

# Kings County Memories

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“The Kings County Gazette”~ Est. 1782

The Revolutionary War 1776~1783

Loyalists and Patriots 225 Years Ago



General Sir Guy Carleton  
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“**The Kings County Gazette**” Newspaper of the Kings County Historical Society, ~ Est. 1782  
Cover Story by Miss A. Baxter, Reporter~ **The Conflict~’Looking Back’**~ Who, When, Where, Why and How It Happened!

## **The Loyalists ~ ‘All The King’s Men and Ladies’**

### **“The Golden Royal Coach of Four Tons Made the Ground Tremble!”**

It was as if the very grandeur, wealth and weight of the British Empire were rolling past on the afternoon of Thursday, October 26, 1775, an empire that now included Canada. **His Royal Majesty George III** rode in royal splendour, pulled by eight magnificent Hanoverian Cream horses. No mortal on earth rode in such style as the British King. London, with its population at nearly a million souls, was the largest city in Europe and widely considered the capital of the world. **The British King** arrived at the Palace of Westminster, there to address the opening of Parliament on the increasingly distressing issue of war in America.

**George III** had been twenty-two when he succeeded to the throne, a man of simple tastes and few pretensions. And in notable contrast to much of fashionable society and the Court, where mistresses and infidelities were not only an accepted part of life, but often flaunted, the King remained steadfastly faithful to his very plain Queen, the German princess Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, with whom by now he had produced ten children. Still youthful at thirty-seven, and still hardworking after fifteen years on the throne, he could be notably wilful and often shortsighted, but he was sincerely patriotic and duty-bound. “**George, be a King!**” his mother had told him. As the crisis in America grew worse, and the opposition in Parliament became more strident, he saw clearly that he must play the part of the patriot-king. He had never been a soldier. He had never been to America. But with absolute certainty he knew what must be done. He would trust to Providence and his high sense of duty.

### **“America Must Be Made To Obey!”**

**George III** had written to his Prime Minister, **Frederick Lord North**, that he was certain any other course but compelling obedience would be ruinous and that he would not swerve from his present path which he thought himself duty-bound to follow. In the House of Lords in March of 1775, both **Lord Sandwich** and **General James Grant** boasted that Britain could win the War. However several of the most powerful speakers in Parliament, **John Wilkes**, the Lord Mayor of London; and the leading Whig intellectual, **Edmund Burke**, had voiced ardent support and admiration of the Americans and called for conciliation. However Parliament decided what was best for America, and convinced that his army at Boston was insufficient, the King dispatched reinforcements and three of his best generals; **William Howe**, **John Burgoyne**, and **Henry Clinton** to the thirteen colonies.

**General William Howe**~ Howe had served in America during the Seven Years’ War, under Gen. James Wolfe, who called him the best officer in the King’s service. He served as commander of British Forces at the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 17<sup>th</sup> 1775 where, although it was a British victory, His Majesty’s forces had suffered more than 1000 casualties. He was stunned at the terrible cost of victory. “The success is too dearly bought!” The news reached King George in July, over a month later, and hardened his resolve to persist. A British ship out of Boston brought 170 sick and wounded to Plymouth, officers and soldiers, “all in great distress”.

### **1775 “The Horrors of the War Come Home to Britain in This Published Account “**

“A few of the men came on shore, when never hardly were seen such objects: some without legs, others without arms; and their clothes hanging on them like a loose morning gown, so much were they fallen away by sickness and want of nourishment. There were, moreover, near sixty women and children on board, the widows and children of men who were slain. Some of these too exhibited a most shocking spectacle; and even the vessel itself, though very large, was almost intolerable, from the stench arising from the sick and wounded”.

### **Ruth Nicholls (Loyalist) Widow of Bunker Hill**

(**George Nichols** of Newport, Rhode Island, was killed at the Battle of Bunker Hill. His widow, **Ruth**, and two sons were among those evacuated to New York in 1781, later arriving on the **Union**, the first ship of the Loyalist Spring Fleet to dock in St. John Harbour on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1783. Ruth’s descendent, Marje Wilson, lives in Sussex.)

## ``Generals Clinton and Howe Disagree``

**General Sir Henry Clinton**~ (April 16, 1738- December 23, 1795) was dispatched with reinforcements in March of 1775 to strengthen the British position in Boston. He was one of the British field commanders in the Battle of Bunker Hill. Clinton and Howe disagreed on tactical manoeuvres. However his plan for an assault on New York August 1776 proved a great success in the Battle of Long Island, for which he was made a Lieutenant-General. In December Howe sent Clinton, in command of 6,000 men, to occupy Newport, Rhode Island, which he accomplished. In May of 1778, Clinton replaced Howe as Commander-in-Chief for North America.

