable progress in his farming, having cleared and fenced 46 acres of land, and erected a house and farm buildings at a cost of £39 "York." In addition, he had gotten together a respectable head of stock consisting of two mares, two colts, six cows, a yoke of oxen, a young steer, two calves, six sheep, and fourteen swine of assorted sizes. Relatively, he had prospered.

The advent of the political troubles in 1775 found a large section of this frontier population apathetic toward the issues involved. The foreign immigrants had not been long enough in the country to have become imbued with the political philosophy of the Revolution; they had come to America as a result of economic pressure and they had come land-hungry, intent only on the laborious task of subduing a wilderness. As a rule, these immigrants were not "politically minded"; they preferred a stable government under whose protection they could continue to clear their farms in peace, and in this case the established British institutions seemed to offer the desired strength and security. The conditions and opportunities that they had found

1. *History of Washington County*, W. H. Hill, p. 232.

in the new country were so great an improvement over those that they had left in Europe that an armed insurrection seemed to most the height of folly. As to the little Methodist colony in the Camden District, it was naturally influenced by the attitude of John Wesley, who was a militant opponent of the Revolution. With a population so constituted, a strong Loyalist sentiment would be expected, and such was the case on the Champlain frontier.

Moreover, there was scattered through the countryside a sprinkling of half-pay British officers, many of whom had settled down in the province following the reduction of two battalions of the 60th, or Royal American Regiment, at the conclusion of the last French War. These retired officers were persons of consequence in their communities, the natural leaders of public opinion, and as a matter of course their influence was actively exerted in their neighborhoods in the interest of the constituted authority.

Despite their numbers, the New York Loyalists were unable to offer any effectual resistance, and the Revolutionary Party was soon in control of the government. For the balance of the year 1775 the cause of the Revolution was everywhere successful and, with an American army invading Canada by way of Lake Champlain, the Loyalists on the border could do little but bide their time and wait for the tide to turn. The tide did turn in the following year, but the difficulties of the Loyalists increased rather than diminished. A neutral attitude would have suited many, had it been possible to maintain it, but the inhabitants were required to take an oath of allegiance and serve in the militia or else to submit to some form of restraint. There was the case of Peter Miller, farmer of Cambridge District in Albany County, who refused to subscribe to the oath of allegiance on the ground that he had already taken one as a British subject. John Younglove, chairman of the Cambridge District Committee of Correspondence, entered a complaint with the county committee, and it was voted "to apprehend the said Peter Miller, dis-arm him, and place him under bonds for his future good behavior";<sup>2</sup> the expense of his subsequent arrest and appearance before the committee in Albany, nineteen shillings and five pence, was ordered "levied by distress on the goods and chattels of the aforesaid Peter Miller."<sup>3</sup>

Until midsummer of 1776 the belief had been prevalent that a peaceful solution would be found of the matters at issue between the

2. *Albany County Committee of Correspondence*, Vol. 1, p. 413.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 543.

colonies and the Ministry, but with the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4th it was generally realized that a serious conflict would follow, and there set in a steady trickle of the more zealous Loyalist partisans toward Canada. The Johnsons and Butlers, the landed gentry of the Mohawk Valley, had already departed with their Highland Scotch retainers and Indian allies. Their example was soon followed by others, including such colorful figures as John Peters, a Yale graduate resident in Mooretown, Gloucester County, the Jessup brothers, lumber barons of Charlotte County, and sundry of the half-pay officers.

On July 12, 1776, the Albany County Committee of Correspondence passed a resolution requiring all the half-pay officers of the British Crown resident in the county to give a parole not to bear arms against the United States, hold any correspondence with enemies of the United States, or to depart the county without the leave of their district committee; the alternative offered was arrest and confinement.<sup>4</sup>

On the day following the passage of this resolve, Francis P. Phister appeared before the committee and entered into a parole.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Phister, a reduced lieutenant of the famous Royal Americans, lived at Hoosac Four Corners where he had a fine estate and a mill, and was known by the courtesy title of "Colonel" Phister. During his service in the Royal American Regiment he had been an engineer officer and in the previous February had refused an offer tendered by General Schuyler to serve as chief engineer of the American army in Canada.<sup>6</sup> He now under compulsion had given a parole, a violation of which would deprive him of the privileges that he might normally expect should he later find himself a prisoner of war.

