

*Each Party Was Supposed to Have a Tory Pilot:
The Loyalist Guides and Volunteers of April 19, 1775*

WHO WERE THE LOYALISTS?



- Many colonists who ultimately became “Tories” were not distinguishable from their neighbors who embraced independence.
- Many loyalists were respected members of their towns; often well-educated Harvard graduates who worked as merchants, doctors, lawyers, distillers or ministers.



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

- Of the four hundred eighty-eight loyalists who eventually fled to Canada after the American Revolution, settled in the Ontario area and submitted claims to the English government for losses sustained during the American Revolution, only five held public office.
- Only one claimant was a physician.
- A small number owned shops, ran taverns or were considered artisans.
- Ninety percent of those loyalists who settled in the Ontario region simply identified themselves as farmers.



- The average loyalist farmer who ultimately took refuge in Upper Canada leased or owned less than two hundred acres of land prior to the American Revolution.
- 42% of the Ontario settlers admitted they had cleared less than ten acres of land prior to their flight.

- Over half of the loyalist refugees who settled in Upper Canada were foreign born.
- Over 50% of Ontario loyalists were Scot Highland Roman Catholics. Second in number were German and Irish immigrants.
- An additional 8% claimed England as their place of birth.

- Many loyalist Scot immigrants had only resided in the American colonies for four years at the start of the American Revolution.
- English immigrants had resided in America on average for eight years.
- By comparison, many Irish and German immigrants had lived in the colonies between eleven and eighteen years

Motivating Factors to Remain Loyal to the British Government



Blind Loyalty?



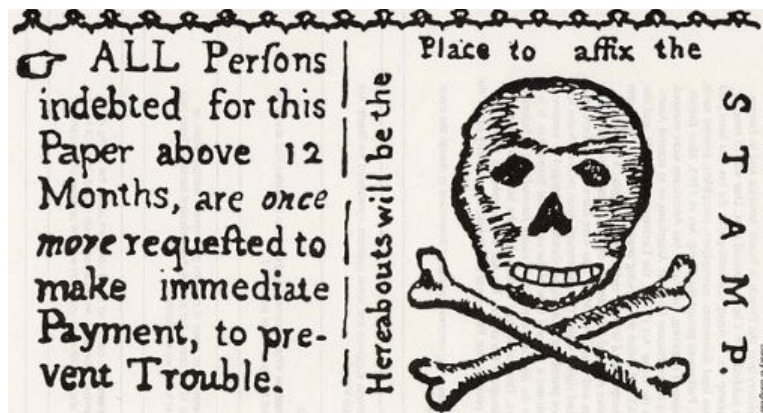
Religious Principles

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

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

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

Economic Principles





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

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

Cultural Allegiance

- Following the conclusion of the French and Indian War, many Scottish veterans from the 42nd, 77th, and 78th Regiments settled in the New York and New England areas.
- Scottish settlers were known for their unquestionable loyalty to the Crown. In a society where clan ties were often paramount, many Scottish residents viewed King George III as their Laird or clan chieftain.

- Most loyalist Scots refused to sign “association” documents or loyalty oaths put forth by the Tory Committee due to the fact such documents were viewed as breaking an oath of allegiance to the King.
- Captain Alexander McDonald, formerly of the 77th Regiment, warned “I am determined to be true to the trust reposed in me and discharge my duty with honour . . . as long as I live.”

Public Safety



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

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

The Declaration of Independence

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.

[illegible]

- Justus Sherwood
- Robert Rogers
- William Smith

[illegible]

