

## YORKER



## COURANT

*News & Wisdom from Sir John's Regt. – The King's Royal Yorkers*

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## *Humorous Military Anecdotes*

THROUGH THE AGES

THE Duke of Wellington's mother had a very low regard for her son's capabilities. She thought him "fit for powder and nothing else". At 18 he was gazetted as an Ensign to the 73rd Highlanders. Here is what his mother, clearly a poor judge of military matters, said:

"Arthur has put on his red coat for the first time today. Anyone can see he does not have the cut of a soldier."

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EVEN in the midst of a bloody conflict with death and destruction all around them, some Englishmen never forget their good manners. One such gentleman was Lieut. Colonel Dan MacKinnon of the Coldstream Guards. Whilst involved in desperate hand to hand fighting outside the gates of Hougoumont during the Battle of Waterloo, MacKinnon was wounded by a musket ball which passed through his knee and killed the horse he was riding. As he fell off his horse, he lost his sword and landed on a French officer. He excused himself politely and explained to the startled Frenchman that he would have to borrow his sword. The Frenchman was so taken aback by McKinnon's request that he gave up his sword without question.

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IN THE Baltic town of Vilnius, through which Napoleon's troops marched to their doom in the summer of 1812, there stands today a simple monument bearing two plaques. Together they tell the whole story. On

### COMING EVENTS

JAN 18  
*Winter Drill*  
*Ft York Armouries*

FEB 15  
*Winter Drill*  
*Ft York Armouries*

MAR 21  
*Winter Drill*  
*Ft York Armouries*

the side with its back to Moscow is written:

'Napoleon Bonaparte passed this way in 1812 with 400,000 men.'

On the other side are the words:

'Napoleon Bonaparte passed this way in 1812 with 9,000 men.'

\*\*\*

FIELD Marshal Lord Alanbrooke referring to Winston Churchill...

'He knows no details, has only got half the picture in his mind, talks absurdities and makes my blood boil to listen to his nonsense... And the wonderful thing is that ¾ of the population of the world imagine Winston Churchill is one of the great Strategists of History, a second Marlborough, and the other ¼ have no conception what a public menace he is.'

\*\*\*

STEPHEN Ambrose (in his book 'Pegasus Bridge') recounts an interesting tale from the desert war.

In North Africa, Hans von Luck was fighting in the only war he ever enjoyed. He commanded the armed reconnaissance battalion on Rommel's extreme right (southern) flank. He thus enjoyed a certain independence, as did his British opposite number. The two commanding officers agreed to fight a civilized war. Every day at five p.m. the war shut down, the British brewed up their tea, the Germans their coffee. At about quarter past five, von Luck and the British commander would communicate over the radio. "Well," von Luck might say, "we captured so-and-so today and he's fine and he sends his love to his mother, tell her not to worry." Once von Luck learned that the British had received a month's supply of cigarettes, he offered to trade a captured officer – who happened to be the heir to the Players cigarette fortune – for one million cigarettes. The British countered with an offer of 600,000. Done, said von Luck. But the Players heir was outraged. He said the ransom was insufficient. He insisted he was worth the million and refused to be exchanged.



## - WINTER TRAINING -

**I**F YOU'VE only just barely cleaned up your kit from the last campaign season, don't put it too far back in the closet. The first Winter Drill session is only weeks away. As we have done for many years, Winter Drill Nights will be held at the Fort York Armories on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month starting in January. So the first three drills of 2012 will be held on:

Wednesday, January 18, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, February 15, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, March 21, 8 p.m.

And there are lots of good reasons why you should be there.

**1. NCO's** – This is an opportunity for you to hone your command skills in the *tranquil setting* of a Drill Hall. Every NCO will have an opportunity to lead a section or even command the parade. This is great experience, that will serve you well when the new season gets under way.

**2. RECRUITS** – This is your chance to learn the fundamentals of Foot & Arms

drill under the *watchful and gentle care* of an experienced instructor. You can learn at your own pace, working through the intricacy of 18<sup>th</sup> century drill with a group of other new guys who are equally bewildered by its many fine points. And of course, once you gain a basic level of skill, you will fall in with the "old guys" where you will master the maneuvers that will once again befuddle the rebels.

