

Royal



Yorkers

With the latest Advices, Foreign and Domestick

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE 2006 CAMPAIGN

Just one more year of 225th Anniversary events, and then we'll be into a long dry spell as we wait for the first of the 250th Anniversary events to begin (only 19 years until 2025). So the word is, **enjoy it while you can!**

Unfortunately, the main theatre of war in 1781 was in the south (Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Siege of Augusta, Eutaw Springs, Yorktown), which means that many of the big events this year are beyond our driving range. But don't despair, the Yorkers will do their share of fighting this season.

In March a group of Eastern Ontario Yorkers are planning a road trip to North Carolina to see action at Guilford Courthouse. Although not *officially* on the Yorker calendar, it sounds like a good sized Section from Duncan's Coy are going to make the 12-hour drive. I'm sure we'll hear stories from this raid for years to come.

For those who don't make this one, the season could still have a very early start. The Northern Brigade will be heading to Blenheim, NY to attend the Lansing Manor event on the weekend of May 6 & 7.

On the long weekend in May (20 & 21) the Annual Tactics School will be held at Westfield Village. This site has become a favourite for the Brigade. For those of you who haven't finished your *housewife* as yet, get on with it. Rumour has it the Followers have a new project in the works.

Of course Black Creek is scheduled for the weekend of June 17 & 18. The many activities that were orchestrated at last year's outing has generated much interest and anticipation for this year's visit to the village.

The Yorkers have been to Hubbardton, Vermont on several occasions in recent years. The Northern Brigade will again make an appearance there on July 8 & 9. Hubbardton is one of

the most picturesque destinations of the 2006 season, and of course it is always great to play on an original battlefield site.

July looks like it will be a very full month. After Hubbardton we will travel to Ward Pound Reservation, near Cross River, NY. This event commemorates the Grand Reconnaissance of the British positions in New York by Washington and Rochambeau.

The following weekend we'll attend the Rev War Encampment at Fort George, Niagara-On-The-Lake. It is expected that this site will be blessed with a "Polly Johnson Day".

This year the trekkers are going to *take it up a notch*. From August 11 to 22 a Bateaux Trek is being planned on Lake Champlain. This one sounds pretty incredible! For those who can't commit to the full 12 days, arrangements have been made for people to come and go as they are able (Flex-Trex - a new concept in reenacting). This trek is open to all NorBde unit members. It should be of particular interest to us though, since the original Yorkers repeatedly plied the waters of Lake Champlain in bateaux throughout the war.

At the end of August we will participate in a weekend at the Rose House Museum near Picton. Although there will be some show-and-tell activities during the weekend to pay our dues to the museum, the primary activity will be intra-brigade war games in superb woods. Like Adolphustown, this is truly Loyalist Country.

Okay teachers, we don't want to hear any more whining. The summer of 2006 has at least five good events for you during the months of July and August.



(Continued on page 2)



Coming Events

January 18	Drill, Ft York Armoury
February 15	Drill, Ft York Armoury
March 15	Drill, Ft York Armoury
April 8	Yorker Party, Appleby College
April 19	Drill, Ft York Armoury
May 17	Drill, Ft York Armoury

(Continued from page 1)

But that's not all. In late September the 2nd Battalion will celebrate the 225th anniversary of its raid into the Mohawk Valley, and the Battle of Johnstown. It is hoped that our Honorary Colonel-Commandant, Sir Guy Johnson, 8th Baronet of New York will be in attendance.

And to end the year with a big Finale, the Yorkers will attend the Siege of Yorktown at Endview Plantation on October 19-22. Who knows if it will be as big as the Yorktown event in 1981, but momentum seems to be building and interest is running very high.

Having said all that, the calendar ain't done until it's done. Stay tuned.

DWP

Rules for the Behavior of All Those Entering These Doors

At the end of last year the Art Gallery of Ontario held an exhibition of art and artifacts from the reign of Catherine the Great. It is said of Catherine, "While most girls played with dolls, she toyed with soldiers". Apparently, she often hosted grand parties, for which she established strict rules of behavior. Perhaps these should serve as codes of conduct for our Annual Yorker Party. She wrote:

1. All ranks shall be left outside the doors, similarly hats, and particularly swords.
2. Orders of precedence and haughtiness, and anything of such like which might result from them, shall be left at the doors.
3. Be merry, but neither spoil nor break anything, nor indeed gnaw at

anything.

