

## Cumberland Planters and the Aftermath of the Attack on Fort Cumberland

Ernest A. Clarke  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

"There are many timorous and weak persons among us, who aw'd by fear, are drove to do what they would avoid, if they durst." John Eagleson, Anglican missionary and acting chaplain of Fort Cumberland, describing Cumberland Planters during the rebellion.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

"O most mighty God," prayed the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel missionary at Windsor. "Ruler of Heaven and Earth," prayed the Rev. William Ellis as H.M.S. *Vulture* sailed out Minas Basin to relieve Fort Cumberland in November 1776. "Re-unite the Divided interests and Distracted minds of our Countrymen. Defend us from Seditious rage at home and from the Designs of all our...enemies, wheresoever they may be!"<sup>2</sup> A good many of the distracted wheresoeverers were, even as Ellis prayed, surrounding Fort Cumberland where sedition had raged through the Planter community, for the past year and where the fort had been under attack for a month by a band of 180 guerrillas led by the self styled Colonel Jonathan Eddy.<sup>3</sup>

Inside the fort were about the same number of defenders: a garrison of provincial troops, the Royal Fencible Americans, and two dozen or more

---

1 Eagleson to John Butler, 27 January 1776, Public Archives of Canada (PAC), MG 11, Vol. 95, 112-7.

2 Prayer, Discourses and Sermons of the Rev. William Ellis, Dalhousie University Archives. Ellis also was a chaplain at Fort Edward.

3 The Planter community of Cumberland was an amalgam of halfpay officers, farmers, tradesmen and artisans heavily dependent on the fort for their livelihood. Cumberland Planters were not pioneers in the usual sense, having received land already rendered productive by the Acadians — not only extensive dykeland but cleared upland and abundant orchards. In addition, the local economy was strongly underpinned by the Fort Cumberland garrison of which the economic spinoff alone was sufficient to support no less than twenty-three non-agricultural occupations (from linen draper to tavern keeper) in the county before 1768.

Despite economic infusion and ready-made farmland, community development was slow in part because Cumberland Planters, especially the ex-soldiers, were poor farmers. Visitors and settlers alike observed that New England farmers were a "lazy, indolent people," rising late in the morning and then only "to get a glass of rum" before breakfast and before going out to work. Abrupt withdrawal of the garrison in 1768 followed by severe economic recession damaged the Cumberland community fundamentally and prepared the groundwork for future political dissent.

loyal inhabitants, designated "the virtuous few" by the fort's commander, Colonel Joseph Goreham.<sup>4</sup> Numerous women and children were also in the garrison where supplies were running low and where many of the buildings had been burned down around them. Ill-trained and ill-equipped, the troops were without uniforms and half of them without a shoe to their feet. Because of their ragged appearance, the regiment was a joke to the Royal Marines on board the relief ship *Vulture*, blessed as they were, not only by the Rev. Ellis, but also with real uniforms. "The Fencibles not being all Cloth'd look so much like Yankees," howled one marine officer, "that [the prospect] of doing [service] with them gives me [the] Horrors!"<sup>5</sup>

The Rev. Ellis also blessed the captain of the ship, and he was well-advised to do so, for Captain James Feattus of H.M.S. *Vulture* was a hard drinker who had even been accused of "being in liquor" while guiding His Majesty's warship into Halifax Harbour.<sup>6</sup> Despite Ellis' blessing, the normally short, one day voyage from Windsor to Cumberland took Feattus a full six days and during the voyage *Vulture* strayed within three leagues of Annapolis Gut, farther away from Windsor than Cumberland was in the opposite direction.<sup>7</sup> But *Vulture* eventually reached Fort Cumberland and the Royal Marines (in their uniforms) condescended to join with the Nova Scotia Fencibles (in their rags) to defeat the Patriots at Camphill, lifting the month-long siege and ending the rebellion.<sup>8</sup> The

- 
- 4 Attestation of service, December 1776, signed by Joseph Goreham and eighteen other officers. Claim of Christopher Harper, PAC, A.O. 13, Bundle 92.
  - 5 William Feilding to Lord Denbigh, 23 May 1776, in Marion Balderston and David Syrett, eds., *The Lost War: Letters from British Officers during the American Revolution* (New York, 1975), 82.
  - 6 Feattus Papers, Public Record Office (PRO), Admiralty (ADM) 1, 1790. When the navy removed Feattus from his command of the *Vulture* for drunkenness, nepotism and neglect of duty, the entire Executive Council of Nova Scotia expressed its displeasure and highly commended Feattus' service, but to no avail, and when *Vulture* assisted Benedict Arnold in his defection to the British in 1780, she had a new captain.
  - 7 Journal of H.M.S. *Vulture*, National Maritime Museum (NMM), L/V/126, and Log, PRO ADM 51:1044. *Vulture* "unmoored" in the mouth of the Avon River, 21 November, and landed troops at Fort Cumberland, 27 November. Quite apart from the captain's personal problems. *Vulture* was delayed by bad weather and the schooner she convoyed. The voyage was bedeviled first by gale force winds, then by thick fog on a dead calm. The *Levinia* schooner carrying two companies of Royal Highland Emigrants, encountered a series of problems that slowed *Vulture*'s progress before contact was lost in the fog and a leaky *Levinia* returned to Windsor thereby reducing the relief force by more than half.
  - 8 For a description of the siege from within the fort, see Goreham's Journals in *PAC Report*, 1894, 355-66; for Camphill, see Eddy's account in Frederic Kidder, *Military Operations in Eastern Maine and Nova Scotia During the [American] Revolution* (Albany, 1867), 67-72; and for a description of its climax, the Camphill Rout, see Thomas Batt's account in *Remembrancer*, Part III, 1776 (London, 1777), 297-8.

effects of the civil dispute lingered a very long time in Cumberland County, growing into a uniquely troublesome period which may be referred to as the aftermath of the siege. It is this unusual period which is here considered.

The foremath of the siege lasted a year, the siege itself exactly one month, but the aftermath persisted vigorously for twelve long years, from the day of the Camphill Rout to at least 1788 when the last legal case was settled and the embers of the last deliberately-set house fire had cooled to ashes. The effects of the aftermath, which spread far beyond the borders of Cumberland County, derived from the bitter nature of the civil strife and also from the peculiar propensity of Cumberland Planters for sustained acrimony.