As the months passed, the more restive spirits among the Loyalists continued to slip away toward Canada to take service in Sir John Johnson's newly organized Provincial corps, the "King's Royal Regiment of New York," or more familiarly, the "Loyal Yorkers," which was being recruited from the Mohawk Valley and the Champlain region. However, it was in the autumn of 1776 that the opportunity came for which so many of the Loyalists had been waiting.

During the summer General Sir Guy Carleton had swept back the American invasion from Canada, and by October had penetrated deep into enemy territory at Crown Point. Here he was held up by

4. *Albany County Committee of Correspondence*, Vol. 1, p. 488.

5. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 489.

6. *Lt. Hadden's Journal*, Horatio Rogers, p. 134.

the lateness of the season and ultimately was forced to retreat to winter quarters in Canada, but while the British army was at Crown Point Loyalist recruits flocked in. Among them was Peter Miller, who had earlier suffered arrest at Albany. He came with a party of some thirty Irish Palatine farmers from his neighborhood under the leadership of Justus Sherwood. Sherwood, as proprietor's clerk of New Haven, Vermont, had been active in the land troubles that preceded the Revolution and just before this had been mistreated by the Bennington mob, a piece of bucolic horseplay that cost the colonies the services of a brilliant officer.

It is probable that these Loyalists had left their homes for what they believed would be but a temporary absence, the brief interval necessary for Carleton to reach Albany and restore authority in the province. The event proved quite otherwise, and it was just as well that they were not aware of the misfortunes that were to follow. When the British army retreated over the Lake, they had no choice but to go with it, hopeful, of course, that they would be back as soon as the season would again permit of active operations.

## CHAPTER II. *The Burgoyne Campaign*

IN the spring of 1777 the stage was set in Canada for the most spectacular and dramatic military operation of the war, the ill-fated expedition of Lieutenant General John Burgoyne. During the previous winter a splendidly officered and equipped army had been assembled, and carefully trained in the tactics of wilderness warfare. The plan was to ascend the Champlain Valley by boat, take the forts at Crown Point and Ticonderoga, then march overland to the Hudson to effect a junction at Albany with Sir Henry Clinton, who was expected to advance from New York City.

Burgoyne did not anticipate serious military resistance, but the problem of maintaining the long line of communication and supply was a troublesome one, and he was counting heavily on the support of the New York Loyalists, once in the difficult country south of the Lake. With this in view, Ebenezer Jessup and John Peters had each received provisional appointments to the command of Loyalist corps, which they were expected to raise, Jessup in Charlotte and Peters in Albany County. Carleton had supplied Burgoyne with blank com-

missions, to be issued when the respective corps were two-thirds complete.

Both Jessup and Peters were early at work, with secret agents reaching down into the Loyalist sections north of Albany, spreading propaganda and soliciting recruits. When the army left Canada in June, they had the nucleus of their battalions, a combined total of eighty-three men,<sup>1</sup> most of whom had followed Carleton from Crown Point the previous autumn. Justus Sherwood was a captain under Peters and in his company Peter Miller was a private. The forts at Crown Point and Ticonderoga proved impotent to impede the British advance and in July the army was at Skenesboro, now Whitehall, the southern extremity of the Lake and near the country where Jessup and Peters expected to secure the bulk of their men. From there Burgoyne wrote to Lord George Germain on July 11th that his Loyalist battalions, though in embryo, were very promising; they had fought, and with spirit, and some hundreds of men had joined since arriving at that place.<sup>2</sup>

Four weeks later when Baum was detached to seize the stores at Bennington, Peters' Loyalists formed part of his force; in fact, the completion of this unit was one of the primary objects of the expedition, which was entering a region where Peters was well known. As Baum's troops moved out from Fort Miller, they were preceded by Sherwood's company of Peters' corps. An American picket was encountered at Cambridge, there was a trifling skirmish, and the advance continued. When the movement began, Peters had something over two hundred and sixty men; on the march he was joined by nearly two hundred more, enough to make his required quota and secure the coveted commission.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile, "Colonel" Phister of Hoosac in conjunction with Mr. Robert Leake of Pittstown, son of the late British commissary general, had been active in raising the countryside. An American participant in the action that followed wrote that "the greater part of Dutch Hoosac was in the battle against us."<sup>4</sup> Phister and Leake gathered their men in time to join Baum on the Walloomsac, where the whole command was cut to pieces by Stark's militia. Baum and Phister, both mortally wounded in the action, were taken to a house

1. *A State of the Expedition*, J. Burgoyne, "Evidence," p. 74.