**3. OLD GUYS** – You've got a double-reason for coming. Not only do you **NEED THE DRILL**, but you need to have a post-drill beer with the guys in the Serjeant's Mess. This is your chance to tell your favourite war story (again), hear the latest rumours and grumble about how long the Sjt Major kept you at the shoulder. How **FUN** is that!

So mark the dates on your calendar and make a point of being there.

*Sjt Mjr Dave Putnam*

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

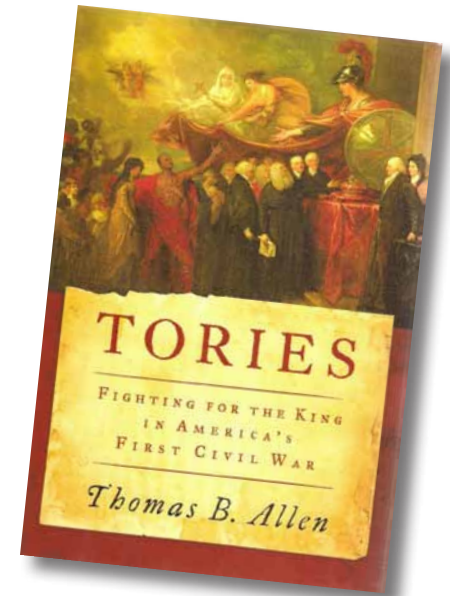
I would like to wish all members of the King's Royal Yorkers and their families, a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. May everyone enjoy the comfort of family and friends at this time of the year.

*Lt. Colonel James*



# TORIES

## FIGHTING FOR THE KING



TORIES: FIGHTING FOR THE KING IN AMERICA'S FIRST CIVIL WAR, by Thomas B. Allen. 2010.

Hardcover, 6x9, index, 496p. Price: \$26.99 plus shipping and handling from Harper Collins, 10 East 53rd St., New York, NY, tel. 1-800-207-7000 <http://www.harpercollins.com>

**T**HIS BOOK provides a long-overdue view of the Revolutionary War from the Tory perspective. Allen describes the seven-year conflict in great detail, and from the opening pages the reader realizes that this was a conflict of extremes. Americans who were related or had known each other from birth, who had schooled, churched, socialized, and served together under arms, were transformed into mortal enemies. Their antagonism persisted throughout the war and long after.

If Allen has any fault in describing Tory motivations it is his failure to recognize that a great many embraced loyalty as a conviction, not just an opportunity to be on the winning side or gain royal favor and land grants. Many of the most prominent Loyalist leaders already had substantial wealth and owned more land than the crown would ever award after the war. Their motive was simply a creed - the faith that to remain attached to Britain was, in and of itself, proper and correct.

As prominent Tories were the best known and their affairs the most recorded, Allen understandably concentrates much of his narrative on their activities. Rich and influential Loyalists, the crown's senior appointees and junior placemen, all of whom had the most to lose by American independence, receive the most attention and fuel the myth that they were the majority of the Royalist opposition. The thousands upon thousands of "regular" Americans who supported the British connection tend to fade into the background as inconsequential.

As British officers like Simcoe and Tarleton - leaders of very effective Tory regiments, get more recognition than their men. Readers would be justified for concluding that their American junior officers and enlisted men were mere ciphers. The author concentrates on Tory military leaders like DeLancey, Skinner, Robinson, Johnson, and Butler, who led large, effective Loyalist formations, but the services of their thousands of men have to be imagined. While there is not enough space to address them adequately, more attention paid to them could have strengthened the book.

Allen relies upon many legendary accounts, especially when covering the war in the north on the Canadian frontiers. Tory regiments and leaders are misnamed and incorrectly located, and the conspicuous

role of the natives has been diminished. However, in the grand scope of his book, which stretches from Florida to Nova Scotia, these lapses are merely aggravations.

The War of Independence is revealed as a litany of unforgiving, unremitting violence of Americans against Americans. The story of the final victory, which ironically had depended so much upon the assistance of two European monarchies, soon became the usual story of victors: that God's favor had been bestowed on his chosen people and their new nation. Loyalists became the vanquished enemy, not admirable soldiers who had fought against neighbors and family for honorable reasons. While Allen relies too much upon legends rather than original sources and does not adequately address the motivations and challenges of ordinary Loyalist soldiers, for the most part this book makes headway in telling the story from the long-neglected Tory point of view.