The depth of bitterness can be judged by the number of homes destroyed. So far, I have been able to document forty-nine houses burned during and after the siege, with the arson evenly perpetrated between Patriots and Loyalists. Indications are that many more were destroyed and, of course, these were not your usual home fires. They were conflagrations malicious! A great serial arson rendered homeless at least 300 people, all neighbours, and out of the ashes there arose an industry of criminal and civil litigation that fueled the aftermath and skewed the legal system at all levels from justices-of-the-peace to Supreme Court judges.<sup>9</sup>

*5 December 1776: six days after the end of the siege*

Many prisoners have been taken. Over a hundred residents have availed themselves of Goreham's promise of amnesty by surrendering and taking the oath of allegiance. The senior Patriot leadership, including Colonel Eddy and most of his Committee-of-Safety, have fled with perhaps sixty refugees to Massachusetts. But five of the prisoners — Joseph Goreham calls them the "principal prisoners" — are being led down to Cumberland Creek to be put aboard H.M.S. *Vulture* and shipped to Halifax.<sup>10</sup>

It is a squally Thursday with fresh gales. Among the principal prisoners is Thomas Faulkner commander of the Cobequid contingent of Eddy's guerrilla army and James Avery the commissariat officer.<sup>11</sup> And there is Dr. Parker Clarke member of the unique collection agency sent out during

---

9 Jotham Gay, a Cumberland Planter, explained the destruction to Levi Ames, an absentee property owner in London: "I am very sorry for the Great Loss you sustained, as well as many Others in This Place, By This Garrison Being Invested in the fall of 1776. Your House and Barn was Burnt (Not by the Enemy) But by the Kings Troops when they Attacked and Drove the Enemy out of the Country, the Consequence of which was that the Country was Put into Great Confusion, Fences Destroyed and Lands layed Common for Several Years." Levi Ames Papers, PAC, MG 40, M 36.

10 Journal of H.M.S. *Vulture*, NMM L/V/126.

11 Avery was a brother-in-law of George Haliburton. See Jean Stephenson, "The Connecticut Settlement of Nova Scotia Prior to the Revolution," in *National Genealogical Quarterly* (American), XLII, 2 (June 1954), 59.

the siege by the Committee-of-Safety to collect old debts and extort money from loyal Cumberlanders. It was odd to see a doctor making house calls, as one who saw him said, with "a bayonet tied to his gun."<sup>12</sup> And there is Benoni Danks who, despite his sixty years, was in the Patriot front lines where he was wounded in the Camphill Rout, having "receiv'd a Spent Ball in his thigh."<sup>13</sup> But he has concealed the wound from his captors and now six days later infection is setting in. The fifth and last prisoner is Richard Uniacke, one of Eddy's out-guards, but who also must have performed more important service to be classified among the principal prisoners. Perhaps he looks back up the hill to catch a fleeting glimpse of his tearful teen-age wife who celebrated her fourteenth birthday three days ago.<sup>14</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

A feature of the aftermath was the growth of the provincial militia, whose members after the siege, were suddenly eager to serve even outside home districts. The Kings County militia had been active locally during the siege,<sup>15</sup> having made the initial discovery of the siege when it recaptured the Partridge Island ferry.<sup>16</sup> It has been assumed that another Planter, Thomas Dixon, brought first news of the siege to Windsor and Halifax and indeed it is difficult to correct an error bronzed, as it were, on a plaque at the Beausejour Museum, but Dixon did not escape the fort and reach Windsor until six days after the militia patrol made its discovery, by which time a relief force was already being organized at Windsor and H.M.S. *Vulture* was already en route from Halifax to pick up that force and go to Cumberland.<sup>17</sup> Militia improvement underscored Nova Scotia's growing

12 Deposition of Thomas Robinson in "Trials For Treason 1776-7," J.T. Bulmer, *Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society* (NSHS), I (Halifax, 1879), 111.

13 Massey to Germain, 4 January 1777, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 365, 3.

14 PANS BIO, Delesdernier. Also, family memorial plaque in St. Paul's Anglican Church, Halifax.

15 In addition to the Kings County militia, that of Annapolis Royal and Halifax were demonstrably active in their own districts during the siege. See "Expenses incurred for Militia employed on Sundry Services between 10 November 1776 and 30 July 1777," PAC, MG 11, Vol. 97, 299-300.

16 Michael Francklin to Joseph Pernette, 9 December 1776, PANS, MG 100, Vol. 143, 22. The five townships of Windsor, Newport, Falmouth, Horton and Cornwallis exhibited the strongest early loyalty of any district outside Halifax, especially during the critical winter of 1775, and early 1776 (see for example the correspondence of the Rev. William Ellis), hence the active response of Kings County to the perceived threat of Eddy's attack.

17 Thomas Dixon probably escaped through Patriot lines 11 November; certainly, he was unable to depart Cumberland sooner, Goreham's first journal, *PAC Report*, 1894. He reached Windsor 15 November, Francklin to Arbutnot, 15 November 1776, and Francklin and Batt to "the Commanders of any of his Majesty's Ships at Annapolis," 15

determination in the aftermath of the siege to aggressively defend even its remote frontiers. When John Allan returned the next year to occupy the St. John River Valley with an invasion force larger and better organized than Jonathan Eddy's, Halifax reacted quickly and was able to use the militia directly. From Halifax, Windsor and Cumberland militiamen joined in the Hawker expedition to drive John Allan from the valley.<sup>18</sup> Sounding pleasantly surprised by this development, Marriott Arbuthnot, the lieutenant-governor, explained to Lord Sandwich how "the militia turned out volunteers with the greatest cheerfulness, many of them quitting their professions where they earned 15 to 20 shillings a day, to serve upon this painful business for one. So much, my Lord, is the complexion of the times altered in this province!"<sup>19</sup> In addition to their one shilling the militiamen were also eligible for prize money. Livestock, goods and chattels of leading Patriots on the river were seized and shipped over to Annapolis Royal where they were auctioned off with the proceeds going to the militia "as encouragement for another Party," explained the Nova Scotia army commander, Eyre Massey.<sup>20</sup>

So eager were militiamen to serve on the Hawker expedition, that there resulted a singular incident — the only scalplings I know to have occurred in Nova Scotia during the Revolutionary War. In the early hours of 1 July, in clear moonlight on the Manawogonish Trail, now in West Saint John, the bloodthirsty Planter militia caught up with several Patriots just

---

November 1776, PAC, MG 11, Vol. 96, 376-81. The Partridge Island ferry was re-captured 9 November and news of the siege was relayed directly to Halifax whence it spread quickly through the town and down the south coast to Liverpool where it was a topic of lunchtime conversation 15 November, Harold A. Innis, ed., *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1766-1780* (Toronto, 1948), 137. Via Liverpool, John Allan at Boston learned of the news as early as 13 November. Allan journal, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 364, 96. By the time Thomas Dixon arrived at Windsor (six days after the ferry's recapture) specific measures had been taken there by Michael Francklin to organize a relief force. In addition, Commodore Collier at Halifax had ordered Captain James Dawson of H.M.S. *Hope* 14 November (one day prior to Dixon's arrival at Windsor) to find the ships *Albany* and *Diligent*, then cruising near the mouth of the Bay of Fundy, and "proceed immediately to Fort Cumberland and destroy if possible the rebel Armament now employed against that Place." A week later the Commodore confirmed that he had given Dawson the order "upon the certainty that a Body of Rebels (reported about 500) had actually invested Fort Cumberland," Collier to Dawson, 14 November 1776, PAC, MG 11, Vol. 96, 332-4.