The Tory Pilots



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

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

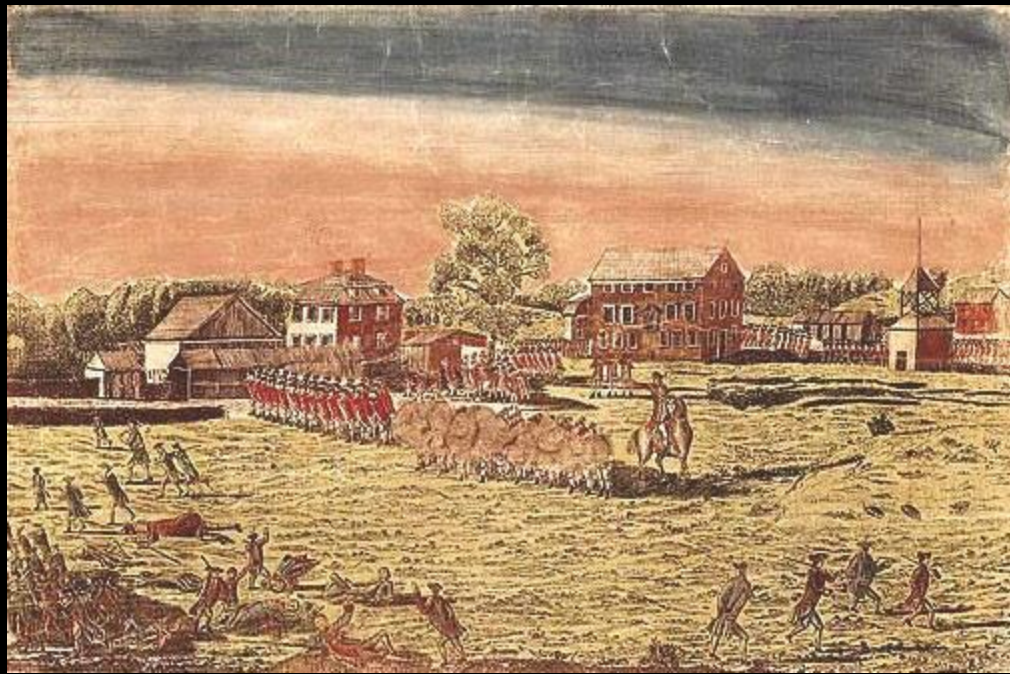
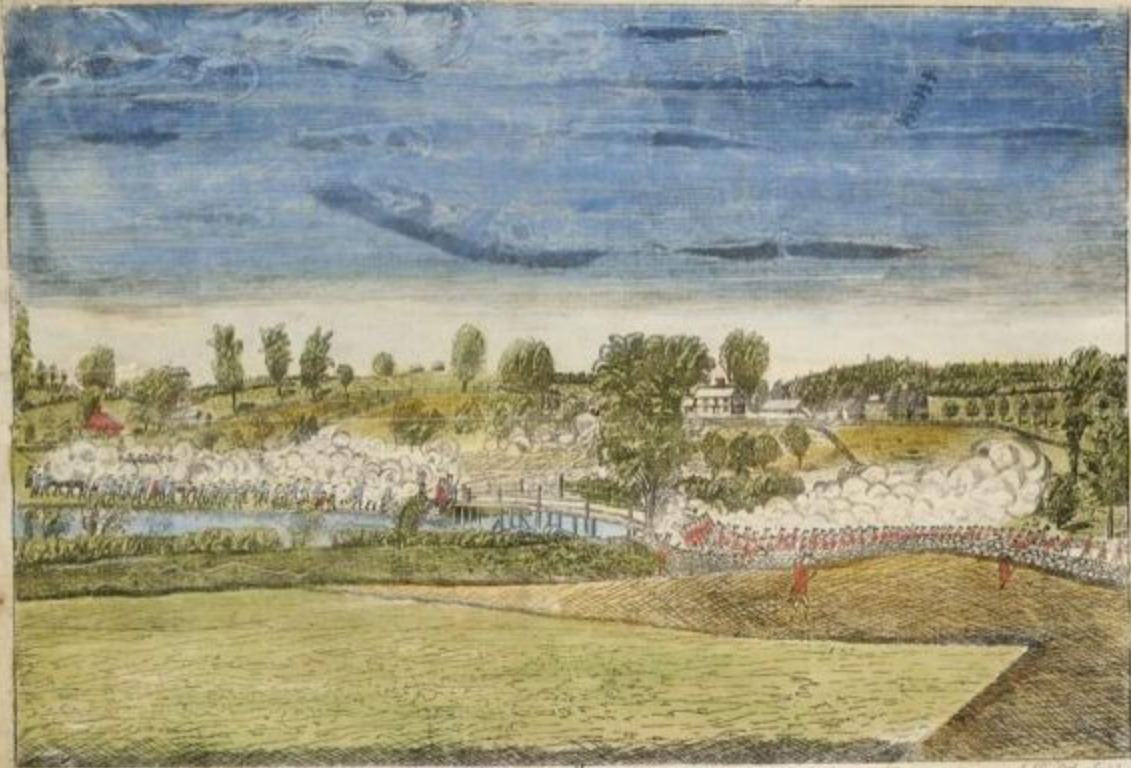


Plate III. The Engagement at the North Bridge in Concord



1. The Detachment of the Regulars who first fired
on the Provincials at the Bridge

2. The Provincials heading by Colonel Robinson's
Rifle & Partick, 3. The Bridge

A. S. Peckham. Sculp.

Plan IV. A View of the South Part of Lexington.