Gavin K. Watt



# Firing IN Files



IT IS OFTEN suggested that tactics lag behind military technology. By the American Revolution however, Britain's professional army seemed to have a pretty good grip on the risks associated with a slowly charged muzzle-loader, and the steps necessary to deal with it. In fact, it would appear that the King's troops were better trained in this regard than their rebel counterparts.

Richard Berleth, in his book "Bloody Mohawk: The French and Indian War & American Revolution on New York's Frontier", gives a thorough and interesting account of the Battle of Oriskany. Berleth describes the early stages of the battle:

"Lieutenant Colonel William Seeber now took command of the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion [Tryon County Militia], or what was left of it. The ranks, locked shoulder to shoulder on the road, elbows jostling as they tried to reload, had been thrust through, hacked, chopped, and even pulled out of line and captured by rushes of Mohawks and Senecas. The formal response to ambush had never worked for General Braddock or Colonel Williams, and there was no reason it would work now for the Tryon County militia. Herkimer had been wrong to hold his men on the road, and now, with their officers down, they crawled into the woods, scraped out firing pits behind trees and fell to fighting Brant's warriors in wilderness style. The problem for riflemen alone in the woods, however, was the half minute needed to reload between firing and

missing. In that half minute, an intended target could close the distance to the shooter and brain him with a tomahawk."

And there you have it. The greatest myth of the American Revolution is exposed. The idea that colonial riflemen stood up to Britain's military might and beat them with their independent spirit and crack marksmanship just doesn't fly.

General Nicholas Herkimer, the wounded rebel commander, attempted to salvage the deteriorating situation with some good military common sense. Berleth explains:

"They pulled him [Herkimer] out from under the horse, rushed him to the cover of the beech tree, and were trying to staunch the flow of blood. All the while, Honnikol [Nicholas] sat calmly on his saddle giving orders. He had lit his ever-present pipe and, now smoking casually, explained what he wanted. Into the woods, two by two, he sent his remaining militia with jabs of his pipe stem. First man fires, and the second covers him if he misses. Try to make the first a rifle shot, the second a musket load of buck and ball for closer range. Don't run from the Indians. Keep touch with your left and right."

While rebel officers waited until the heat of battle to instruct their men in the fundamental principles of file firing, the professional soldiers included this as part of their basic training for fighting in North America.

Captain Johann Ewald was a jager officer

in the Infantry Regiment von Dittfurth in the Service of the Prince of Hesse-Cassel. After the Revolution (1785) he wrote his "Treatise on Partisan Warfare" in which he described many of the techniques used by Light Infantry troops during the war. He stated, "Since the loading of the rifles goes very slowly, the jager in particular must be well taught that always one of two, or two of four, have loaded guns, so that they can support those who have fired already... If this maneuver has to be performed during a retreat, one of the two, two of the four, or three of the six, retreat 50 to 100 paces after they have given fire, while the others save their fire until the retreated party has reloaded. This is the way how to retreat alternately. During all of this the officers and non-commissioned officers of the platoons have to constantly call to their men and give the necessary support so that the platoons do not get mixed up, causing disarray."

In the 1797 manual, "Light Infantry Exercise: As Ordered in His Majesty's Regulations for the Movement of the Troops", a similar description is provided:

"In firing in extended order, it is to be a standing rule, that the two men of the same file are never unloaded together, for which purpose, as soon as the front rank man has fired he is to slip round the left of the rear rank man, who will make a short pace forward, and put himself in the other's place, whom he is to protect while loading. When the first man returns his ramrod he will give

his comrade the word *ready*, after which, and not before, he may fire and immediately change places as before.”

Of course this practice is by no means new to the Yorkers. Although the front and rear rank man do not exchange places as described in the above paragraph, the concept of working with your file partner and firing alternately is our standard mode of operation. Here are some good rules of thumb to ensure that this method of firing is done safely and effectively:

It is essential that the rear rank man keep locked-up to the front rank man so that his fire does not injure his front rank file partner.

To ensure the safety of each person in the file when loading in a kneeling position, the front rank man must cast about with the muzzle to the front and the rear rank man must cast about with the muzzle to the rear.

Files must be careful not to move ahead of the line, thereby exposing themselves to friendly fire.

There is a great temptation for file partners to split up as they individually seek cover. To be most effective file partners must stick together and work cooperatively. Once they separate the protection for the unloaded file partner is gone.