4. Be seated, stand or walk as it best pleases you, regardless of others.
5. Speak with moderation and not too loudly, so that others present have not an earache or headache.
6. Argue without anger or passion.
7. Do not sigh or yawn, neither bore nor fatigue others.
8. Agree to partake of any innocent entertainment suggested by others.
9. Eat well of good things, but drink with moderation so that each should be able always to find his legs on leaving these doors.
10. All disputes must stay behind closed doors; and what goes in one ear should go out the other before departing through the doors.



ANNUAL YORKER PARTY

DATE: SATURDAY, APRIL 8

LOCATION: APPLEBY COLLEGE

6:30 P.M. ~ RECEPTION

7:00 P.M. ~ DINNER

CASH BAR



PRICE: (\$35/ADULT, \$20/CHILD)

- You will be contacted by your Section NCO concerning your attendance
- You are welcome to invite a guest from another reenactment unit. Please include your guest in your return.



Cornwallis Surrendered ~ Yorkers Fought On

On October 18, 1781, British troops under the command of Lord Cornwallis laid down their arms following the siege of Yorktown. Yorktown: the last military action of the American Revolution; the final defeat of Crown forces in America.

Does it surprise you that the King's Royal Regiment of New York did not see it that way?

In fact, on that very day Major John Ross, commander of the Royal Yorker's, 2nd Battalion, was leading a force of 734 men into the Mohawk Valley for another shot at the bread basket of the Revolution. The combined expedition consisted of 4 companies of Royal Yorkers (2nd Battalion), 3 companies of Butler's Rangers, a large contingent of Indians, as well as troops from the 8th, 34th, 84th and German Jaegers. As always, the goal was to ravage the valley and destroy the recently harvested crops. But more important, Haldimand wanted to make a show of force that would influence the wavering residents of Vermont in favour of the King.

Much had changed in the Valley since Johnson's raid a year earlier. Many people had left the region, and those that remained were hunkered down in one of the 24 fortified camps between Schenectady and German Flatts. Colonel Marinus Willett controlled two regiments of Continental soldiers (1200 men) from his headquarters in Canajoharie, and was able to call out 800 militiamen at any time.

Ross arrived in the vicinity of Cor-

rystown, south of Fort Hunter, on October 24. His first objective was Warrensborough. He soon realized however, that his expedition was expected and that 2,000 rebels awaited his arrival. In a downpour of rain, over roads that had turned to mush, Ross made a forced overnight march that brought him to Warrensborough before dawn. By noon, despite the rain, the entire settlement was in flames.

In his report Major Ross wrote, "From Prisoners and others I learned that the Rebels were on their march from every Quarter far superior to my numbers." At one o'clock on the afternoon of October 25 he crossed the Mohawk River and headed for Johnstown.

After a short skirmish with the rebel garrison at the fort near Johnstown, Ross set out into the woods in search of the trail north. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon Colonel Willett's advance guard came up on his rear. Realizing that he could not outmarch them, Major Ross turned on them and drove them back. Willett then advanced with his main force, and again Ross retaliated, and pushed them in a running fight for more than a mile. Ross wrote, "I lamented the want of a good Body of Indians, (few of those present venturing to engage), in which Had I been so fortunate, it would in all probability have crushed the Spirit of Rebellion on the Mohawk River".

The next threat appeared on Major Ross' left, where a rebel field piece and another body of men fired briskly on his flank. Again, Ross' men "advanced to attack, the very countenance of which made the Rebels give way". The rebels abandoned their field piece and fled. Willett then came on from the right. Ross turned his 3-pounder on them, and sent his troops in to surround them.

As darkness fell, fighting broke off and Willett withdrew out of reach. Ross' men remained in the woods overnight and then headed west toward German Flatts in the morning.

On October 29, just a day's march from German Flatts, the persistent rain



turned to snow and Ross was forced to make camp. The next morning the pursuing rebels arrived in their camp shortly after Ross's departure. The Major ordered his men across West Canada Creek, which was completed by 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Major Ross wrote, "Just as the Troops had all got over, the Rebels made their appearance and fired upon our Rear, the fire was returned. Captain Butler, who commanded the Rangers covering the Line of March was unfortunately killed". Ross waited nearly an hour for Willett to resume the Battle of West Canada Creek, but the attack never came. He continued his march north, reaching Carleton Island on November 6, 1781.