18 The task force raised to dispel the second Massachusetts attack comprised six ships led by H.M.S. *Mermaid* (Captain James Hawker). In charge of the regular provincial troops of the force was Gilfred Studholme while Michael Francklin and John George Pyke commanded the militia.

19 Arbuthnot to Lord Sandwich, 13 September 1777, G.R. Barnes and J.H. Owen, eds., *The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty 1771-1782*, Vol. 1 (Navy Records Society, 1932), 296-8.

20 Massey to Germain, 10 June 1777, PAC, MG 11, Vol. 97, 170-3.

wounded in a skirmish and killed and scalped them (not necessarily in that order). The incident was mentioned by John Allan, described in lurid detail by Stephen Smith of Machias,<sup>21</sup> and I have recently verified the name of one of the victims.

Neutral? The Nova Scotia Planter militia certainly was not! Confused? Yes, but only (and unfortunately) in discerning the limits of their duty! Such alacrity appears the more startling when one considers that the militia commander on the Hawker expedition, John George Pyke, was the brother-in-law of John Allan, leader of the Patriot invasion.<sup>22</sup> In fact, most families (especially Planter families) had members on both sides of the dispute. An example is the Wethereds, called by Eyre Massey "the family of the worst Rebels in this Province."<sup>23</sup> Samuel Wethered kept a tavern near Fort Cumberland and during the siege entertained Eddy's guerrillas nightly. On one such occasion, while in his tavern, Wethered was severely wounded by a cannonball fired from the fort. This story has been discounted by some historians, but in an unpublished letter written only a week after the siege, we read that "Wethered has had about half his buttocks taken off by a cannon shot from the Fort, when he was in his own house, there being many rebels in it."<sup>24</sup> While the half-buttocked Wethered was so painfully laid up in his tavern, his two Loyalist sisters (Catherine Wethered, wife of Thomas Dixson of whom we have heard and Sarah Wethered, wife of James Law, barrack-master of the fort) were inside the fort with their husbands celebrating the defeat of Jonathan Eddy.<sup>25</sup>

21 Allan's journal in Kidder, *Military Operations*, 111. Stephen Smith to Mass. Council, 31 July 1777, PANS, MG 1, Vol. 364, 56.

22 Allan genealogy in Kidder, *Military Operations*, 25. For Pyke's service on the St. John River see indictments of Crath, Fulton and Crawford, 27 January 1778, and the deposition of John George Pyke, 3 February 1778, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 342; also, Fulton to Allan, 1 April 1778, Massachusetts Archives (MA) Vol. 218, 55-6.

23 Massey to Germain, 17 January 1777, PAC, MG 11, Vol. 96, 96-9. "Nothing but open Rebellion," wrote John Eagleson in January 1776, "will satisfy them, being stimulated and led on principally by Allen and Wethered, persons of Desperate Fortune."

24 Michael Francklin to Joseph Pernette, 9 December 1776, PANS MG 100, Vol. 143, 22. The Wethered incident appeared first in Knapp's folktales over-dressed in the embellishment of much re-telling. It was repeated by Bird before being denounced by Kerr who said it "need not be taken seriously," which advice has generally been followed by later historians. Kerr's comment and Webster's branding of another of Knapp's folktales as "ridiculous" have discredited the Knapp collection of stories about the siege, but while these stories must be approached warily, they are ignored at one's peril. All contain elements of verifiable fact and the Wethered incident - almost too bizarre to be false - is confirmed by the Francklin letter. Charles Knapp's "Folk Lore About Old Fort Beau-se-jeur," *Acadiensis* (October 1908), 300; W.R. Bird, *Century At Chignecto* (Toronto, 1928), 227-8; W.B. Kerr, "The American Invasion of Nova Scotia," *Canadian Defence Quarterly* (October 1936), 444.

25 Louise Walsh Throop, "Early Settlers of Cumberland Township, Nova Scotia," in

A curiosity of the aftermath was the collapse of military discipline in Fort Cumberland during the spring and summer of 1777. Any number of reasons might be given: post-siege doldrums, renewed heavy drinking of Joseph Goreham, spill-over from the general turmoil of Cumberland County, and certainly the neglect of Halifax authorities. "There is great dissensions among the Officers of the Garrison," gloated John Allan.<sup>26</sup> Chief among the dissensions was the row between Commander Joseph Goreham and Major Thomas Batt, hero of the Camphill Rout, which resulted in each of them being court-martialled.<sup>27</sup> But the strongest evidence of the breakdown of discipline was the series of duels fought between officers of the garrison. On 29 May for example, Lieutenant Constance Connor shot dead Lieutenant Lewis De Beaudoin. These two officers had actually led troops into battle together in the Camphill Rout only a few months earlier. With a successful duel in his curriculum vitae, Planter Constance Connor went on to lead a naval detachment on the Nova Scotia vessel *Buckram*, and became commander of Fort Hughes on the Oromocto River.<sup>28</sup>

Dueling was in fashion during this period of the aftermath and was not confined to junior officers of the garrison. Eyre Massey, in charge of the army in Nova Scotia, and George Collier, in charge of the navy, had developed their hatred of each other during the siege. They came within seconds of fighting a duel with pistols behind Citadel Hill and were only dissuaded at the last moment by Marriott Arbuthnot. "The impropriety," admitted Collier, "of the two chief officers of the Army and Navy going out to fight at a time when we were surrounded by the Enemies of our Country" could hardly be ignored.<sup>29</sup> One might ask if indigenous rebellion

---

*National Genealogical Quarterly*, 67, 3 and 4 (September and December 1979), 189, 270. Both Eyre Massey and Joseph Goreham cited James Law for his failure to supply the fort with adequate fuel in the fall of 1776, as he had been contracted to do, and for which he had been paid. However, there is no doubt that Law was loyal — incompetent but loyal.

26 Allan to Mass. Council, 24 June 1777, in Kidder, *Military Operations*, 196.

27 Goreham was tried in 1777 and Batt in 1780. See the British Headquarters Papers (BHQ): the complaint against Goreham, 10 July 1777, and that against Batt, 18 June 1780.

28 Allan to Mass. Council, 24 June 1777, in Kidder, *Military Operations*, 196-7. Muster rolls of the Royal Fencible Americans, PAC, RG 8, Vol. 1893. Letter of William Handfield, 18 April 1782, PANS, RG I, Vol. 369, 16-18. Lorenzo Sabine, *The American Loyalists* (Boston, 1847), 225. E.C. Wright, *The Loyalists of New Brunswick* (Yarmouth, 1955), 120. "Letterbook of Captain McDonald," *Collections of the New York Historical Society* 1882 (New York, 1883), 348-9.