*Sjt Mjr Dave Putnam*



## Attack on QUEBEC



*François Dambourgès was an officer in the Royal Highland Emigrants. François rose to the rank of captain, making him the highest ranking Canadian Regular officer in the British Army during the war. Here's my account of his activities in 1777 and later:*

A francophone officer, 84RHE. In 1777, assistant Deputy Quarter Master General at Sorel. Appointed on 26Jul77 by Carleton (which suggests he was responsible for the supply line between the Quebec posts and Ticonderoga) and “received Orders to join General Burgoyne’s Army, and to take upon him the charge of the Canadian Corvée Men, under the directions of General Phillips.... [A]t Ticonderoga he communicated his Orders to Brigadier Hamilton, who Ordered him to remain there to take charge of the Canadians Employed in Transporting Provisions.... Remained at Tyconderoga untill the 18<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1777 at which time he was taken Prisoner and carried to Boston where he remained till the

13<sup>th</sup> June 1778.” Got permission to go to NYC to get exchanged. (HP, AddMss21873, ff.24-25) Commanded at Carleton Is. during the Ross Raid of 1781. (s22)

*Todd Braisted uncovered this excellent account of François Dambourgès’s bravery during the blunting of the rebel attack on New Year’s Eve in the Sault au Matelot, Quebec City Lower Town. This was penned by Captain (later Major) John Nairne, who served with him.*

*Gavin K Watt*

Sir

I received yours of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Jany: two days ago which brought me the first account of the death of my late worthy friend Captn: Dambourges, for which I am very sorry, and will be happy if any thing I can say or do can contribute to the relief of his Widow and infant Children. He Served with me in the late 84<sup>th</sup> Regt: and in my own Company, and I do no more than justice

to his memory to declare, that I as well as every one who had an opportunity of knowing his Character, look on him as a good, intelligent, and brave Officer, and that he Showed himself to be such on every occasion, But particularly on the morning of the 31<sup>st</sup> Decemr: 1775 when he joined a party of which I was second in Command, which Colonel Caldwell led to the Low[er] Town to oppose the Americans in getting into it, or to drive them back if they had already got in. On our arrival there we found the Enemy had drove back the Guard in the Sault au Matelot, and got possession of that Street, and that they were on the point of getting over the last Barrier, and so getting possession of the Lower Town, having already thrown a Ladder, over that Barrier, by which they meant to get in. But this having been Observed, and it having been also Observed, that from the Gavel end of (what I think is called) Maillou's house they could annoy us, Some one of our party Seized a Ladder and planted it against the end of that house, and Mr. Dambourges instantly Sprung up, and having broke the Window with the butt of his fuzee, he got into the house, and I immediately followed him with a party – we found Mr: Dambourges Surrounded by a party of the Enemy whom we drove out with our Bayonets, soon there after the Enemy called to us and begged we would cease firing and that they would Surrender, as they found their retreat was cut off by a party which Genl: Carleton had Ordered out by Palace Gate, and which then attacked them in the rear, as our party did in front, under the Orders, and directions, of Coll: Caldwell, and the Enemy having been told to advance without arms, did so, and we received them as prisoners: Thus it will be seen what an active and intrepid part Mr. Dambourges acted on this Occasion, and I wish and hope, this my account of it may be of Service in the application you intend to make in behalf of his Widow, and am Sir your most Obedient humble Servant

J[ohn] N[airne]

*Library and Archives Canada, John and Thomas Nairne fonds, MG 23, GIII23, Volume 3, Entrybook of Correspondence, Pages 441-442.*



## *Your* **RESPONSIBILITIES** *as a Royal Yorker*

**O**VER the years many interesting and informative articles have been printed in the Yorker newsletters. The following article was written in 1993 by then-Colonel Gavin Watt. It makes a number of excellent points about our responsibilities as members of the Royal Yorkers that were relevant in 1993, continue to be relevant today, and will still apply 18 years from now as the Yorkers continue to soldier-on.

### YOUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFETY

In this hobby, the greatest danger to yourself and your fellows is incorrect or sloppy procedures during the loading and firing of the musket. While the regiment works very hard at training each new man, there are many who come into the ranks part-way through a season or from a location far away from the off-season training programs. As a result, they often miss the individual coaching that perfects the drill and cements the safety procedures. While there are many procedures to learn, here's a few that are especially important.