1. Colonel Smith's Regiment retreating before the Town.
 2. General Gage's Troops entering there.
 3. General Gage's Troops in the Town.

4. The Black Guard of the Town.
 5. A College of the Town.
 6. The Garrison of the Town in Lexington.

A. W. Smith del.

The Forgotten Volunteers

- One group that has been noticeably absent from period accounts of the Battles of Lexington and Concord were the Loyalist guides who assisted the military expedition to Concord.
- Little has been written about the role Loyalists played in Gage's military operation prior to 2016. Many early historians initially suggested that only two to three loyalists accompanied Smith's regulars to Concord. This is incorrect.
- Likewise, the role of armed and mounted loyalists present when Lord Hugh Earl Percy's relief force marched to Lexington the afternoon of April 19, 1775 has been completely overlooked.

Background To Lexington and Concord

- In an attempt to break the Massachusetts colonists of their resistance to crown policy, the Boston Port Bill authorized General Gage to undertake any military measures necessary to help bring the colony under control.
- Gage quickly responded to this authorization by requesting naval warships be sent to the New Hampshire coast, Cape Ann and to the Massachusetts South and North Shores.
- He also dispatched soldiers and loyalists to Middlesex, Essex and Worcester Counties with instructions to map the roads and topography, sample the political moods of the countryside and discover what they could about suspected provincial supply depots

- In late winter and early spring of 1775, Gage received a series of dispatches from London ordering him to not only arrest the leaders of Massachusetts's opposition party, but to launch a major strike against the apparently growing provincial stockpiles of weapons and munitions.
- As he contemplated these orders, Gage considered a variety of military options, including a long-range strike against the large store of weapons located in the shire town of Worcester, forty miles west of Boston.
- Realizing that this was much too risky a venture, the general decided instead to seize the military supplies reportedly stored at Concord, a march half the distance of that to Worcester.

The Plan of Operation



Gage's plan called for approximately seven hundred men composed of the elite grenadiers and light infantry from several regiments and a company of marines, to march from Boston to Concord under cover of darkness on April 18, 1775.



This “strike force,” under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith of the 10th Regiment of Foot, was ordered “[to proceed] with the utmost expedition and secrecy to Concord where you will seize and destroy all the artillery, ammunition, provisions, tents, small arms and all military stores whatever. But you will take care that the soldiers do not plunder the inhabitants, or hurt private property.”

~General Gage to Lieutenant Colonel Smith, April, 18, 1775

- Gage instructed Smith to dispose of provincial supplies by destroying the trunnions of the cannons, burning the tents, dumping powder and shot into local ponds and eradicating food “in the best way you can devise.”
- To counter the problem of colonial alarm riders spreading word of the expedition, the general informed Smith that “a small party on horseback is ordered out to stop all advice of your march getting to Concord before you.”

Lexington-Concord

19 April 1775

The march to Concord and back

Smith's Column
Percy's Column
Combined Column
Colonials

Arriving like swarms of bees all through the day

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The Presence of Loyalist Guides

According to the Reverend William Gordon, “several” loyalists were present with the army. “On the first of the night, when it was very dark, the detachment, consisting of all the grenadiers and light infantry, the flower of the army to the amount of 800 or better, officers included, the companies having been fitted up, and *several of the inimical torified natives*, repaired to the boats, and got into them just as the moon rose, crossed the water, landed on Cambridge side, took through a private way to avoid discovery, and therefore had to go through some places up to their thighs in water.

~ An Account of the Commencement of Hostilities between Great Britain and America, in the province of Massachusetts Bay, by the Rev. Mr. William Gordon, of Roxbury, in a letter to a gentleman in England. May 17, 1775

Why Recruit Loyalist Guides?

- In the days leading up to the March to Concord, General Thomas Gage actively recruited Loyalist men to assist in the military operation.
- Why recruit Loyalist civilians?
 - They were familiar with the countryside, especially the route from Boston to the Concord area.
 - They were familiar with the location of hidden military stores in Concord.
 - Some had previous military experience and as a result, could help identify hostile forces and potential ambush sites.
 - If necessary, they could serve as a communication line between Boston and the battle front.

*How Many Guides Were Present
with Colonel Smith's Column?*

6

(Sorry ... not much else on this slide)

Who Were The Guides?