29 The near duel between the two heads of the army and navy in Nova Scotia is described in "A detail of some particular services performed in America during the years 1776-79 by Sir George Collier," NMM BGR/28. While this incident has not been corroborated, several other incidents between Collier, Massey and Arbuthnot, which are described in the same document, are supported by other evidence.

could have wished for a more divided military command than that provided by General Massey and Commodore Collier, or for that matter, a more inept lieutenant-governor than that forgetful senior citizen, Marriott Arbuthnot whose faculties, it was said, "(which were never brilliant)" were so impaired in 1776 that he lost important military instructions in the pocket of his own trousers!<sup>30</sup> Arbuthnot's chief concern in November 1776 was not the outcome of the siege but the Christmas present he would get his patron, Lord Sandwich. Not just anything would do for the Lord! It had to be unusual. Finally, he found a live wildcat and shipped it off to England.<sup>31</sup> He must have surprised the Lord with that gift — hard to top it really! But throughout 1777, while discipline collapsed at his garrison outpost of Cumberland, the real issue for this affable old servant of the crown was what to get Lord Sandwich to match that wildcat!

A thorny political problem arising from the aftermath was the disposition of spouses and children left behind by absconding Patriots. An analysis of those who fled with Jonathan Eddy (who was careful to remove his own family before the siege) indicates that their families numbered above 200 persons, many of whom were destitute and a burden on the resources of the fort. Their continued presence was a source of conflict in Cumberland and exacerbated the mood of vengeance. The common term for Patriot women during the aftermath, according to John Allan, was "Damn'd Rebel Bitches and Whores, Excuse the rough Expression, and [they are] often kicked when met in the street. My unhappy Wife has often been accosted in this manner," added Allan whose wife, Mary, was one of those stranded in Cumberland after the siege."<sup>32</sup>

30 When Admiral Shulldham sailed away from Halifax with the North American fleet and army in June, he left behind with Arbuthnot secret written instructions regarding various matters including the New York destination. These papers, intended for the reinforcements soon to arrive from England were consigned to Arbuthnot's pocket where he promptly forgot about them and when Lord Howe's fleet arrived in July and Admiral Hotham's in August, he was unable to tell these gentlemen even where Shulldham had gone, leaving them to guess their intended destination. See "The War in America 1776. Original manuscript Journal by Admiral Sir George Collier," NMM JOD/9. This incredible incident is corroborated in a "Journal of occurrences from January 1776 to August 1787. Military Events etc. at Halifax, Nova Scotia kept by Lieut. Ferguson," PANS, RG 1, Vol. 365, 28 1/2.

31 Arbuthnot to Sandwich, 11 October 1777, Barnes and J.H. Owen, eds., *The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich*, Vol. 1, 306. Arbuthnot's health worsened but did not prevent Lord Sandwich from promoting him to Admiral of the North American fleet. "I have been seized with very odd fits," complained Arbuthnot in his new position, "I faint, remain senseless and speechless sometimes four hours and sometimes longer, and when I recover am ignorant of the past." Incredibly, he was soon after leading a squadron of eight warships of the line into action against a similar French force off Chesapeake Bay. See Captain Donald MacIntyre, *Admiral Rodney* (London, 1962), 156.

32 Allan to Mass. Council, 24 June 1776, in Kidder, *Military Operations*, 196. When John Allan fled to Massachusetts before the siege, he abandoned Mary and the five Allan



Of course, families were not free to join Patriot husbands and fathers in Massachusetts with which Nova Scotia was at war, but early efforts to exchange them for Loyalist prisoners in New England looked promising. Joseph Goreham, with a view to alleviating the local situation, considered an application to permit the families to leave the province in the summer of 1777. A cartel ship filled with exchange prisoners was sent from Boston and actually docked at Windsor to receive the families. But Halifax intervened at the last minute to squelch the deal. Policy had hardened in the wake of John Allan's occupation of the St. John Valley and authorities refused permission for the women and children to leave the colony. The cartel ship was ordered to depart Windsor at once and the families to be removed to Halifax.<sup>33</sup> The implication of removing so many women and children from Cumberland to the capital was enormous. Nevertheless, some, if not all, were brought as far as Windsor before the absurdity of the order dawned on Halifax. As it was, at least five families of leading Patriots were taken on to the capital and held under house arrest through 1778.<sup>34</sup>

Not until the spring of 1779, when Nova Scotia felt much more secure militarily, and with the prospects of a general amnesty imminent, did the hardline policy soften towards the refugee families of Cumberland Patriots. An arrangement to exchange them for Loyalist prisoners in New

---

children to their fate. On the day of the Camphill Rout, the Nova Scotia troops advanced along the Baie Verte Road and burned the Allan home, barns and all the family belongings. Mary barely had time to flee with her five children into the woods where they were forced to spend the night. On that same night, a cold, wet, late November night, "severe with wind and rain," while Mary and the children huddled together, hungry and suffering from exposure, husband John was enjoying the warm reception and fine entertainment of Gray's tavern in Dedham, Massachusetts.

33 Executive Council Minutes, 16 September and 6 November 1777, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 212, and Bulkeley to Barron, 17 October 1777, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 136. Also, see petitions and letter of Robert Foster and other Patriots to Mass. Council, including a list of refugee families, and Mass. resolve, 22 September 1777, MA, Vol. 183, 171-76.

34 Bulkeley to Barron, 20 December 1777 and 25 February 1778, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 136. The five ladies were Mary Allan, Martha Throop, Mahitable Earle, Anne Burke and Mrs. Fales. John Allan is not to be believed when he complained publicly that his wife, Mary, was kept in gaol and severely treated while in Halifax. A Patriot agent explained to Allan that the women were provided with houses and given soldier rations. Mary Allan lived in the home of her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Pyke (whose husband, John George Pyke, commanded the militia that drove John Allan from the St. John River) while her children stayed with various other in-laws and the older ones attended school. Possibly, this young thirty-year-old mother of five young children enjoyed no quieter interlude in her married life than this period in Halifax. See John Fulton to John Allan, 1 April 1778, MA, Vol. 218, 55-6. Meanwhile, husband John Allan (as he confided to his journal) was throwing parties for the Malecite ladies of Aukpaque on the St. John River, dancing far into the night, delighting in the details of the fine jewellery these native ladies wore, and drinking wine, as he said, in their wigwams.