2. *Ibid.*, App. XX, No. 8.

3. *History of New York*, Thomas Jones, Vol. 1, p. 690.

4. *The Hoosac Valley*, G. G. Niles, "The Rudd Letter," p. 548.

in Shaftsbury where they died on the following day. For the Loyalists, Bennington was a catastrophe. In addition to the heavy casualties in Phister's corps, Colonel Peters had lost upwards of half his command, and the men who would have been more than enough to ensure his commission were either killed or taken before they had been even formally mustered.<sup>5</sup>

When the survivors of Baum's shattered force rejoined the army on the Hudson, Captain Samuel MacKay, another reduced officer of the Royal Americans, was appointed to command the remnants of Phister's corps, now known as the "Loyal Volunteers." Peter Miller secured a transfer to this unit, which had been raised in his own neighborhood. He had escaped the carnage at Bennington, but his brother had been wounded and taken prisoner.

By this time Burgoyne's Loyalists were divided into four distinct corps under the three commanders already mentioned, and a fourth, Captain Daniel MacAlpin, also a retired officer of the Royal American Regiment. On September 1st these four corps reached the maximum strength attained at any one time on the campaign, a combined total of six hundred and eighty men.<sup>6</sup> As Burgoyne worked slowly southward, the Loyal Volunteers formed the advance posts of Fraser's "flying army," and daily screened the march with their scouting parties. On September 21st one hundred and twenty "brave men of courage and fidelity" were drafted from the four Loyalist corps as replacements into the regular British battalions, which had become sadly depleted from the heavy fighting at the first battle of Saratoga.<sup>7</sup>

When it finally became evident that he could not fight his way through to Albany, General Burgoyne reluctantly decided on a retreat. To facilitate this proposed movement he despatched a working party, guarded by the 47th Regiment and MacKay's Provincials, back up the Hudson to repair the roads and bridges. When within three miles of Fort Edward, the threat of a serious American attack necessitated the recall of the 47th to the army. The regulars were hardly out of sight before the Loyal Volunteers found themselves confronted by a superior enemy force and cut off. MacKay succeeded in withdrawing from the river bank to the cover of a nearby wood, where he was able to maintain his position, but in so doing lost

5. *History of New York*, Thomas Jones, Vol. 1, p. 688.

6. *A State of the Expedition*, J. Burgoyne, "Evidence," p. 86.

7. *Ibid.*, Supplement, p. 25.

forty-three of his hundred and eighty men. Finding it impracticable to return to the British camp, he made good a retreat to Fort George, from where, learning of Burgoyne's surrender, he continued on to Ticonderoga.<sup>8</sup> Brigadier Powell reported from Mount Independence on October 19th that MacKay had arrived with a hundred men and that other small parties had since come in.<sup>9</sup>

The three remaining Loyalist corps were also fortunate enough to avoid the consequences of the surrender at Saratoga. The night before the Convention was signed, the commander-in-chief, through General Phillips, gave leave to the Provincials to attempt an escape to Canada.<sup>10</sup> This was done, in all probability, because a grave doubt existed as to whether the Loyalists would be accorded the status of prisoners of war, inasmuch as so many of them had already taken the oath of allegiance to the State of New York. Fortunately, the Loyalists were able to make their way back successfully without further losses, and a total of five hundred and sixty-two men subsequently returned in safety to Canada.<sup>11</sup>

In the investigation that followed his return to England, General Burgoyne was severely critical of the New York Loyalists and of the troops that they had furnished to his army. He had expected the country to rise *en masse* at his approach and felt that he had been sadly misinformed in regard to the Loyalists, both as to their numbers and their zeal for the Royal cause. In this connection it must be remembered that the General was a bitterly disappointed man, anxious to advance other reasons than his own errors, for the misfortunes that had overtaken him. The country through which he had penetrated was at best but a thinly settled frontier, and in the latter part of the campaign it must have been evident that his success was problematical. He had displayed throughout a total lack of tact in the tone of his official proclamations, and above all, in his threats to let loose the Indians. Candor compels the admission that there had been considerable shuffling about on the part of the inhabitants, following the fluctuations in the fortunes of war. It was true that many who flocked to Burgoyne's camp to "take protection," as it was termed, were actuated by expediency rather than conviction, but it

8. *Narrative of Captain Samuel MacKay*, p. 10.