### “All The King’s Men And Ladies”

**Charles Cornwallis**~ (1738-1805) A British general and a colonial governor, Charles served with distinction during the American Revolution. He won the Battle of Brandywine, and captured Philadelphia in 1777 and Charleston in 1780. He was finally forced to surrender to Washington at Yorktown in 1781, ending the War.

**Lord George Germaine**~ In November 1776, King George III appointed him as Secretary for the American colonies, replacing the Earl of Dartmouth, whose attitude to the war was less than whole-hearted. He was a proud, intelligent, exceedingly serious man of sixty, tall, physically impressive, and, notably unlike the King and Lord North, as he was a soldier. He had served in the Seven Years’ War in Germany. As a politician in the years since, he had performed diligently, earning a high reputation as an administrator. In his new role he would direct the main operations of the war and was expected to take a firm hand. For the “riotous rebels” of America, he had no sympathy. The King thought highly of him.

### “The Role of the Six Nations Iroquois in King George’s War”

**Molly Brant**~ Molly was one of the most influential people in the American Revolution because of, not in spite of, her being a woman. She was born about 1736 of mixed Onondaga and Wyandot parentage in the Upper Mohawk castle of Canajoharie in New York. Bridging two cultures as distinct as the European and the Mohawk of the Six Nations Iroquois, Knowatsi’tsienni forged between her people of upper New York and the British a consensus that altered the destinies of both peoples. Molly enjoyed a high status as the relict of a powerful British land baron and Indian agent, and as a diplomat and stateswoman at the head of a society of Six Nations matrons who wielded immense power and authority in traditional Iroquoian government. Molly was married by Mohawk rites to Sir William Johnson, colonial baron, whose leadership in upper New York made him an influential voice throughout the Mohawk Valley. Following Sir William’s death in 1774, Molly wielded considerable influence over the Iroquois Confederacy. Whenever their loyalty wavered, she was able to convince the Confederacy to continue their support for Britain throughout the Revolution. Because of their loyalty the Six Nations Confederacy was dispossessed of its extensive lands following the Treaty of Paris in 1783. The Iroquois, including Molly Brant and her seven children, were forced to flee as refugees with some 7,000 other U.E. Loyalists to Quebec

### **Sir Guy Carleton~In Charge of the Loyalist Migration!**

**His Mission**~ “To remain on duty until every man, woman, and child who wanted to leave is safely moved to British soil.” After the Battle of Yorktown and the capitulation of Lord Cornwallis in October 1781, Sir Guy Carleton was appointed Commander-in-Chief, North America on Feb. 22, 1782, and he arrived in New York City on May 6, 1782, succeeding General Sir Henry Clinton. In August, he was informed that Britain would grant the United States its independence. Carleton asked to be relieved of his command. With the ‘news’ there became an exodus of Loyalists wanting to leave the Thirteen Colonies. Carleton did his best to resettle both Loyalists and slaves, about 30,000 in all. On Nov. 28, the evacuation ended, and Carleton returned to England.

### **Brook Watson~ “the Wooden -Legged Commissary”**

In 1782 **Brook Watson** became commissary-general to the British Army in America, under Sir Guy Carleton, who was commander-in-chief. Through the War he was known as the Wooden-legged Commissary. He had lost his leg to a shark in his youth. In 1783 it became his task to provide transportation from New York for thousands of United Empire Loyalists who were fleeing for safety in British North America. Many Loyalists wrote letters

praising his work on their behalf. When he returned to London, he was appointed the first agent of N.B. in England. In this position he was able to help in many settlements of Loyalist claims for property losses during the Revolution. (Brook Watson~ Read his story in 'Our New Brunswick Story').

### **John Ward~From Peekskill to Ward's Creek, Sussex, Kings County**

**John Ward**, born in 1752 at Peekskill, Hudson River, was appointed in 1777 by General Sir William Howe as an ensign in Col. Beverley Robinson's regiment. In 1778 he received a Lieutenant's commission from General Sir Henry Clinton. The last of the troops that left New York for Parr Town were under his command. The landing was at Lower Cove. As shelter could not be found, Lieut. Ward, with his troops, camped under canvas through the winter on the ground known as the Barrack Square. The tents were trenched around and covered with spruce, brought in the boats of the transports from Partridge Island. Lieut. Ward later drew lot #412, King Street, and shortly after removed to Sussex, Kings County. Ward's Creek was named after him.