1. Loading in two ranks at close order requires very specific foot & musket movements. In the rear rank each man must be very conscious of where his muzzle is pointing at all times. While priming, the barrel is to be between the front rank men and is held on an angle that places the muzzle of the firelock level with your hat. When loading the main charge into the barrel, the firelock is held in the right hand at the swell of the stock and the barrel is roughly vertical, coming up into the space that lies forward and to the front of your immediate right side. Don't look down the barrel, nor should the muzzle be pointed at the neck or ears of the men in front of you, or at the man on your right. You do not turn the musket to the rear and load in that position. For front rank men, the more serious safety consideration is keeping the muzzle from pointing at your right hand man while you load the main charge.

2. When a demonstration or battle is over, you must never randomly discharge your musket just to get rid of the charge. The unit will always proceed through a checking procedure and when your musket is found to be loaded, you will be led through the proper emptying procedure. One of our most serious accidents resulted from a random discharge after a battle. The reason for this discipline is that many pairs of eyes are available to keep you out of trouble.
3. A common failing of new soldiers is double, or heaven forbid, triple loading of the musket because of misfires. A triple charge blank can cause the musket to leap out of your hands and send you on your rump, or worse. Keep a cool head and concentrate on whether your firelock has fired – not just the priming, but for sure the main charge. If you know that only the priming has flashed, when you re-prime, don't put the extra powder into the muzzle. Put the partly used cartridge back into your pouch, or empty it carefully onto the ground. Never hold a partial cartridge in your hand. It can sympathetically explode when you fire and give you a terrible burn. Don't worry if you miss a volley or two. Just get your firelock back into use safely. And remember to fold over that part cartridge so that you won't have loose powder spilling into your pouch.
4. You will often experience a misfire of your musket due to a dull flint, dirty pan or wet and dirty frizzen surface. As a musketeer, your primary duty is to keep that firelock operational. But, servicing the firelock when you are in tightly packed ranks requires a clear mind and careful thinking. Remember to close your pan before you knap your flint with your musket tool. To be doubly careful, put your hammer stall on. Always think about where your muzzle is pointing when you're servicing your firelock.
5. You must never prime or load your musket on the march. If your section moves



PLATE 1

it hurts someone, you are out of luck. Once you've surrendered control of that firearm, the insurance for you is void and any lawsuits that may occur will be your total responsibility.

Also, our coverage is for an involuntary accident to someone other than a participant. So, the insurance coverage does not protect yourself, other members of our unit, or members of other units. We have additional coverages, but the third party accident is the most significant. Note well – third party, not your fellow members or other participants and not yourself.

Our other public responsibility can be enjoyable. That is the missionary factor of trying to educate the public and dispel the many erroneous myths and offset the plain lack of knowledge that the average Canadian exhibits. But, it is a responsibility. If you don't know the answers to questions posed by genuinely interested people, have the courage and common sense to direct the questioner to someone who does. Don't forget, you are not an instant expert simply because you're wearing the kit. Of course, the public doesn't know that. Any of us in uniform is a likely target for some questions, but you know whether you're capable or not.

And another thing, if you find yourself too shy to answer questions, please be polite and introduce your questioner to someone who enjoys the contact.

#### YOUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF REGIMENTAL HISTORY

In a perfect world, all of us would know as much about the old Yorkers and the period we represent as the men who served during the Revolution. Obviously, this isn't a realistic goal. Even the most knowledgeable and highly motivated amongst us only knows a fraction of the detail.

However, in the Brigade of the American Revolution (BAR), the smaller units require each of their men to pass competency tests before they graduate to full membership.

While few units can hold a candle to our Regiment's reputation for spirit and dedication, there are certainly many, many which can illustrate, man for man, a far better grasp of the period and their original unit. Only each and every one of you can do something about this gap. It's fun and personally rewarding to learn.

before you've finished, move with the section and finish loading as soon as they halt. Complete your loading safely and get back into the action.