- A review of primary sources, including Loyalist claims for compensation after the American Revolution, suggest that at least **six loyalists** were recruited to assist Lieutenant Colonel Smith's expedition by navigating colonial roads and assisting troops in locating military stores in Concord.
- Among the guides were former Harvard classmates and friends Daniel Bliss of Concord and Daniel Leonard of Taunton.
 - Both were well established attorneys who were forced to flee to the safety of Boston in 1774.
 - It was suspected by many Massachusetts Loyalists that Leonard was the anonymous author "*Massachusettensis*", who had published prior to Lexington and Concord a series of pro-government letters drafted in response to the political arguments of John Adams.

Massachusettensis :

O R

A SERIES of LETTERS,

CONTAINING

A FAITHFUL STATE OF MANY IMPORTANT
AND STRIKING FACTS,

WHICH LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE
PRESENT TROUBLES

IN THE

Province of the *Massachusetts-Bay*;

INTERSPERSED WITH

ANIMADVERSIONS and REFLECTIONS,

ORIGINALLY

Addressed to the PEOPLE of that Province, and worthy the
Consideration of the TRUE PATRIOTS of this Country.

By a PERSON of Honor upon the Spot.

*Falsis Honor juveni, & mendax Infamia torret,
Regem, nisi mendicium & mendacem ? Vir bonus est quis ?
Regi Consilia Patrum, qui Leges Juraque servant.*

Hon. Ep. xvi.

B O S T O N printed :

LONDON reprinted for J. MATHEWS, No. 18, in the Strand,
MDCCLXXVI.

- Also present as guides were Dr. Thomas Boulton of Salem and Edward Winslow Jr. of Plymouth.
 - Boulton was a vocal supporter of Crown policies towards Massachusetts and was forced to flee to Boston in 1774.
 - Winslow held several political and legal posts in Plymouth County. Sensing a radical shift in the political mood in October of 1774, he abandoned his estate and also retreated to Boston.
- Another Loyalist was William Warden.
 - Warden was born in Boston and was a shopkeeper, grocer and barber.
 - Unlike many of his station, Warden had been opposed to the political and violent activities of the Massachusetts “patriots” since the Stamp Act.
 - An American prisoner captured during the retreat from Concord later recounted that British troops identified the “Boston barber” Warden as “one of their pilots”

Location During the Mission

- It appears the guides were interspersed throughout the column.
- Lieutenant William Sutherland of the 38th Regiment of Foot references on two separate occasions a “guide” attached to the front of the column.
- “When I heard Lieut. Adair of the Marines who was a little before me in front call out, here are two fellows galloping express to Alarm the Country, on which I immediately ran up to them, seized one of them and our guide the other, dismounted them and by Major Pitcairn's direction gave them in charge to the men.”
- This guide was likely Winslow as he claimed that he was with the head of the column at the Battle of Lexington.

Assignments

- Loyalist guides assisted British officers in identifying enemy combatants. Sutherland describes how a Loyalist guide identified a captured American prisoner as being a person of importance.
- “I mett coming out of a cross road another fellow galloping, however, hearing him some time before I placed myself so that I got hold of the bridle of his horse and dismounted him, our guide seemed to think that he was a very material fellow and said something as if he had been a Member of the Provincial Congress.”

- In addition to leading the column to Concord, the guides also had the responsibility of assisting search parties in locating military stores.
- “The troops renewed their march to Concord, where, when they arrived, they divided into parties, and went directly to several places where the province stores were deposited. Each party was supposed to have a Tory pilot.”

Were The Guides Armed?



Jennifer Wilbur Photography

Yes!

- A newspaper account from May 3, 1775 suggests that **some of the guides** were armed.
- According to the *Massachusetts Spy*, “A young man, unarmed, who was taken prisoner by the enemy, and made to assist in carrying off their wounded, says, that he saw a barber who lives in Boston, thought to be one Warden, with the troops . . . he likewise saw the said barber fire twice upon our people.”

The Loyalist Guides of Percy's Relief Column



Contingency Plans

- General Gage had also made contingency plans in the event the expedition to Concord was in danger or in jeopardy of failure.
- In the event of an emergency, Lord Hugh Earl Percy and regimental units from his brigade were to march to the expedition's aid.
- At six o'clock on the morning of April 19th, an unknown rider, possibly a Loyalist guide from Lieutenant Colonel Smith's column, arrived in Boston requesting assistance. After some delay, over one thousand soldiers marched out of Boston towards Lexington.



Who Were the Loyalists of Percy's Relief?