England was struck and those families still wishing to leave the province were permitted to board a cartel ship.<sup>35</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

*15 December 1776: over two weeks after the siege was lifted and ten days after the five principal prisoners were put aboard 'Vulture'*

It might reasonably be expected the prisoners would be in Halifax by now, but no, they were still in Cumberland Basin, shackled in a cold, damp ship's hold, crowded in with twenty-four other prisoners from Massachusetts, transferred from the captured American warship *Independence*. Captain Feattus had intended to sail away immediately but Joseph Goreham insisted that he stay longer at Cumberland. Anchorage was shifted daily as boat crews went ashore in search of Patriot stragglers. Temperatures dropped steadily as the weather fluctuated between squalls and gales, sleet and snow.

Crowded below decks are Commissary Avery, the "much terrified" Thomas Faulkner, the extra-billing Dr. Clarke, the future attorney-general of the province, Richard Uniacke, looking anything but prosecutorial in irons, and the badly wounded Planter Danks whose fever mounts as *Vulture* tosses about in the choppy waters of the basin. Today, their second Sunday on the *Vulture*, the prisoners are shifted across the harbour to the transport ship *Nancy* which is likewise crowded with Massachusetts prisoners.<sup>36</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

The legacy of the siege was the plethora of court proceedings that seriously derailed the legal system. The month of republican rule in Cumberland County, administered by the Committee-of-Safety, verged on anarchy.<sup>37</sup> It was the political equivalent of New Dispensationalism with William How's plundering party and Dr. Clarke's collection agency acting, as it were, "under the pretence of honouring free grace."<sup>38</sup> When Eddy's

35 Executive Council Minutes, 24 April 1779, PANS, RG I, Vol. 212, and Bulkeley to Goreham, 26 April 1779 and 30 May 1779, PANS, RG I, Vol. 136.

36 Journal of H.M.S. *Vulture*, NMM L/V/126. The brig *Independence* (Captain Simeon Sampson) was captured by H.M.S. *Hope* (Captain James Dawson) 25 November off the south coast of Nova Scotia while *Hope* with *Nancy* in convoy was en route to relieve Fort Cumberland.

37 "Anarchy" was the term used by John Allan to explain the Committee-of-Safety's rule in Cumberland. Allan to Mass. Council, 19 February 1777, PANS, RG I, Vol. 365, 23.

38 Anti-nomianism, or radical anti-formalism, surfaced during the aftermath and extended well beyond it. Of the more than twenty accounts of anti-nomianism in Nova Scotia and

forces were driven out of the country a day of reckoning was predictable. Joseph Goreham's initial effort to deal leniently with Patriots who remained in Cumberland after the siege was soon eclipsed by a mood of vengeance. The loyal populace, encouraged by over-zealous authorities, indulged in a paroxysm of retribution that became the chief characteristic of the aftermath.

Less than a week after the Camphill Rout, even before the prisoners were put aboard *Vulture*, depositions were being collected for legal proceedings against them. These would lead to the so-called treason trials, more appropriately called the treason indictments since, while only two Patriots were ever tried, more than fifty were indicted for rebellious practices related to the siege.<sup>39</sup>

A dragnet, spread over Cumberland in the spring of 1777, caught many men who had been in arms. Their wives and children (amounting to hundreds of people) were thrown on the fort for charity. They were homeless, having come through a hard Nova Scotia winter (cold enough were such winters, it was said, to congeal the rum in an S.P.G. missionary's

---

New Brunswick between the 1780s and 1820s, it is of more than passing interest that the first account ("and the foulest," added William Black who witnessed the event in 1782) was in the Sackville area, also the centre of Nova Scotia rebellion. Moreover, the most common location of these accounts was the greater Cumberland region. The Sackville-Amherst axis was particularly subject to religious extravagance and in the 1790s entered into a phase of New Dispensationalism, the most virulent outburst of anti-nomianism. New Dispensationalism in Cumberland climaxed in the worst account of practical anti-nomianism, the Babcock tragedy of 1805, when Amos Babcock of nearby Shediac "ordered himself to be worshipped and thereafter divided his sister or cut her [in] twain." Not only was the venue of this sobering event in the greater Cumberland region, but one of the participants in the all-night religious exercises leading up to the ritual murder had been a soldier in Jonathan Eddy's Patriot army while a member of the jury also had been a member of the Committee-of-Safety. Not only did the Cumberland troubles continue into the nineteenth century, they spanned the political/social/religious gamut of this unique Planter community as political agitation, leading to open rebellion and military siege, was followed by an unruly and turbulent aftermath which itself was superseded by the religious anarchy of New Dispensationalism. New Dispensationalism and the Babcock tragedy are described in D.G. Bell, ed., *The Newlight Baptist Journals of James Manning and James Innis* (Saint John, 1984).

- 39 The two convicted of treason were Thomas Faulkner and Parker Clarke whose sentences were respited and eventually (after both had escaped gaol, although Faulkner was re-captured) their cases were overtaken by general proclamations of amnesty as were those of the many who in the meantime had been indicted for crimes related to the siege.

The indictments multiplied early in 1777, after the other two surviving principal prisoners, James Avery and Richard Uniacke, agreed to give King's evidence. By April, "more than 200 names" had been returned to the attorney-general out of which the dozens of indictments of Patriots from Cobequid to Passamaquoddy followed. Complaints had been collected in Cumberland by Joseph Goreham and local justices-of-the-peace, but even from the few surviving documents, it can be concluded that Avery and Uniacke also were of considerable assistance to the authorities. By the end of January Avery had

house)<sup>40</sup> and many were without food. One of those arrested was Planter Alpheus Morse who by April was languishing in Halifax gaol with ten of his comrades from Cumberland! His wife, Theodora, and their little ones showed up at the fort: "She had not one Mouthfull of Vitals to give her Children and she tould her child to take that Tray and ask me for a little flour!"<sup>41</sup> It was lucky for Theodora that out of all those soldiers she had picked Sergeant James Innis who would later become a minister of the gospel. "Glory be to his great name," he cried after helping her, "for that a man Sows of the Seam Shall he Reape!"<sup>42</sup>

Old inhabitant Loyalists like Christopher Harper, who suffered loss in the siege, demanded recompense through civil litigation. Such proceedings flourished after 1778 when the Rev. John Eagleson returned from captivity in New England to a glebe destroyed by the Patriots.<sup>43</sup> Those who had helped Jonathan Eddy (some through fear and compulsion), and who thought themselves protected by Joseph Goreham's promise of amnesty,

already given evidence against seven of his Cobequid comrades and the April trial of one of them, Charles Dixon, had to be postponed when Avery, the star witness, escaped gaol. At the same time, Uniacke had also given evidence against at least Faulkner and Clarke.

40 Joseph Bennett to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.), 21 February 1767, Reel 73, 106, 274.

41 Morse genealogy in W.C. Milner, *The Basin of Minas and its Early Settlers*, reprinted from the Wolfville Acadian, n.d., 121-2.