Although the destruction of property and provisions was minimal, Ross' fighting withdrawal, with a superior force on his tail, in terrible weather conditions, and with few supplies, must stand as one of the most remarkable raids in the history of the Revolution.

DWP



INCREDIBLE! YET ANOTHER SOBRIQUET FOR THE ROYAL YORKERS

In Colonel Marinus Willett's return of prisoners taken from the Ross Raid in 1781, he called us the "2d battalion Sr Johns Rangers". As I've said before, it is no wonder that our regiment has become so obscure to history.

GKW

Victory Bucket or The Canadian Molly Pitcher

It has been noted by some cynical readers of this article that in fact there never was an invasion of Canada by the Marquis de Lafayette (or anybody else) in 1780; and that the Township of North Marysburgh not only does not currently have a Historical Society, but apparently has never had a Historical Society in the existence of the community. It has also been noted by some supposedly astute observers that no historic documentation of any type can be located that an Engineer Cubbison or Brigadier Watt ever served with the British Army during the War for American Independence. Furthermore, they note that no battles ever occurred at or around Upper Canada Village during the American Revolution; in fact, to this date there is no such community. Nevertheless, the researchers who discovered this rare, valuable, and previously unpublished historical document remain fully convinced of its authenticity and accuracy. Let the alleged facts fall where they will. The researchers who discovered this document at great expense and effort, and generously made it available to posterity without either compensation or recognition, would also like to note that we live in a sad and skeptical age, and we really don't believe that we are any the better for it.

Found in the Papers of Major Douglas Cubbison, Royal Engineers, North Marysburgh Historical Society, North Marysburgh, Ontario, Canada. The writing does not appear to be Cubbison's, appearing in a different hand, but its writing style and paper is consistent with that of the early 19th century. Historians believe it to be authentic. How it found its way into Cubbison's papers is unknown, although it is surmised that Cubbison may have obtained it from a fellow veteran while writing his landmark history of the 1780 Lafayette invasion of Canada.

Most of our illustrious readers are familiar with the Canadian Campaign of 1780, in which the young adopted American Major General Marquis de



Molly Pitcher at the Battle of Monmouth, New Jersey

Lafayette's surprise invasion of Canada nearly claimed that Colony for the young United States of America. The story of how British Intelligence completely missed the Continental Army's preparations for this assault, being cleverly misled into believing that it was to be a repeat of Sullivan's 1779 campaign against the Indian nations, belongs more properly to the grand histories of that fabled struggle. This story is not about the great and powerful, the renowned and the famous, but rather about one diminutive hero whose contributions did much to turn the tide of battle for Great Britain, at a time when Britannica's fortunes were among the darkest of the war.

How Lafayette's combined columns aggressively swept up Lake Champlain and the Richelieu River, capturing the British fortifications at Isle Aux Noix and St. Jean in dashing surprise attacks and then moving on to seize Montreal and march to the very gates of Quebec during that long, hot summer are well known. However, the actions of the American secondary column along the St. Lawrence River are much more poorly documented. During the first American invasion of Canada in the spring of 1776, British forces consisting of the 8th Foot from Niagara and Oswegatchie had launched a spoiling

attack on the American left (west) wing, seizing the American force defending the rapids, decisively defeating a relief force, and endangering Montreal itself. Only the actions of the great American hero Lieutenant General Benedict Arnold had saved the Americans that day. Having benefited from long discussions with Arnold regarding Canada, shortly before Arnold was dispatched to achieve his string of glorious victories in the American South, Lafayette was not going to make the same mistake. Accordingly, he dispatched a column down the St. Lawrence River in bateaux and canoes, with the express intent of occupying the British garrisons at Fort Oswegatchie and Fort Niagara, so that they could not interfere with his logistical route at Montreal. This was not Lafayette's main column, which was principally composed of battle-hardened Continentals. Rather, this column predominantly consisted of militia, strengthened by an extremely strong force of artillery.