- At least seven Loyalists were present in Percy's relief force.
- George Leonard of Plymouth served as a mounted scout.
 - A successful businessman in his own right, Leonard noted that "he went from Boston on the nineteenth of April with the Brigade commanded by Lord Percy upon their march to Lexington. That being on horseback and having no connexion with the army, he several times went forward of the Brigade."

- Two other men, Abijah Willard of Lancaster and John Emerson of Worcester also volunteered to serve as mounted guides.
 - Emerson, a house joiner and carpenter by trade, was tasked with the dangerous task of delivering “despatches from the British headquarters in Boston to Earl Percy, then covering the retreat of the troops from Concord.”
 - Willard, a veteran of the Siege of Louisbourg and French and Indian War was positioned in advance of the column to identify any “ambush laid for the troops.”

- Loyalists Thomas Beaman of Petersham, Thomas Aylwin and Walter Barrell of Boston all asserted they joined Percy's relief column either on their own volition or at the request of General Gage.
- According to Barrell, "when the Lexington affair of the Rebels firing on His Majesty's troops occurred, he voluntarily associated with a number of friends to Government who offered their services to General Gage in any capacity to oppose the rebels."
- Aylwin recalled, "on the day of the skirmish at Lexington, General Gage asked him to enrol himself as a volunteer."

John Bowen - Captured Guide

- John Bowen was a former officer of the 45th Regiment of Foot.
- In 1767 he retired from military service and settled in Princeton, Massachusetts.
- He refused to recognize the authority of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress, he was arrested and confined to a jail cell in August, 1774.. Upon release, he fled to Boston.
- On April 19th, Bowen recognized that “Gage had failed to procure [guides] for Lord Percy’s Brigade, he [Bowen] volunteered for the duty and conducted the force to Lexington.”
- Later that day, the retired officer “was taken prisoner in returning from that skirmish.”

Wrong Place at the Wrong Time?

- One guide asserted, somewhat questionably, that he accompanied the British expedition out of mere curiosity.
- “The Petition of Samuel Murray, now a Prisoner of War, in the Town of Rutland, humbly sheweth: that on the nineteenth day of April AD 1775, Your Petitioner being then, an Inhabitant of the Town of Boston, & a Student of Physick there, was unfortunately induced, from mere Curiosity, unarmed & as a Spectator only, to follow the British Troops on their March to Lexington – but long before they reached that Place, recollecting the Troubles & dangers, to which he might be exposed, actually separated himself from them, & on his Return, being known to some People of Cambrige, was apprehended by them, on suspicion only & confined.”
- Given his status as a prisoner of war, it was more likely Murray was merely attempting to craft a defense to the accusations leveled against him.