6. It is your duty as a soldier to level your musket crisply and well, in particular the rear rank men who can have difficulty doing so. However, at many events, and particularly with certain of the reenacting societies, it is necessary to elevate your musket when firing as this is perceived to be an important safety measure. The nonsense of this is proven by simple physics. Elevation increases the range of anything that might be in the barrel including the burning powder. However, by the act of elevating, the apparent threat of pointing at an individual is reduced. Your NCO or Officer should be ordering elevation when the unit draws too close. However, you are personally capable of recognizing when the action is very close and you can elevate above the heads of the opposition.
7. While everyone who has joined the regiment understands that he is going to have firearms pointed at him and has accepted

this perceived threat, our audiences have not. You must never point your firearm at the public, nor should you be ordered to fire towards the audience if the distance is under 90m. It is your personal duty to avoid doing so and to inform your NCO or Officer of this danger, which in the heat of the moment, he may not have recognized.

#### YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PUBLIC

To be sure, we're all in this hobby for our personal enjoyment and relaxation. However, there is a strong missionary element to our activities and I think all of us enjoy sharing our knowledge and experiences with the public. This sharing does bear some responsibilities.

While the Museum has a substantial third party liability insurance policy, we must recognize that we are not protected from certain occurrences. Most important, you and we are not covered if you give your musket to a non-member to fire a round or snap a flint and something goes wrong. Or, if your bayonet is fixed to the musket and

# “PATRIOT” SOLDIER

## *Arrested*

### IN U.S. CAPITAL



WASHINGTON, D.C.: As a Revolutionary War re-enactor, Jon Andrews helps recreate the struggle against government repression from which the United States of America was born. But when he recently came to Washington D.C. to practice his art, he lost his own freedom. His attempt to help celebrate the birth of liberty with his antique flintlock muskets landed him a berth in a D.C. Jail.

The 53-year-old Vincennes, Indiana resident brought his wife and son to take part in a weekend re-enactment at Mount Vernon’s “Washington and Rochambeau Commemoration.” On the afternoon of Thursday September 8<sup>th</sup> Andrews and his family decided to see the U.S. Capitol. The timing couldn’t have been worse, not just because of rain but because in a few hours the President was due to give an address to Congress. Security that is normally heightened was now hyper-tight.

It started with a traffic stop. Andrews says he was pulled over by a Capitol Police officer and told he made an illegal lane change. He says he was later told that was a pre-text for stopping him. “They informed me later on that I had been profiled, or my car had been profiled as a potential threat because of the way my (Chevy) Blazer sat low to the ground in the back and because of the big black cargo box I had on top of my car.” A statement from the Capitol Police denies profiling was involved. “The United States Capitol Police has specific policies and practices that forbid any type of discriminatory profiling and none was practiced here.”

He says from that point his D.C. family getaway became a nightmare. Although it was unlikely he would try to assassinate the President with an 18<sup>th</sup> century muzzleloader, the Capitol Police seemed unable to decide

what to do with him. “Something that could have been sorted out really quickly, it just seemed like nobody would sign off on it, or everything that I was hearing was that nobody would stick their necks out.”

Eventually he was transferred into the



Jon Andrews at Mount Vernon along with fellow re-enactors of the “Illinois Regiment ~ Virginia State Line.” This photo taken the weekend after Andrews’ arrest at the U.S. Capitol.

custody of the District’s Metropolitan Police to be held overnight – a facility he describes as filthy and horrendous. “No water, no food, no anything all night long. In fact the whole time I was in there I had no food or water and was handcuffed and

shackled.” Meanwhile his wife and 12-year-old son were left alone in a strange city to fend for themselves.

Friday afternoon, after more than 24-hours incarcerated, Andrews was set free. No charges were filed. His weapons and SUV had already been returned to his wife. He sees the return of his weapons as an admission that he had never really been a threat at all. He’s not bitter but he is shaken. “I am really happy that our government is watching but there seems to be a lack of common sense or lack of logic involved.”

U.S. Capitol Police say they stand by the Andrews detention. “Mr. Andrews was handled according to USCP standard policies and practices. He was not shackled at any time by the USCP.” And as for the lack of any charges, the Capitol Police say Andrews, “violated several laws that prohibit possessing or carrying dangerous weapons and explosives. The decision not to move forward with charges was made by the United States Attorney’s Office and does not reflect a judgment upon the validity of Mr. Andrew’s arrest.” Meanwhile D.C.’s Metropolitan Police Department denies leaving Andrews without food and water saying “We fed ALL of our prisoners twice, that evening and during the overnight hours.”