In early July this force landed near Chrysler's Farm on the north bank of the St. Lawrence River, and began demonstrating against a small British force that was then similarly engaged. The British response to Lafayette's

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

surprise attack had initially been confused and disjointed. The speed with which Lafayette's men moved stunned the British defenders, who had become lethargic and lazy after three years of inactivity in the Canadian garrisons.

Lieutenant Colonel Gavin Watt of the King's Royal Yorkers, commanding the garrison at Niagara, received garbled communications that intimated at an American assault. Desperately requesting reinforcements, and promoting Watt to Brigadier General in charge of the British column, he was directed to move up the St. Lawrence River to the succor of Montreal. Montreal would fall long before Watt could make his march, but word of that surrender would not reach Watt in time to influence events on the Saint Lawrence. Brigadier Watt commanded a mixed force of British Regulars, Loyalist Provincials, and Native Americans. A small contingent of artillery was hastily gathered from the garrisons, but Royal Artillerymen were few and far between. Accordingly, infantrymen were drafted to assist serve the guns, but the departure was so hurried that the guns remained inadequately manned on the eve of battle.

Rushing ardently forward, as was his trademark in battle, Watt on July 9th had pushed his advanced guard out too far, and it was very roughly handled in a brief, hard fought action under a torrid sun that afternoon. The large number of extremely well served American artillery pieces stunned the British advanced guard. The Natives had decamped at the first volley of roundshot, as the hidden American guns were unmasked. Deprived of his most valuable scouts, the British Advanced Guard commander attempted to recover, but he was hopelessly out-gunned, and soon the proud British advanced guard was broken.

Retreating back upon Brigadier Watt's main party, Watt angrily planned his revenge. Learning that the Americans had occupied the small hamlet of Upper Canada Village, Brigadier Watt determined to launch a deliberate attack upon the village. This time, his force would be prepared, his attack closely coordinated, and well

supported by his small command of artillery. As Watt made his preparations, Engineer Cubbison, acting as commander of his artillery, presented concerns regarding the manning of his guns. As Watt and Cubbison grappled with the problem, a diminutive voice sounded out, "I'll help, Sir." A slight teenaged girl, slender as a fence rail, stepped out from her crude log cabin, "I can help, sir. I can help carry the bucket for the gun." Brigadier Watt, the grizzled veteran, smiled and responded in his characteristic growl, "Well, there is your answer, Cubbison, make do with that volunteer there."

And thus a slight teenaged girl, hands hardened by the labor of the rustic barnyard and household, joined the column of Redcoats and green-coated Provincials and painted Natives as they marched upon Upper Canada Village.

Hardened veterans of years of frontier warfare would later remark upon the slender visage, skirts held high, racing with the brown leather water bucket from cannon to cannon, quenching the thirst of the gunners, always ready to ensure that the guns could be safely swabbed so that they could continue barking their deadly loads into the ranks of the Americans. Her be-ribboned cap was soon lost behind her rapid strides, but the young lass's enthusiasm never wavered.

The weather was appallingly hot and humid. Heavy rains had turned the farm fields to soaked mud bogs. The gunners sweltered in their own sweat as they worked the heavy cannon, the barrels wavering from the heat of their rapid fire. Her stockings bunched around her dainty ankles, the young farm girl faithfully stood by her gun crew. Roundshot and grapeshot from the American cannon, as well served in this engagement as they had been that afternoon, whistled with gleeful abandon around the gun. Musket shots hummed past, occasionally felling a brave Loyalist or British soldier, but the dainty lass stood bravely to her post. With the gun crew fearfully reduced by casualties, and nearly exhausted by their labors, her presence and efforts served to keep the gunners' morale high, and the gun remained in action throughout that long evening,

never slowing fire as the shadows slowly grew longer and longer.

The success of that small 3-pounder grasshopper as it was rushed into one critical position after another, first driving an American flanking column into a swamp with its ranks shattered, then devastating a company holding a crucial strong point in a farm field so that the British advance could sweep forward, is well documented. Brigadier Watt would later remark himself that the actions of that small Grasshopper gun was integral to British success that day, and Cubbison would find himself mentioned in dispatches and later promoted for his gun's presence that evening.