42 "The Journal of James Innis," Bell, *Newlight Baptist Journals of James Manning and James Innis*, 244-5. Sergeant Innis appears in the Royal Fencible Muster Roll, PAC, RG 8, Vol. 1893. Also appearing in the muster roll is a Private "James Maning," although there is no evidence that he was the Newlight Baptist minister who being born 1763-65, would have been no more than fourteen in 1777. However, he would not have been too young to be in the Fencibles, a regiment that commonly recruited boys. Thomas Dixon's son, who was "the Eldest volunteer in the Regiment" in 1778, was only "about 17 years of Age," and already had been in the regiment a year, maybe longer. Also in 1778, the soldier son of Captain George Burns, "a Sprightly fine Lad" of 15, was already a one year veteran of the Force. See Joseph Goreham to Robert MacKenzie, 3 January 1778, BHQ.

43 "He has returned to his place of abode to view with an aching heart the spot which once contained...the comforts of life, now without a bed for its owner. But what he laments is the entire loss of his library." S.P.G. Journals, letter of John Eagleson, 4 July 1778, Vol. 21, Reel 4, 330-2.

Egleson's return from captivity was a milestone in his tempestuous, twenty-year Cumberland ministry, dividing it into two distinct phases of similar length: a vigorous and productive first phase (1766-1778) and a disastrous and tragic second phase (1778-1790). His ministry began in 1766 as a Presbyterian missionary. After a year Eagleson left the Dissenting Church to join the Anglicans and went to London for ordination. When he returned to Cumberland in 1770, he found the local religious geography much altered. Baptists had divided into two separate and competing churches and a Dissenting Congregationalist Society had been established under the ministry of the Rev. Caleb Gannett of Boston. Contending vigorously in his new missionfield, Eagleson built up the Established Church and just as vigorously he contended in the courts for the township

found themselves besieged with lawsuits.<sup>44</sup> Several decisions, favorable to Loyalists were obtained and property was seized. Those Patriots whose properties were not seized were "under the Terror of the same prosecutions and the continual dread of being reduced to Wretched Indigence."<sup>45</sup>

Not surprisingly, "Wretched Indigence" was a condition to be avoided if possible, so after about 1780 it became difficult to levy judgments against Patriot farms. Lawsuits were commenced, on purpose it was said, between Patriots to protect their farms and effects from being used for making good the damages suffered by Loyalists. These suits were looked upon as collusive; they evoked strong emotions, being the cause, for example, of Christopher Harper "falling into a passion."<sup>46</sup> What followed was utter confusion. Justices-of-the-peace, now all Loyalists, exceeded their authority; judges issued confusing, even conflicting, instructions; sheriffs were faced with issuing several writs on the same land. Out-of-court settlements

---

ministerial grant which Gannett had already settled with the blessing of the Congregational society.

In a direct and emotional manner, the complex Cumberland glebe dispute challenged the residue of New England style local government in the Planter community, in this instance, the right of a committee of proprietors to allocate land. The dispute, which Eagleson won, broke Gannett's ministry and sent him back to New England. The Dissenting Church in Cumberland was decimated, but the dispute also provided a convenient reference point for later promoters of rebellion. The premature departure of Gannett, who at any rate was no advocate of the Patriot cause, and the collapse of his congregation meant that the Dissenting Church played no part in the Cumberland rebellion. The local revolutionary movement had its political leaders, the greatest concentration of republican zealots in the province, but it had no religious underpinning. Considering the importance of a strong Dissenting Church in the New England revolutionary movement, this was a fundamental flaw.

The desolate scene of his ruined home that was presented to Eagleson on his return from captivity was a foreboding omen of the tragic second phase of his ministry. Although he rebuilt, laboured on for a time in his mission, married and had a family, he developed a drinking problem and increasingly neglected his duties until in 1790 he was removed from his post by Bishop Inglis. Discouraged by property losses, broken by the ordeal of captivity, embittered by protracted legal battles, estranged from his family, and mentally deranged (his wife's brother-in-law, Charles Morris junior, referred to him at this time as "that unnatural monster"), the Rev. John Eagleson truly was a victim of the siege aftermath.

44 The onslaught of lawsuits prompted several of these people to petition Joseph Goreham to intervene on their behalf and stop the proceedings. Halifax was unequivocal in its reply to Goreham's subsequent enquiry: "The petitioners may be entitled by your Declaration and by several Proclamations to their Liberty and the re-possession of their property and to Pardon for the offenses they committed against the Crown, but not to an Exemption for the Injuries which they may have done to private people.... The course of Law cannot be stopped," advised the provincial secretary, "and the injured have a right to seek remedy." Bulkeley to Goreham, 8 June 1779, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 136.

45 "Report of the Judges of the Supreme Court, relating to the Inhabitants of Cumberland," 8 September 1782, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 221, 61.

46 Deposition of William Black in *Watson vs. Bent*, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 36, 82.

were also pursued as more houses were burned in the night, and various Patriots were said to be "guilty of divers misdemeanors and atrocious behaviour."<sup>47</sup>

Certain delinquents of the county, according to the Rev. John Eagleson, "bid defiance to all law and last fall [1780] wrote several anonymous and seditious letters to the sheriff and other executive officers, threatening to burn their property, and maltreat their persons, should they presume to execute any writ of the courts against them."<sup>48</sup> Now John Eagleson was a baroque personality, much addicted to extravagant language (among other things), but I have found one of the letters to which he must have been referring, written in the fall of 1780 to deputy provost marshal, Thomas Watson, and deliciously seditious.

Sir,

I suppose you are not ignorant of the proceedings of some people of late days in which your hand is deeply engaged. You know that a number of Families have been ruined by the Diabolical proceedings of a perjured Wretch, you know who I mean....I warn you to desist from Executing any Instrument...against any persons...who have been under Arms against the Fort.

Your punishment, you may depend, will not delay as hitherto, for tho' Vengeance may nod, yet her Sleep is mostly very short.... Should you be obstinate and persist...I solemnly declare...that you will neither have House nor Barn many days after....Weigh these matters Seriously...for... there is Evil determined against you.

I am with Respect, according to your future demeanor,  
Sir, R. Revenge, Scrutiny River, 20 August 1780.<sup>49</sup>

It is not clear if Watson's home was put to the torch as threatened by Mr. Revenge, but court orders continued to be served through 1781. Abuses of the law and further instances of perjury followed. By the next year, matters had so deteriorated that a judicial enquiry was called for and was commenced by Supreme Court judges, Isaac Deschamps and James Brenton.