Despite his ordeal, Andrews and his family joined with his unit of re-enactors and others at Mount Vernon’s re-enactment that weekend. He knows his story is unique but he fears what happened to him could happen to others. Andrews still loves his country, but when asked if he still feels the same about his government, “Not near like I used to. It has taken away a part of me.”

By FOX News Radio White House Correspondent Mike Majchrowitz.

MINISTER MACKAY:  
*Lieutenant Governor of Ontario*  
 AND THE  
*Queen's York Rangers*



THE HONOURABLE Peter MacKay, Minister of National Defense, announced that the position of Lieutenant Governor of Ontario is being invested in perpetuity as Colonel of the Regiment of The Queen's York Rangers, a unit of the Canadian Army in Toronto. During the American War of Independence, The Queen's Rangers (as they were then known) fought for the British under Major John Graves Simcoe and were brought to the northern shore of Lake Ontario in 1796 by the province's first Lieutenant Governor, the same, the Honourable John Graves Simcoe.

"This appointment highlights the deep historical roots of many of our regiments, particularly in the Canadian Army, but also the military's deep and continuing relationship with the Crown," said Minister MacKay. "I'm delighted that the officeholder of the position of Lieutenant Governor of Ontario will accept this appointment in perpetuity."

The Queen's York Rangers are based at Fort York Armoury in downtown Toronto only a few metres from the old fort built by their forebears before the War of 1812. The Rangers of that day also cut the city's original roads (including Yonge Street) out of the wilderness while their commanding officer, as Lieutenant Governor, was laying the foundations of democratic rule in the province.

"We have never lost sight of our roots," said Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Zdunich, commanding officer of the Rangers today.

The Regiment enjoys another connection to the Crown in His Royal Highness Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, who is the unit's Colonel-in-Chief. As well as cementing the military's links to the Crown, the holders of these appointments foster esprit de corps

and participate in memorials, relations with affiliated regiments and other matters of military tradition.

A reconnaissance unit in the Reserve that is active in both training and operations, The Queen's York Rangers has deployed 70 soldiers since 2001 to operations in Africa, the Balkans and Afghanistan. The investiture of the Honourable David C. Onley took place at Fort York National Historic Site on Saturday Sept 10 following the annual Stand-To-Parade in commemo-

ration of The Battle of Brandywine (1777). As noted in a letter of appreciation to Minister MacKay, Past-President Fred Hayward noted how fitting it was "*that the first recipient of this honour is the Honourable David C. Onley UE whose Loyalist ancestor John Comfort settled on Lot 13, Conc. 1 in Niagara in 1795. His Honour has been most supportive of the work of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada.*"



*Christmas is come, hang on the pot,  
Let spits turn round, and ovens be hot;  
Beef, pork and poultry, now provide  
To feast they neighbours at this tide;  
Then wash all down with good wine and beer  
And so with mirth conclude the year.*



## ❄️ *What They Ate at Christmas* ❄️

AS WE enter the Christmas Season our thoughts turn to parties, gifts, decorations and **FOOD**. Yes *food* - turkey, dressing, gravy, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, minced meat tarts, Christmas cake and all the other good things that we like to eat at this time of year. But what was the menu like on Christmas Day during the Revolution. Here are three accounts of the festivities and the food on three different Christmas': A Virginia Ball in Alexandria, 1775; the night before the Battle of Trenton in 1776; and a Canadian Christmas in the home of General and Mrs. Riedesel in 1781.

"THE HOLIDAY season closed on Twelfth Night, often with a ball. Nicholas Cresswell attended one in Alexandria in 1775 and recorded this description of it:

Saturday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1775. Last night I went to the Ball. It seems this is one of their annual Balls supported in the following manner: A large rich cake is provided and cut into small pieces and handed round to the company, who at the same time draws a ticket out of a Hat with something merry wrote on it. He that draws the King has the Honor of treating the company with a Ball the next year, which generally cost him Six or Seven Pounds. The Lady that

draws the Queen has the trouble of making the Cake. Here was about 37 ladies dressed and powdered to the life, some of them very handsome and as much vanity as is necessary. All of them fond of dancing, but I do not think they perform it with the greatest elegance. Betwixt the Country dances they have what I call everlasting jigs. A couple gets up and begins to dance a jig (to some Negro tune) others comes and cuts them out, and these dances always last as long as the Fiddler can play. This is sociable, but I think it looks more like a Bacchanalian dance than one in a polite assembly. Old Women, Young Wives with young children in the lap, widows, maids and girls come promiscuously to these assemblies which generally continue till morning. A cold supper, Punch, Wines, Coffee and Chocolate, but no Tea. This is a forbidden herb. The men chiefly Scotch and Irish. I went home about two o'clock, but part of the company stayed, go drunk and had a fight."