9. *Canada Archives*, 1890, State Papers, p. 102.

10. *History of New York*, Thomas Jones, Vol. 1, p. 683.

11. *History of Canada*, Kingsford, Vol. 6, p. 249.

was the only way that those exposed settlers could ensure the safety of their homes and families.

Burgoyne was particularly harsh in his strictures on the Provincial troops. "Their various interests made them hard to handle; one's view was to the profit to be enjoyed when his corps was complete, another's the protection of the district in which he resided, while a third was wholly intent on personal revenge." The General had found them all insubordinate, involved in a multiplicity of personal squabbles that required the personal interposition of the commander-in-chief, and "useful only for searching cattle, patrolling roads, and guiding; a few were of distinguished bravery, including Mr. Fistar [Phister] and Captain Sherwood."<sup>12</sup> He referred to the "desertion or timidity of the Provincials in the last days of the Expedition";<sup>13</sup> again, "not half of the four hundred Loyalists may be depended upon, the rest are trimmers, actuated by self interest."<sup>14</sup> Colonel Kingston, his adjutant general, referred to MacKay's corps as "that party of Provincials that ran away while they were employed to repair roads, and that were never heard of afterwards."<sup>15</sup>

It may be admitted that the Provincials were not trained troops and could not be expected to display the steadiness of the disciplined British regulars. However, in addition to the guiding and scouting activities enumerated by the General, the Loyalists, from Hubbardton on, had been heavily engaged in every action of the campaign; if casualties are any criterion, and they are usually so considered, the record of the Provincials compared favorably with that of the best British battalions. In joining the British forces the Loyalists had risked not only their lives, but their homes and property as well, and the dismal failure of the Expedition cost them one or the other, or both. To the Provincial officers in particular, the campaign proved an unmitigated hardship. They had expended freely their money and credit in recruiting, expecting to recover from the pay and allowances of their prospective ranks, but in this they were grievously disappointed, for General Burgoyne saw fit to withhold the commissions on the ground that, technically, their units had failed to attain the required strength.

12. *A State of the Expedition*, J. Burgoyne, "Review of Evidence," p. 102.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

14. *Ibid.*, App. XXIV, No. 9.

15. *Ibid.*, "Kingston's Testimony," p. 88.

### CHAPTER III. *After Saratoga*

THE Burgoyne Expedition was the outstanding and, in fact, the last major military operation of the war on the Champlain frontier. The Provincial corps, although reorganized from time to time, were continued as auxiliaries to the British forces in Canada, but in the succeeding years were employed either on minor raids and scouting parties, or in the operations in the Mohawk Valley. These troops were not Canadians, as is sometimes stated, but were recruited exclusively from the revolted colonies and principally from the northern counties of New York. It was with the greatest difficulty that these units were kept up to strength, and recruiting was actively carried on by secret agents who operated even in the city of Albany itself.

Following the return to Canada the Loyal Volunteers were temporarily attached to Sir John Johnson's corps. In the succeeding reorganizations of the Loyalists this unit lost its identity, but Captain Robert Leake's "Independent Company," formed at Sorel in the summer of 1779, had much the same personnel.<sup>1</sup> This unit saw service on the Mohawk, and in 1780 relieved the Loyal Yorkers at Carleton Island, the fortified post at the entrance to Lake Ontario. Peter Miller served in this company until his honorable discharge in the winter of 1781; his two stepsons were with Butler's Rangers at Niagara.

The failure of the Burgoyne Expedition affected profoundly the fortunes and futures of the Loyalist families in the northern counties of New York. They had openly declared themselves and were marked down for reprisal; it was not long before there was a program of persecutions and confiscations directed at the families of those "who had gone with the enemy," and with it the resultant opportunities for the satisfaction of personal grudges and neighborhood spites. Later, the program of confiscations or sequestrations developed into a series of measures that had for their purpose the bodily removal of these families from the state.

On June 30, 1778, the New York legislature passed an act to "prevent mischiefs arising from the influence of Persons of equivocal and suspected characters."<sup>2</sup> It was intended to counteract the in-

1. *Canada Archives*, 1888, p. 684.