Following the long hours of fighting, and with the Americans driven from the community and retreating in disarray into the darkness, the gunners sagged by their piece, letting the powder be-fouled bronze barrel cool, desperately quenching their thirst at yet another bucket of water provided by this tireless young Canadian patriot. Two veteran British Rangers marching past noted the visage and one asked of his companion, "Who is that?" The other Ranger, who had in fact pulled on that very gun's drag rope to swing it into firing position not a few minutes earlier, responded brusquely, "Why, don't you know, that's Victory Bucket?"

Thus was born the legend of Victory Bucket, the famous Canadian heroine. Americans have Molly Corbett, buried at the hallowed ground of West Point for her service at the Battle of Fort Washington, and Molly Pitcher, who so bravely served an American gun at Monmouth. But Canadians have their very own Victory Bucket, who courageously earned her sobriquet that day at Upper Canada Village, doing her small part to ensure British victory for Brigadier Watt. Watt would later remark that his army did indeed have its answer, for with patriots such as Victory Bucket, Canada could never be conquered. And, indeed, it never has been.

By an
Anonymous
British Soldier

Captain Richard Duncan ~ His Horn

In the June issue of the newsletter it was noted that the powder horn of Captain Richard Duncan, KRRNY was up for auction in Britain. Alas, the horn has been sold. Capt Allan Joyner was able to obtain pictures of the horn, which generated some discussion about its scrimshawed illustrations. Gavin made the following observations about a building that appeared on the horn.

From what I can see, the round topped building may be a dovecote, which is a fairly common accessory outbuilding in Britain. The Duncan family home at Niskayuna outside Schenectady was called "The Hermitage" and was a well known landmark. The property comprised 800 acres. His father, John, was a wealthy merchant and a partner in Duncan & Phyn - Phyn being a Londoner. On John's retirement, the business was taken over by the Ellice family and became known as Phyn & Ellice.

John was severely hounded during the war. In 1776, Washington requested the Schenectady Committee of Safety to search his buildings as it was rumoured he had 300 stand of arms squirreled away. However, they demurred, as the property was outside their jurisdiction. In 1777, he was noted as "a dangerous person" and was arrested, taken to Albany and released under a bond of L500. Later that year, he was dismissed as the commissary of purchases for the US army hospital in Schenectady. The Conspiracy Commission was after him again in 1778 and he was squeezed into taking the Oath of Allegiance in the interest of retaining his wealth and property. However, as Richard was with Sir John in Canada, John Duncan remained under great suspicion throughout the war.

We might wonder how Richard was able to return to the United States after the war without being persecuted.

One American historian wrote the following:

During the October 1780 raid, he was in immediate command of a company of regular troops under Sir John Johnson and is said to have commanded "with great gallantry and success on the retreats, when attacked by a spirited regiment of the army of General Robert Van Rensselaer." Having researched this raid to the nth degree, I'm not quite sure when Richard performed so prominently, but who are we to question a positive comment by a Yank? Further, Captain Duncan "was never taxed with cruelty or severity by the settlers" and after his father's death in 1791, he resided for many years at the Hermitage, "an accomplished Christian gentleman, of extremely urbane manners and very much respected." Hanson, *History of Schenectady*

LtCol GavinWatt

1st Battalion Promotion



The two Gavin Watts are pleased to report that, in recognition of his sterling support to the battalion in the provision of martial music in our times of need, and of his extraordinary sacrifice in the marrying of a gender-challenged fifer, Michael Putnam is promoted to Drum Serjeant.

Mike joined the Yorkers on June 6, 1987 and immediately took an interest in drumming, as his father (who had much experience in these matters) had told him that girls were attracted to uniforms, especially those with lots of fancy lace.

Peter Alexander, the Yorkers' senior drummer and percussionist of Gin Lane has proclaimed that Michael was his star student

and that's saying a lot, cuz Pete's trained a zillion drummers.

Over the years, Mike has served in many capacities. His favourite role has been a drummer in the 1st & 2nd battalions, but he's also been a musketeer in both and was recently promoted to Corporal in Singleton's.

Himself

In Memorium Lloyd Turcott

It is with sincere sadness that we inform you of the passing of Musketeer Lloyd Turcott after a short illness. He was in his 84th year.

Lloyd was a veteran of WWII and proudly served his country as a wireless operator in the RCAF.

Through the '90's he was an active member with the Kings Royal Regiment of New York, serving in the ranks of the Colonel's Coy and then Duncan's Coy.