Christopher Harper was accused of having abused his office of justice-of-the-peace. He was guilty, found the judges, of violent and oppressive measures and they recommended his removal. They also recommended that a three-person committee be set up in Cumberland to account for the losses and apportion them among those "in any way

---

47 Executive Council Minutes, 16 April 1777, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 212.

48 Journals of the S.P.G., letter of Eagleson, 7 May 1781, Vol. 22, Reel 5, 257-60.

49 "Incendiary and anonymous letter," included in Bulkeley to Thomas Watson, 25 September 1780, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 170, 307-8. See also Executive Council Minutes, 22 September 1780, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 212.

concerned in supporting or aiding the Rebels during the Invasion at Fort Cumberland."<sup>50</sup> Although claiming to have support from both sides, this plan was not acted upon immediately and individual prosecutions continued, along with the burnings and threats of burnings.

At the same time (September 1780), court orders emanating not only from the Inferior Court at Cumberland but also from that of Horton and the Supreme Court of Halifax, concerning several cases relating to the siege, were judged to have been improperly levied to the probable injury of the many parties involved. At the urging of the General Assembly, the Supreme Court ordered the sheriff to cease further executions of the orders, further confounding the judicial process.<sup>51</sup>

The influx of American Loyalists the following year added a new confusion to the siege aftermath. Relations between new Loyalists and old inhabitants were strained, resulting in many disputes across the province, but in Cumberland County this pattern was more complex. Some disputes, supposed simply to have been between new Loyalists and old inhabitants, were more properly disputes between old inhabitants of varying degrees of Loyalty. And here I must lean on the Rev. William Ellis: "I apprehend," said he, "that there are degrees in this virtue of loyalty."<sup>52</sup>

An example is the dispute in July 1783 involving old inhabitant Moses Delesdernier and one Captain Kipp, a newly-arrived Loyalist who in a violent outrage, ejected Delesdernier from his own home.<sup>53</sup> It may at first seem strange that local justices-of-the-peace turned their backs on the incident and ignored Delesdernier's complaints. But it is not at all strange when one considers that the Delesdernier family had been labelled with the lowest degree of Loyalty as the result of its ambiguous role in the siege, while the justices-of-the-peace — in this instance, James Law, Christopher Harper and Charles Dixon — by virtue of their losses wore the badge of highest Loyalty. The lawsuits with neighbours of lesser loyalty, the abuses of power, the acrimony between the various factions of old inhabitants created just the atmosphere that would have tempted the likes of Captain Kipp to believe he could with impunity assault Moses Delesdernier.

A month later, the provincial secretary censured the three justices-of-the-peace for their mal-conduct in the Delesdernier affair,<sup>54</sup> but for one of

---

50 Report of the Judges, 8 September 1782, PANS, RG I, Vol. 221, 61.

51 See Harper vs. Ayer *et al*, PANS, 39 'C', Box 25, 1782; also, Assembly Address to Executive Council, PANS, RG I, Vol. 286, 147.

52 Prayer, Discourses and Sermons of the Rev. William Ellis, Dalhousie University Archives.

53 Diary (17-23 July 1783) and deposition (17 July 1783) of Moses Frederick Delesdernier, PANS, RG I, Vol. 223, 7, 8.

54 Bulkeley to Law, Harper and Dixon, 2 August 1783, PANS, RG I, Vol. 136.

them, Christopher Harper, the string had already run out. The Supreme Court Judges' Report had just been presented to Executive Council with its recommendation to remove Harper. With the Delesdernier incident fresh in their minds, the councillors acted immediately on the recommendation,<sup>55</sup> although it should be noted, that Christopher Harper later became a justice-of-the-peace in New Brunswick.

Undismayed by the setback and impatient with delays in court proceedings, Christopher Harper sailed to London in 1784 to plead his case before the special Board of Commissioners set up "to enquire into the Losses and Services of American Loyalists." I took "a decided and active part against the Rebels," claimed Harper, "and took up arms in consequence of which my House and property were destroyed by the Rebels." The commissioners, who had been appointed by King George for the sole purpose of judging who was a Loyalist, were sympathetic.

"It appears decidedly to us to have been a Loss sustained in Consequence of Loyalty" — "We therefore think ourselves justified in recommending a small allowance to Mr. Harper."<sup>56</sup> It mattered not that Harper was an old inhabitant of Nova Scotia, that his loyal service had been performed in Nova Scotia, or that his property loss had been sustained in Nova Scotia. And it was a good thing that Harper applied for certification when he did. The United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada has since proven that King George made a poor choice of a Board, that his Commissioners were incompetent in their job of certifying Loyalists (at least those who were old inhabitants of Nova Scotia) and that henceforth the job might be better carried out in Toronto (then known as York).

Neither the Loyalist diversion, the report of the Supreme Court Judges, the removal of Christopher Harper from public office, nor the passage of seven years, could diminish the fury of the aftermath. The General Assembly in 1784 recognized "the discontent and uneasiness which has long subsisted in the County of Cumberland," placed much of the blame on the justices-of-the-peace, and recommended more removals.<sup>57</sup> The Supreme Court judges were sent back for further investigation, but in the meantime, efforts were revived to find a more comprehensive solution.

Towards the end of the year, the three-person committee was finally set up to find a formula for the relief of old inhabitant Loyalists.<sup>58</sup> Some results were forthcoming over the next two years. Liability was appor-

---

55 Executive Council Minutes, 22 August 1783, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 212.

56 *Claim of Christopher Harper*, PAC, A.O. 12, Vol. 100 and A.O. 13, Bundle 92. See also E.A. Clarke, "Christopher Harper: Loyalist," *The Loyalist Gazette*, XXIV, 2(December 1986), 16.

57 Executive Council Minutes, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 212, 12 January 1784.

58 Executive Council Minutes, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 212, 8 December 1784. Committee members were Jotham Gay, Thomas Scurr and George Foster, all of Cumberland.



tioned and assets of absconded Patriots were assigned. But more significantly, these attempts at restitution and apportionment of blame rekindled the bitterness, triggered a new round of civil litigation, and caused the spectre of arson to rise again over Cumberland.

In January 1778, Christopher Harper, Loyalist, had just settled in a house awarded him in New Brunswick under the programme of restitution, and which had previously belonged to Elijah Ayer, member of the Committee-of-Safety. One cold evening, "either by accident or Intention, the latter is strongly suspected...the House was burned to the Foundation Stone."<sup>59</sup> It had been twelve years since the attack on Fort Cumberland and twelve years since the Harper's first home had been burned by the Patriots!