2. *Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies*, Vol. 2, p. 783.

fluence of certain prominent people who had professed neutrality, but whose motives were in question; they were required to renew their oath of allegiance in a positive manner and, if they refused, were to be removed forthwith to within the enemy lines. In accordance with this act, John Stevenson, Richard Cartwright, John van Alen, and Isaac Man were ordered to appear at the Albany Court House on August 19, 1778, to be removed northward within the enemy lines.<sup>3</sup> They were to provide fourteen days' provisions for themselves and such of their families as they chose to accompany them (persons capable of bearing arms excepted). Also, they were permitted to take with them all their clothing and household furniture, but the charges for transportation to the enemy lines were to be defrayed by themselves.<sup>4</sup>

Up to now the migration of Loyalists to Canada had been largely confined to men of military age on their way to take service with the Provincials, but on July 23, 1778, Mrs. Phister, widow of Colonel Phister, and a Mrs. Cooper had arrived from Albany.<sup>5</sup> In the fall of that year Brigadier Powell reported from St. Johns that women and children from Albany County and the Connecticut River were coming down the Lake.<sup>6</sup> They were the families of Loyalists with the troops in Canada who had found their situation intolerable, and had been fortunate enough to be able to make their way out. On September 21st the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies directed General Stark to provide a "flag" to Canada for Mrs. Wrag of Fort Miller, Catharine Rederpach, and Mary England, as it appeared that these women whose husbands were with the enemy had become chargeable to the districts in which they resided and were being subsisted at public expense.<sup>7</sup>

The fact was that these families of Loyalists "with the enemy" were becoming something of an embarrassment to the New York authorities. They were, rightly enough, suspected of being in communication with their relatives in Canada, and their presence was considered inimical to the public security. They had been already stripped of most of their possessions, and as they were, or were likely to become, public charges, there was no point in their remaining

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 209.

4. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 190.

5. *Canada Archives*, 1887, p. 295.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 338.

7. *Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies*, Vol. 1, p. 238.

longer. On April 15, 1779, the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies resolved that "from the frequent complaints which are exhibited to the Board that the wives of such disaffected Persons who are gone over to the enemy daily harbor Persons who conceal themselves and their holding correspondence with their Husbands it is conceived necessary to prevent this evil, to remove them within the Enemy lines."<sup>8</sup>

On July 1, 1780, and again on March 22, 1781, the New York legislature enacted laws for the purpose of the "Removal of the Families of Persons who have joined the enemy."<sup>9</sup> They were to be given twenty days' notice to either depart the state or to go to such parts of it as were within the enemy's power; at their discretion they could take any of their children not above twelve years of age. The authorities were empowered to take and sell all the goods and chattels in the possession of these persons, and apply the money to defray the expense of their removal.

In accordance with these laws Daniel B. Bradt, Supervisor for the District of Hosick, certified on September 20, 1780, that he had warned the following women to depart the state within twenty days: Rebecca Ruyter, Sarah Cameron, Catharina Best, Elizabeth Ruyter, Hannah Simpson, Elizabeth Letcher, Arcante Wies, Maria Young, and Susannah Lantman.<sup>10</sup> On October 7, 1780, a return was signed by John Younglove of Cambridge District that he had warned the following: Elizabeth Hogle, wife of John Hogle, who had been killed at Bennington, Jane Hogle, wife of Francis Hogle, and the three children of Simeon Covell.<sup>11</sup>

Concentration points were named where these parties designated for removal were to report with two weeks' provisions. From these places the refugees were forwarded under a flag of truce to Crown Point where they boarded British vessels that brought them to Pointe Au Fer and thence to St. Johns.<sup>12</sup> To the end of the war there was a constant succession of these "flags" over the Lake, bringing refugee families from New York and New England. The family of Peter Miller, who had joined the British five years earlier at Crown Point, came in during the fall of 1781. They had been turned from their

8. *Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies*, Vol. 1, p. 327.

9. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 794, 799.

10. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 527.

11. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 540.

12. *Canada Archives*, 1887, p. 338.

two farms, which reverted to the possession of the landlords; the house and barns, the horses and cattle, the sheep and hogs, and the growing crops had all been lost,—but his wife had saved the furniture!<sup>13</sup>

The Champlain Valley was not the only avenue of approach to Canada used by the Loyalists. The same things were happening in the other counties of the state, and as the war slowly dragged to a conclusion the refugees were streaming in overland by every available route. When peace finally brought the melancholy business to a close and the city of New York was evacuated by the British troops, whole shiploads of Loyalists left by sea for Quebec.