The funeral service took place on January 25, 2006 and was attended by Sjt Mjr Dave Moore, Cpl Mike Martin and Cpl Alex Lawrence, as well as his step-son Ken and Brian Cox.

Sjt Mjr Moore was inclined to place a musket ball in the open casket so that he could deal with General Washington should their paths cross on the other side. He thought better of it however when he remembered that Lloyd was going to heaven, and therefore would have no opportunity to see Washington. DWP

Of Messing, and the Advantages Attending It

Captain Bennett Cuthbertson served as adjutant in the 5th Foot from 1755 to 1768, and there gained considerable knowledge of regimental management. His work, "A System for the Compleat Interior Management and OEconomy of a Battalion of Infantry", became required reading for many young subalterns who had nowhere else to turn for information concerning the interior management, training and discipline of a regiment. One section of his book deals with the important subject of feeding the troops. Cuthbertson wrote:

(Note: Questions in italics are the Editors.)

Experience proves, that nothing contributes more to the health of Soldiers, than a regular well chosen diet, and their being every day obliged to boil the pot; it corrects drunkenness, and in a great measure prevents gaming, and thereby desertion, nothing being more common, than for a Soldier (after having spent his pay in spirituous liquors, or perhaps gamed it away, and having no means left of subsisting, but by selling his linen, or committing a scandalous theft) to desert, in order to avoid the certain punishment of his crime; Officers therefore cannot be too exact, in establishing every method, to enforce the strict observance of regular and constant messing.

What must be done to ensure that a man's pay (after stoppages) is directed toward a "regular well chosen diet"?

Whether a Company is paid daily, once, or twice a week, (which must entirely depend on the establishment of a market, or the nature of the service it is employed on) the Pay-Serjeants, after making the stoppages ordered, should give the remaining subsistence of the Soldiers, to the Serjeants and Corporals of the different Squads of inspection, in order to buy the regulated quantity of provisions for the several Messes, and never to the men themselves.

Five, six or eight men, being gener-

ally the number in a mess, the Non-commission-officers should assemble a man or more from each, and march them regularly to market, and there buy a proper quantity of good and wholesome meat (either beef, mutton, or pork) and also of vegetables, salt and oatmeal, to serve each mess, until the next day for receiving pay; and, if not in the Field, they ought to buy a sufficiency of bread too, at the same time: all this being done, the men are to be marched back regularly to the place of Parade, and there dismissed.



How much food is enough for a soldier to live on?

Three quarters of a pound of meat and one penny-worth of bread, with a proportion of roots, &c. for making broth, should at least be the calculation for each man's mess, for a day; but when the cheapness of provision will admit of it, the allowance of meat ought to be augmented to one pound; as the less money a Soldier has to spend on drink, the better will be his health, his attendance to duty more punctual, and his dress more becoming.

What controls should be put in place to prevent the NCO's from absconding with the men's pay (as those rascally Serjeants are apt to do)?

On the evening of market-days, the Serjeants and Corporals should fully explain to the Soldiers of their respective Squads, how much money has

been laid out for the several species of provisions, and having satisfied them that every thing is just, ought to pay each man an exact share of whatever balance remains.

When the Non-commission-officers return from market, they are to make up a return of the kind and quantity of provisions bought for each mess, and give it to the Orderly serjeant of the Company, who is to make out from them, a general one for the visiting Subaltern-officer, who, as soon as he receives it, should immediately go round his Company, and examine into the state of the provisions, comparing them with the return, in which, if he finds any thing disagreee, he must enquire into the reason of it, and have every matter set right, before he delivers his report to the Commander of the Regiment; and if such mistake proceeded from the smallest neglect or connivance, in the Serjeant or Corporal who bought for the mess, he ought to bring him to a severe account for it.

How should married men and their wives be treated?

Those Soldiers who are married to industrious sober women, that can earn near as much as their husband's pay, and can be depended on for eating well, may be excused from messing with their Companies; but if on the contrary, the wives are idle, and trust to them for support, it must be insisted on, that such men be appointed to a mess, to prevent their being starved, and to oblige the women to some scheme of industry, by which alone it can be possible for their husbands to be allowed to co-habit with them: Officers should frequently enquire into the married Soldiers' manner of living, that they may be enabled to prevent, in time, any ill consequences which may arise, from the indulgence of permitting them to be with their wives.

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