Not only had the civil litigation, not to mention the arson, spread to neighbouring New Brunswick, but the aftermath in Nova Scotia had by now infected the highest levels of the judicial system. The judges affair, which resulted in the impeachment of acting chief justice Isaac Deschamps and justice James Brenton, reviewed a number of court cases allegedly mis-handled by the judges. Two of these cases were related to the attack on Fort Cumberland. These cases were the successors to earlier cases about which, ironically, the judges had admitted in their report of 1782 that Patriots had been "harassed" by the courts. Their attempts to correct matters in the later two cases only compounded the problem and provided grist to their accusers. The judges affair was not simply a matter of untrained practitioners lapsing predictably into incompetence; rather it was a part of a larger context, and the judges were, at least in part, victims of the siege aftermath.<sup>60</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

### *17 December 1776: eighteen days after the end of the siege*

*Nancy* transport ship docks at Windsor. Old judge Isaac Deschamps saw

---

59 Stephen Millidge to Ward Chipman, 23 January 1788, New Brunswick Museum, Hazen Collection, F 1, Pkt. 6.

60 The two cases were Thomas Watson vs. John Bent and Thomas Watson vs. Joseph Cozins. Watson was the deputy provost marshal who received the engaging letter from "R. Revenge." John Bent was a member of the Committee-of-Safety and brother-in-law of another member, Simeon Chester. His own brother, Jesse Bent, was a Patriot soldier and for "some months" after the siege Judith Clarke lived with John Bent while her Patriot husband, Parker Clarke, was on trial in Halifax. Joseph Cozins' house was burned by the Nova Scotia troops. For accusations against the judges and their defense see *The Reply of Mssrs. Sterns and Taylor, to the Answers Given by the Judges of His Majesty's Supreme Court of the Province of Nova Scotia*, Colonial Correspondence, 217/61/203b-232a, and a later report, *Collections of the Publications relating to the Impeachment of the Judges of His Majesty's Supreme Court of the Province of Nova Scotia*, copy in Acadia University Archives.

her anchor out in Minas Basin. After surviving ten terrible days on the *Vulture* only to be transferred to *Nancy*, the five principal prisoners have suffered the ordeal of a two-day winter voyage around to Windsor and are taken ashore. By this time Benoni Danks is in very bad shape, and according to an observer, was carried off the ship "half dead."<sup>61</sup> From his unattended wound "a mortification ensued of which he died."<sup>62</sup> Today — Tuesday — a day "squally with snow,"<sup>63</sup> a line of four shackled prisoners might be seen trudging towards Halifax — Avery, Clarke, Faulkner and Uniacke — facing gaol, trials for treason, very uncertain futures. But Planter Danks' trials are over. He has been left behind at Windsor where, it is said, he "had little better than the Burial of a Dog."<sup>64</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

The will of the province to defend itself was tested by a month-long siege driven as much by local issues as by external factors; most certainly, the long aftermath was nurtured strictly on local issues. The latent loyalty of Nova Scotians (some would say neutrality) was transformed to active loyalty by the successful defence of Fort Cumberland. Only one expression of that transformation was a dramatically improved militia by 1777,<sup>65</sup> a timely circumstance given the collapse of discipline in the provincial officer corps and deep divisions in the Nova Scotia command. The convoluted legal proceedings, which defied disentanglement for so long, reflected a volatility of opinion longstanding in Cumberland and paralleled that community's remarkable innovation in social, religious and political thinking. It is in this context of diversity and innovation that the Planter community of Cumberland became Nova Scotia's most unruly county during the American Revolution and supported the single instance of indigenous rebellion.<sup>66</sup>

61 A.G. Doughty, ed., *Captain John Knox: An Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America for the Years 1757, 1758, 1759, and 1760*, Vol. 1, The Champlain Society (Toronto, 1914), 196-7.

62 Massey to Germain, 4 January 1777, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 365, 3.

63 Journal of H.M.S. *Vulture*, NMM L/V/126.

64 Doughty, *Knox Journal*, 196-7.

65 By 1782, even Cumberlanders who had been in arms against the fort, but who had "returned to their allegiance," were admitted to the county militia and armed. Bulkeley to Barron, 20 June 1782, PANS, RG 1, Vol. 136.

66 If Cumberland County was the region of rebellion in Nova Scotia, Sackville was its centre. It was to Sackville that Eddy went to recruit the Planters after his invasion and it was to Sackville that he retreated with the remnants of his guerrilla band after the Camphill Rout. Of the seven members of the General Assembly who also became soldiers in Eddy's army, three were from Sackville; more importantly, when several members lost their seats in July 1776 for rebellious activities after which constituencies re-elected loyal

In conclusion, some loose ends should be tied up.

You will be pleased to learn that Marriott Arbuthnot succeeded in finding a gift to send home to his mentor, Lord Sandwich, for Christmas 1777. From the exotic wilds of Nova Scotia he retrieved it, a live owl, "finest bird I ever saw," exulted the absent-minded Lieutenant-Governor!<sup>67</sup>

In the event you have been holding your breath about what happened to Alpheus Morse whom we left languishing in Halifax gaol, charged with rebellious practices, wife Theodora thrown on the generosity of troops at Fort Cumberland, I can assure you that he and his colleagues were released and were never tried because of the general amnesty granted. Alpheus reformed himself with a swiftness matched only by Richard Uniacke, becoming justice-of-the-peace, and respected member of the community, appearing more loyal than the Loyalists. To illustrate this last point, it may be noted that a piece of china belonging to Alpheus Morse has survived and is included in the Weldon collection at Kings College: "Alpheus Morse, Loyalist,"<sup>68</sup> scribbled the unsuspecting Mrs. Weldon in her notebook. Alpheus' cracked sugar bowl may be seen at any time, sitting quietly in the display case among the crockery of the Botsfords, the Saunders and other notable Loyalists. Examine it closely! See its aura spreading slowly outwards, gradually infecting the good Loyalist teacups surrounding it! But I digress.

Finally, there is Planter Benoni Danks. A loose end? Was he not buried at Windsor and given the appropriate epitaph by one who knew him: "he liv'd under a general Dislike and died without [one] to regret his Death?"<sup>69</sup> Yes, but as it turned out General Eyre Massey was an old war buddy of Colonel Danks; they were together at the siege of Havana, Cuba, in 1761. So when Massey heard of Danks' death he sent his surgeon to Windsor to investigate and dug him up, a indignity for poor old Danks. I know, he is the only Planter

Kodak *ds*  
digital science™

**DEMO**

members in by-elections, Sackville Foster, a member of the Commons. Sackville seat was again declared (1783), constituency reformation apparently matched that of its new member.

patriot, Robert  
age, when the  
by which time

67 Arbuthnot to Sandwich, 11 October 1777, in Barnes and Owen, *The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich*, Vol. 1, 306.

68 While Mrs Weldon did not regard her collection as exclusively Loyalist, she apparently assumed the particular Morse piece to be Loyalist, and recorded in her notebook that Alpheus Morse was a Loyalist. See the Weldon Catalogue prepared by Marie Elwood and the original Weldon Notebook, both in Kings College Library.

69 Doughty, *Knox Journal*, 196-7.

70 Massey to Germain, 4 January 1777, PANS, RG I, Vol. 365, 3.