As the Loyalists for the most part entered the province in a distressed or destitute condition, the government was placed under the necessity of providing for their maintenance and comfort, and this was done as adequately as the available means would permit. Cantonments were established for the accommodation of the refugees at Montreal, Machiche, Sorel, St. Johns, and other places, and a system of rationing instituted. Peter Miller was quartered at Montreal with his wife and three children.<sup>14</sup> They were allowed two portions of provisions per day, but when the oldest daughter was married the allowance was reduced to one and one-half portions.<sup>15</sup> On November 16, 1784, there were 5,652 refugee Loyalists—men, women, and children—on the provision list;<sup>16</sup> at this time the total population of the Province of Quebec, which then included the area later divided into Upper and Lower Canada, was less than 115,000 souls.<sup>17</sup>

#### CHAPTER IV. *Haldimand's Problem*

THE burden of the maintenance of these hundreds of refugees proved a severe tax on the resources at the disposal of the Provincial government. The Governor General at the time, Frederick Haldimand, was a Swiss soldier of fortune who had entered the British service in 1754 at the formation of the 60th, or Royal American Regiment, of which he had organized and commanded the second battalion. Through sheer merit he had risen through the various

13. *Ontario Archives*, 1904, Part 1, p. 407.

14. *Haldimand Papers*, Book 166, p. 96.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 129.

16. *Canada Archives*, 1889, p. 109.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

grades until in 1773, at the departure of Gage for England, he had succeeded to the rank of commander-in-chief in America. On the return of General Gage in the following year Haldimand continued on the staff as Major General, second in command, and the logical successor to Gage in the event of the latter's impending retirement. It is interesting to speculate as to what would have been the probable outcome, if the conduct of the war had been left in his competent hands. However, the actual state of rebellion in the colonies required on constitutional grounds that the troops should be commanded by native-born officers; consequently, Haldimand was relieved in October, 1775, and given a nominal appointment as Inspector General of the West India Department,<sup>1</sup> but was recalled to the American continent in 1778 to succeed Sir Guy Carleton as commander-in-chief of the Province of Quebec.

Haldimand was a soldier, and his was frankly a military government, but he was a capable and conscientious officer with an imperial breadth of view. When the refugees first began to come into the province, he had not hesitated to assume the responsibility for their relief; as the months passed and their numbers increased, he had done all in his power to alleviate their condition. There were times when Haldimand felt that the refugees did not properly appreciate his efforts in their behalf; in fact, his relations with the Loyalists frequently moved him to the point of exasperation. The refugees were difficult to satisfy and often unreasonably demanding; they did not get on well with the authorities or with each other, and they were restless, critical, and impatient under any restraint, however well-intentioned. Their attitude, however, is easily understandable when it is recalled that they had suffered the loss of their homes and possessions, and found themselves destitute in a strange land for no fault other than loyalty to their legally constituted government. It was too much to expect that such a situation could or would be taken philosophically.

Naturally, the arrangement of housing the refugees in cantonments was an emergency measure designed to relieve a temporary condition. Until nearly the end of the war the Loyalists had confidently expected an outcome that would permit them to return to their former homes in the revolted colonies, but when the terms of the Treaty of Paris became known it was painfully apparent that there were no provisions to safeguard their interests effectually. Any

1. *Canada Archives*, 1885, p. 230.

thought of a return to the United States was definitely out of the question, and they were now squarely presented with the problem of a permanent disposition of their affairs.

This question of what was to become of the Loyalist refugees was one that had given General Haldimand much concern. Racial and religious factors would render difficult their easy assimilation into the older and more settled portions of that former French province; neither could they be expected to take kindly to its peculiar political institutions or semi-feudal land tenure.