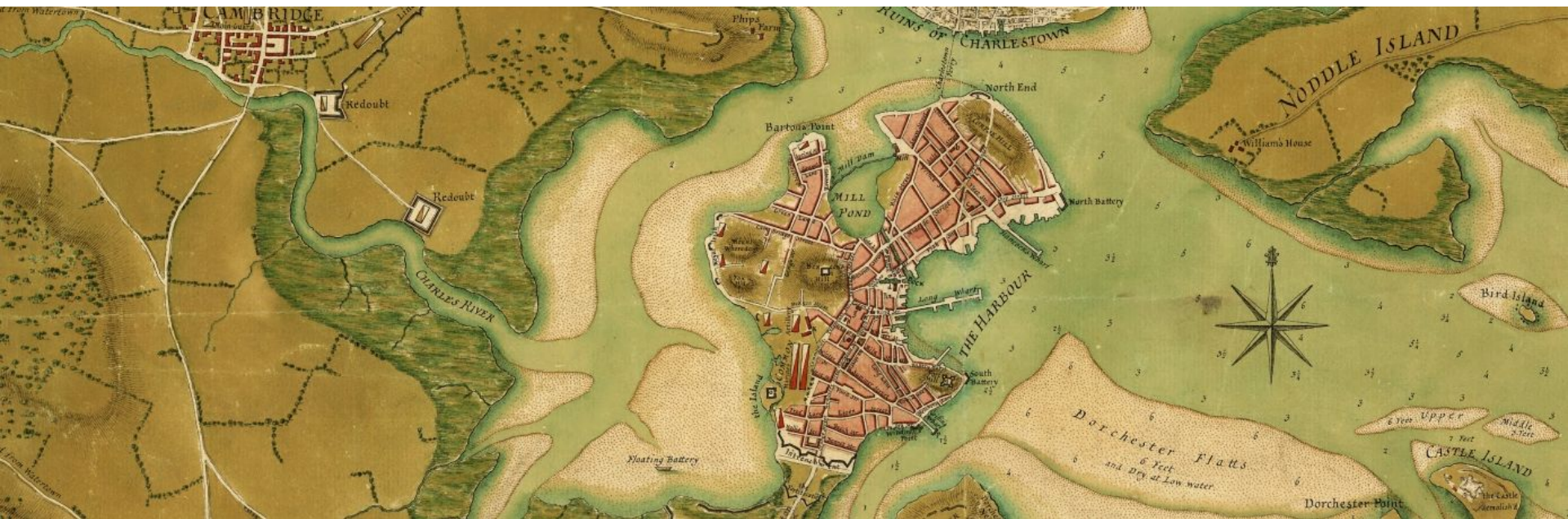
Mistaken Identity

Some individuals were mistakenly identified by Massachusetts locals as guides. Harvard tutor Isaac Smith Jr. made the grave error of merely directing Percy's relief column towards the correct turn in a fork in a road. For his efforts, Smith was vilified by many colonists for years after the Battles of Lexington and Concord.

Why Did Gage Keep the Loyalist Guides Out of His Official Report?

- It is likely General Gage had excluded his Loyalist Guides from his official reports in an effort to shield them from retribution. Why?
- The presence of Loyalists with the British column on April 19, 1775 eventually garnered the attention of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress.
- On June 16, 1775 Congress proposed to pardon all enemies who surrendered, except General Gage, Admiral Graves “and all the natives of America, not belonging to the navy or army, who went out with the regular troops on the nineteenth of April last, and were countenancing, aiding, and assisting them in the robberies and murders then committed.”

The Siege of Boston



After Lexington and Concord

- During the Siege of Boston, the guides continued to provide military and logistical support to the Crown.
- Many of the Loyalist guides were recruited into Timothy Ruggles' Loyal American Association. By July 5, 1775, the association was composed of five companies of loyalists.
- The companies were charged with the responsibilities of protecting various neighborhoods of Boston via "constant patrolling party from sunset, to sunrise [to] prevent all disorders within the district by either Signals, Fires, Thieves, Robbers, house breakers or Rioters"
- The organization also served as the town's fire department. "In case of Fires your company officers & privates to repair immediately to ye place without arms to assist in extinguishing it & upon all duty to wear a white Scarf round the left arm to prevent Accidents."

The Fate of the Loyalist Guides

- What happened to each of the known Loyalist guides?
- Thomas Beaman
 - In May, 1775, Thomas Beaman was appointed a wagon master to the British Army.
 - Beaman died in Bedford, New York in November, 1780.
 - After the war, his widow and children settled in Digby, Nova Scotia.

- Daniel Bliss

- In 1777, Daniel Bliss was appointed an Assistant Commissary General with Burgoyne's Army. Following Burgoyne's defeat, he was placed in charge of the whole commissariat from Niagara Lake to the most westerly British outposts.
- In September, 1778, he was formally banned from Massachusetts by the Massachusetts legislature.
- On November 28, 1780, John Hancock signed the order declaring his Massachusetts estate forfeited and seized.
- Following the war, Bliss was appointed a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in New Brunswick, Canada.
- He died there in 1806.

- George Leonard

- George Leonard would finance the construction of seven armed vessels and three transports for service with the British Navy stationed at Newport, Rhode Island. This small fleet successfully destroyed eleven American vessels harbored at Martha's Vineyard and forced the island to turn over necessary provisions for the British Army.
- At the end of the war, he settled in New Brunswick and was active in politics for thirty-six years.
- He died on April 1, 1826.

- William Warden

- The barber William Warden was recruited by Gage to engage in intelligence operations against the local rebels.
- On one occasion, “he was sent by General Gage to Salem and Marblehead to receive intelligence from Dr. Benjamin Church, but failed to execute his business.”
- On several instances he scouted the American siege lines around Boston from an open rowboat in the harbor.
- He also served as a courier, delivering messages to various British posts around Boston.
- In 1776, he and his family fled from Boston to Shelburne, Nova Scotia.

- Samuel Murray

- In a general order issued on June 15, 1775, Murray was released from custody and ordered confined at his father's homestead in Rutland.
- In 1778, he was banished from Massachusetts by legislative order.
- He died prior to 1785 in exile.

- Daniel Leonard

- After Lexington and Concord, Daniel Leonard continued his legal service to the Crown in Bermuda and England.
- At the conclusion of the war, he retired to London, England.
- On June 27, 1829, Leonard committed suicide by shooting himself

Questions?



Thanks!

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