COLONIAL VIRGINIANS AT PLAY  
*by Jane Carson*

"ABRAHAM HUNT, the richest man in Trenton, was a Tory. He had a fine house on the corner of King and Second streets. In his

stables, directly behind the house, he kept a carriage and four horses. He was a man of substantial local position, and on Christmas Day of 1776, he felt that his social standing was confirmed. Christmas evening he gave a party. Like most parties it revolved around a particular guest of honour, in this case Colonel Rahl, commander of the German troops in Trenton.

Mr. Hunt and even more so Mrs. Hunt were devastated by the fact that the firing at the outpost kept Rahl away from the party until the late hours of the evening. However, when he joined his fellow officers and those few Trenton Tories who were in attendance at Abraham Hunt's house shortly before midnight, he proceeded to make up for lost time; and when the clock struck twelve, ushering in that very fateful day of the twenty-sixth of December, Rahl was at ease and enjoying himself hugely.

He had already put down several bumpers of hot flip - a colonial concoction of butter and rum - and had partaken of the good food, game, turkey, venison and baked pigeon and stuffed goose and fat roast ham, the good sweet cakes and the rich American pies that were so lovingly cooked and served for his appetite and approval. He relaxed in a chair, conversed with his host and the

other Americans present in broken English, proved himself to be both charming and delightful and was quite happy that now, after all, Christmas in this strange, wild land would not be so different from what it might have been at home.”

THE CROSSING  
*by Howard Fast*

“ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1781, the Riedesels had their Christmas dinner in the dining room of their new house. They had “plum pudding” and Lady Fritz explained in her diary that to eat plum pudding at Christmas was an English custom. All the dinner guests were men, officers of the garrison. But of course there were the Riedesel young ladies – Augusta, Frederika, Caroline and America.

Lady Fritz thoroughly enjoyed setting up housekeeping at Sorel, but there were surprises in store for her. Inhabitants came to ask how many chickens she wanted killed to last all winter and how many fish she would need for a full winter’s supply. She remembered all too well the putrid meat brought to her in Charlottesville and she was sure that fish, especially, would be much worse. Whereupon the Baroness learned about frozen food. The “loft” would be her

frozen-fish locker, because fish would keep better there than in the cellar. She laid in “three or four hundred fish, great quantities of fowls as well as beef and lamb.” The meat “was delicious all winter long,” but there was a point to be remembered before starting dinner. The food was packed in snow and time must be allowed to chop it out with a hatchet.

Six barrels of apples and a half barrel of pears were shockingly expensive, and Mrs. General blamed herself for not making a firm bargain with the dealer in Quebec before she ordered them. But they kept well in the cellar as long as the barrels were tightly headed, the heads “pasted over with paper.” Frozen lemons were good when defrosted, and the Indians brought around “an excellent fruit” for sale. “It grows in water, is red, and as large as a cherry without a stone.” The answer to this riddle is “cranberry.” Cooked with maple sugar, cranberries made a wonderful preserve.”

THE BARONESS AND THE GENERAL  
*by Louise Hall Tharp*

RECIPE FOR  
WILLIAMSBURG EGGNOG  
(12 CUPS)

6 eggs, separated  
½ cup sugar  
2 cups whipping cream  
1 cup milk  
½ cup bourbon  
½ cup brandy  
½ cup light rum  
nutmeg

Beat the egg yolks with sugar until thick. Slowly add the cream, milk, and spirits. Chill. Whip the egg whites until soft peaks form and add to the mixture. Chill and let ripen a few hours. Sprinkle with nutmeg before serving.

And now raise your glass of Eggnog with me...

*Merry  
Christmas  
to All,  
... and a  
Happy  
New Year!*



The  
YORKER  COURANT

*News & Wisdom from Sir John's Regt. - The King's Royal Yorkers*

EDITOR

Sjt Mjr Dave Putnam

LAYOUT

Christopher Armstrong  
chris.armstrong@interbrand.com