In August, 1783, the Governor General had received a suggestion from Lord North to the effect that the land to the eastward of the St. Lawrence, bounded south and west by the revolted colonies, also the Bay of Chaleurs, were eligible places for Loyalist settlements.<sup>2</sup> Replying to Lord North, Haldimand had definitely stated his policy on this point, as follows: "the frontier to the east of the St. Lawrence should be left unsettled for some time, and then by French Canadians, as an antidote to the restless New England population . . . the danger of mischief by the settling of Loyalists, who could not agree with the Americans . . . will settle them on the St. Lawrence towards the Ottawa, and on the Bay of Chaleurs."<sup>3</sup>

The key to Haldimand's policy lay in the fact that the events of the war had demonstrated the urgent necessity of settlements in the vicinity of the "Upper Posts," the forts on the upper St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes. The excessive cost of the maintenance and supply of these remote points had imposed a terrific financial burden, but their retention was a political and military necessity. The General had now in his grasp a complete solution to the problem. On the one hand, there was a surplus and unattached population absolutely under his control, a population already inured to the privations of pioneer life and thoroughly fitted in every way to cope with frontier conditions; on the other, a wide extent of desirable territory whose settlement was dictated by every consideration of governmental policy.

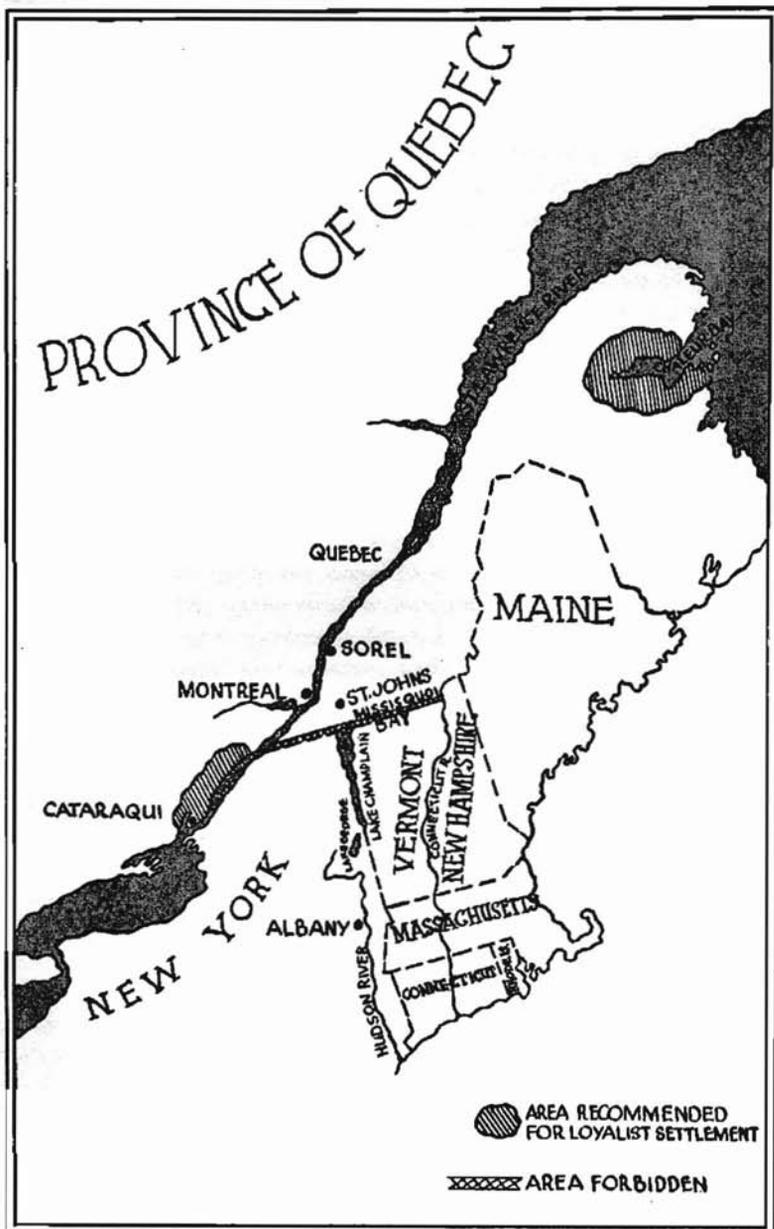
Accordingly, during the summer and early fall of 1783 surveying parties were despatched to locate suitable tracts for settlements, both up the river west of Lake St. Francis<sup>4</sup> and down the St. Lawrence to the Bay of Chaleurs.<sup>5</sup> Already, on August 27, 1783, Haldimand

2. *Canada Archives*, 1885, p. 309.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 355.

4. *Ibid.*, 1888, p. 843.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 754.



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