### **The Patriots~ Washington's "Military" Family**

**General George Washington** first took command at Cambridge at age 43 in 1777. With his height (six feet, two inches) and his beautifully attired military attire, the commander-in-chief was easy to distinguish in an army where almost no one was as tall and few had even a semblance of a uniform. A leader, the General believed, ought to both act and look the part. (Quote from 1776, by author David McCullough)

**General Nathaniel Greene** of Rhode Island, a handsome, good-natured Quaker who walked with a limp, knew little of military life other than what he had read in books, when, at thirty-three, he became the youngest brigadier general in the American army. With experience, he would stand second only to Washington. He wore down the British in a series of battles hard fought. His motto was: "We fight, get beat, rise, and fight again."

**Joseph Reed**~ Of those of his immediate staff, his military "family", as he called it, Washington prized especially Joseph Reed, a talented young Philadelphia attorney who served as secretary and became his closest confidante. Reed had great admiration for his commander. Washington wrote to Reed on January 23, 1776; "It is absolutely necessary for me to have persons that can think for me, as well as execute orders."

**General John Sullivan** was an ambitious New Hampshire politician turned soldier, who had courage and tenacity, but was headstrong, Washington saw him as spirited and zealously attached to the cause, but as a man touched with a "tincture of vanity" and too great a "desire of being popular". He did not have Gen. Greene's ability.

**General Henry Knox**~ a big, gregarious, artilleryman. Knox, the former Boston bookseller, was, like his friend, Nathaniel Greene, a man of marked ability, which Washington saw from the start. Under the most trying conditions, through the darkest hours, Knox proved an outstanding leader, capable of accomplishing almost anything, and, like Greene, he remained steadfastly loyal to Washington.

**Captain Charles W. Peale**~The Philadelphia artist, was in charge of the Philadelphia volunteer militia. Charles painted the portraits of General Washington, Joseph Reed, General Greene, General Knox, and his self-portrait.

**Colonel Thomas Mifflin**~ The handsome Colonel, a young aide-de-camp to Washington, his quarter-master general, belonged to one of Philadelphia's most prominent families. He and his beautiful stylish wife, Sarah, added a distinct touch of glamour to Washington's circle. Of note too, was General Gates' English wife, Elizabeth, who caused a sensation by going about in a mannish English riding habit.

### **Patriot Wife~ "Molly Pitcher" on the Battlefield at Monmouth in 1778**

An artillery wife, **Mary Hays McCauly** (better known as Molly Pitcher) shared the rigors of Valley Forge with her husband, William Hays. Her actions during the battle of Monmouth on June 28, 1778 became legendary. That day was as hot as Valley Forge was cold. Someone had to cool the hot guns and bathe parched throats. Across that bullet-swept ground, a striped skirt fluttered. Mary was earning her name "Molly Pitcher" by bringing pitchers of water to the exhausted and thirsty men, and tending the wounded. When her artilleryman husband was wounded, she took charge of his post and stayed in the face of enemy fire acting as a gunner. For her heroic role, Washington himself issued her a warrant as a non-commissioned officer. Thereafter she was hailed as "Sergeant Molly".

### **Benedict Arnold~ ‘Traitor’**

Benedict Arnold was different~ a military hero for both sides in the same war. He began his career as an American patriot in May 1777, when he and Ethan Allan led the brigade that captured Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain. For 5 years Arnold served the patriot side with distinction in one battle after another. No general was more imaginative, more daring or more courageous than Arnold. Yet Arnold has gone down in history as a villain, a military traitor, who as commander of the American fort at West Point, New York, in 1780, schemed to hand it over to the British. Arnold was ambitious and extravagant, an egocentric man who craved power and the financial rewards that came with it. He was intrepid and ruthless, willing to risk his life and the lives of others for gain.

### **John Paul Jones~ “Bold Privateer”~Terror, Plunder and Profit On Canada’s Atlantic Coast**

The American Navy’s great hero was John Paul Jones, who undertook devastating attacks off the Cape Breton coast in late 1776. The nature of privateering gave the rebels many advantages over the big, powerful ships of the Royal Navy. In November of 1776, the privateer ‘Alfred’, under the command of John Paul Jones, left Rhode Island for Cape Breton with the sloop Providence to liberate American prisoners held there. His Nova Scotia cruise proved spectacularly successful as his crew captured and took five vessels back to New England. During the course of the War, Halifax authorities issued commissions to local privateers to confront their rebel attackers who outnumbered them. By the spring of 1783 American privateering attacks on Nova Scotia at last ceased. However the economy was devastated by the War and was soon strained by the influx of desperate Loyalist refugees.

### **Breaking News! May 11<sup>th</sup>, 1783**

**Loyalist Ships from New York Are Spotted entering the St. John Harbour!  
The Spring Fleet Has Arrived! Portland, May 18, 1783**

**Editor~** Our Reporter, **Miss Baxter**, is on the dock with Major Gilfred Studholme, James White, Betsey and children; James Simonds, and William Hazen, to await the arrival of the first ship, the Union. Miss Baxter has the privileged opportunity of interviewing the Major and the Traders while they wait for the Loyalists to arrive.

**Major Studholme~** “I was born in Ireland in 1740. I was 16 when I became an ensign in the 27<sup>th</sup> Foot and was sent to Nova Scotia in 1757. In 1761 I helped Col. Robert Monckton rebuild the old French fort across the harbour which was renamed Fort Frederick. Seven years later the garrison was withdrawn, save for a Corporal and four men. They were captured in 1775 by American privateers and Fort Frederick was burnt. I had retired from the Army before the start of the War of Independence, but at its outbreak I rejoined as a captain in the Loyal Nova Scotia Volunteers. I was then transferred to the Royal Fencible American Regiment. With the destruction of the fort, our people in and about this small trading settlement at Portland Point were at the mercy of privateers. James White, James Simonds, and William Hazen had started a profitable lumbering, fishing, and fur trade in 1762 when they arrived from Massachusetts. They also feared for their lives as they were pressed by zealous rebels to abandon Kings George III in favour of General Washington. The Indians had begun to show hostility, so William Hazen made the hazardous trip to Halifax to seek help from the British Garrison. I was sent with soldiers and just in time to put to flight the American raiders. However, as soon as we left, they returned, plundering the warehouses and burning. Again William Hazen came to Halifax for help, and General Massey, the English commander there, ordered me to return and remain. I brought with me 100 soldiers of the Royal Fencible American Regiment, a frame blockhouse and armaments. We then built Fort Howe, named after Gen. William Howe. Fort Howe protected this post throughout the War. I am in charge of settling our Loyalist families, some 3,000 men, women and children. The guns of Fort Howe will salute their arrival as the ships enter the harbour.”

**James Simonds~** “I came to Nova Scotia from Haverhill, Mass. at great expense and at risk of my life, in search of the best land and conditions. I served at the taking of Ticonderoga in 1757 with an Uncle Hazen, and learned about the rich valley of the St. John from Uncle Moses Hazen. I and my brother, Richard, helped the Peabody-Perley advance party survey the upriver lands they would later settle. I went back to Massachusetts with glowing accounts of possibilities for business there. In 1764 a party of six of us worked on our enterprise. James White and I lived at the St. John post while William Hazen handled the Boston and Newburyport operations.”

**James White Sr.~** “I joined a Massachusetts regiment of foot as ensign on July 1, 1761. I was stationed at Crown Point, at the narrows of Lake Champlain. I served as assistant to Samuel Blodgett, a sutler or provider of supplies

and services. Thus my knowledge of book-keeping for the St. John trading post, and principal agent for the fur trade. The Indians call me Kwa-pit or “beaver” as beaver fur is the standard currency for barter. Sam Blodgett sends me the current best-seller novels as I like to read. I married Elizabeth Peabody and this is my young son, James Jr. In August of 1778, the Indians turned against the British. Word reached us that hundreds of Maliseets and Micmacs had taken to the warpath. As the Indians had always trusted me, I took a canoe and set off upriver to the Long Reach where I met a flotilla of 90 canoeloads of war-painted Indians, and persuaded them to come ashore and confer. It took me several days to parlay with the Chiefs, until Maliseet Pierre Tomah, who had reverted to the American side, changed back again to support me, and finally all agreed to come to a grand council meeting at the rivermouth. A peace treaty was signed on Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> 1778, with an oath of allegiance to King George III.

**William Hazen**~ “I was 21 years old when I enlisted in the Massachusetts Rangers. to go to Quebec. I have my powder horn enscribed with my name and the map of the route we took back then. It is my prized possession. It was late in the summer of 1762 when we arrived here. There were about 20 of us in our group which included James Simonds, the Francis Peabody family, and Hugh and Elizabeth Quinton. We men camped on Portland Point, while the women and children sheltered at Fort Frederick. James Quinton was born that night, the first English child born here.”

Suddenly our attention is diverted as the old iron guns of **Fort Howe** thunder out their salute! The ships are coming into the harbour, the flag of Britain streaming from their mastheads. **Major Studholme**, as Crown Agent, is giving the wearied exiles a hearty welcome. He has done his best to cheer their drooping spirits, and as rapidly as possible will settle them in habitations which they might once again call their own. The **Union** is the first to dock. It is **Fyler Dibblee**, Deputy Agent, whom I will first address. In Part II **Miss Baxter~Reporter**

**Editorial: The American Revolutionary War (1775-1783)** also known as the American War of Independence, began as a civil war between the Kingdom of Great Britain and thirteen British Colonies on the North American Continent. The spark that ignited the War was the faulty judgement of the British government in sending troops to suppress the liberties of those who thought of themselves as freeborn Englishmen. Already, however, colonists were deeply resentful at the persistent refusal by Britain to redress their many grievances~particularly the taxation imposed on the colonies without their consent, and without their representation in the British parliament. Britain also incensed many of the colonial population by continuing to enforce the long-established Navigation Acts, which dealt with the export of raw materials and import of manufactured goods. A series of taxes and duties, notably the import on tea and molasses, finally drove American patriots, disguised as American Indians, to dump consignments of tea from the British East India Company into Boston harbour. This act became known as “**The Boston Tea Party**” which then led to eight years of War. King George retaliated, declaring that Massachusetts was in a state of rebellion, and instructed Gen. Thomas Gage to put down the revolt. The shooting war began on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1775 when American ‘minutemen’ confronted British Redcoats at the Battle of Lexington.

**African and Native Americans**~Slave and free-served on both sides during the war. At least 5,000 black soldiers fought for the Revolutionary cause and more than 20,000 black soldiers fought on the British side. Most Native Americans east of the Mississippi were affected by the war. Most of these opposed the United States, since native lands were threatened by expanding American settlement. An estimated 13,000 warriors fought on the British side; the largest group, the Iroquois Confederacy, fielded about 1,500 men. In London, King George III gave up hope of subduing America by more armies while Britain had a European War to fight. There was no hope of recovering New England. But the King was determined “never to acknowledge the independence of the Americans, and to punish them by prolonging the war.” His plan was to destroy their coasting-trade, bombard their ports; sack and burn towns along the coast, and turn loose the Native Americans to attack civilians in frontier settlements. These operations, the King felt, “would inspire the Loyalists; would splinter the Congress; would keep the rebels harassed, anxious, and poor, until the day when, by a natural and inevitable process, discontent and disappointment were converted into penitence and remorse” and they would beg to return to his authority”. This plan, however, only brought horrific punishment and persecution for the Loyalists and the loyal Native Americans by the Patriots, and indefinite prolongation of a costly war.

**The Total Loss of Life** from the American Revolutionary War is unknown. Disease claimed more lives than battle. Washington's decision to have his troops inoculated against the smallpox epidemic was one of his most important. An estimated 25,000 American Revolutionaries died in active military service; 8,000 in battle; 17,000 from disease; about 8,000 as prisoners of war. Wounded and disabled totalled 8,500 to 25,000. About 171,000 seamen served for the British; about 25-50 percent were pressed into service; 1,240 were killed in battle, while 18,500 died from disease; the greatest killer being scurvy, a disease known at the time to be easily preventable by issuing lemon juice to sailors. Life was cheap then! About 42,000 British seamen deserted. No reliable figures exist for the number of casualties among other groups, including Loyalists, British regulars, Native and African Americans, French and Spanish troops.

**The British** spent about 80 million pounds ending with a national debt of 250 million pounds. The United States spent about 175 million. America could not have won the war without French assistance. The British had logistical problems of distance and dispersment of troops. They also had the difficult task of fighting the war while retaining the allegiance of the Loyalists. They could have recruited more slaves and Native Americans, but this would have alienated the Loyalists. The need to retain Loyalist allegiance also meant that the British were unable to use the harsh methods of suppressing rebellion they employed elsewhere. This combination of factors led ultimately to the downfall of British rule in America. The Loyalists then had to flee for their lives!

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