

The Bay of Fundy, 1775-1777

In 3 Parts

Prepared for
DeLancey's Brigade Living History Association

Part 1 | The Raid on Conway and the Burning of Fort Frederick, 1775

Part 2 | The Story of the Rebels recruiting on the St. John River and in the Bay of Fundy, Fort Cumberland, and the Return to Portland Point in 1776

Part 3 | The Raid on the River St. John of 1777 and the building of Fort Howe

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			Studies of ye Long 18th Century 1688 - 1820
Studies of the Long 18th Century	The Revolution's War of Independence	File Location	
1775 — 1783	Nova Scotia & The Bay of Fundy, 1775-7	10-200-10 Cover	



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1776

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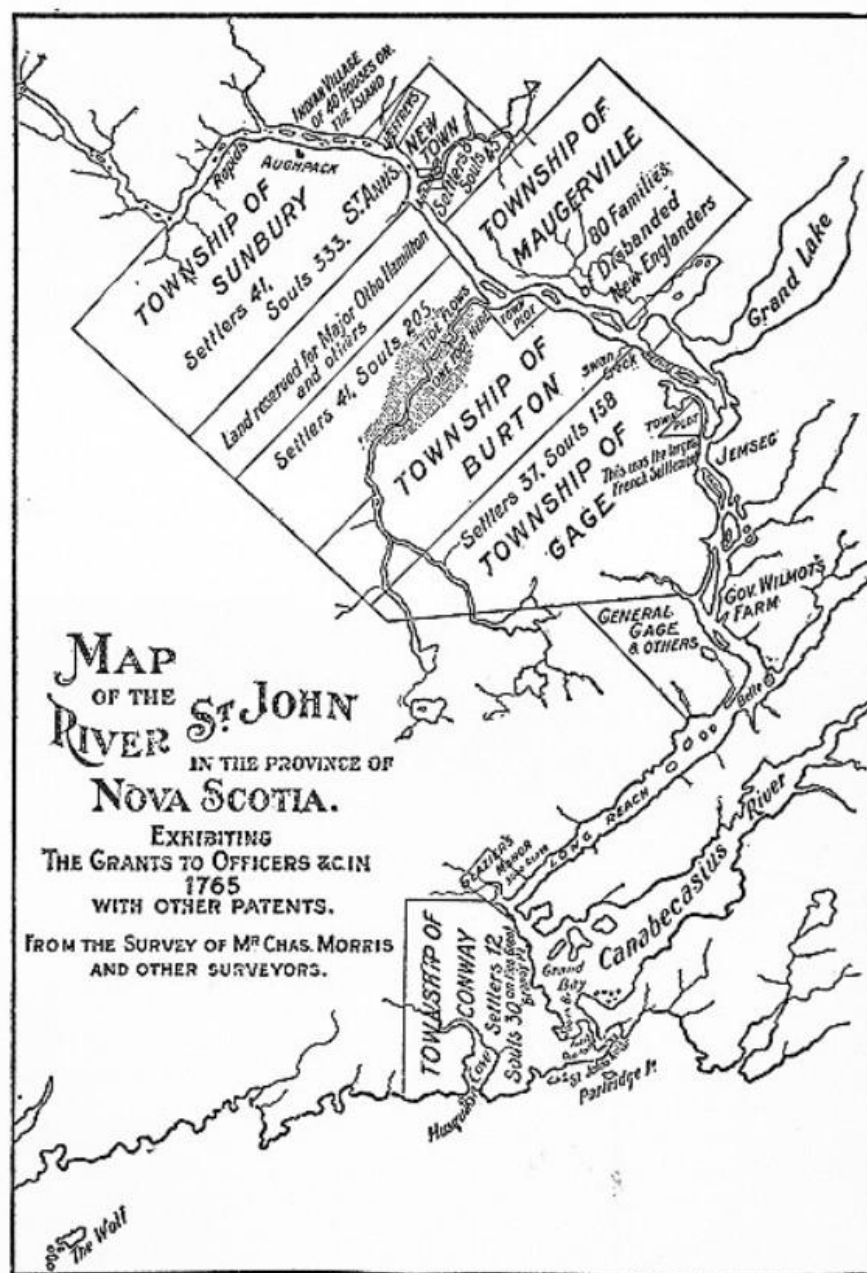


Figure 1 Map of the townships of Sunbury County, Nova Scotia. W. O. Raymond, 1910.

Less than nine months after the Raid on 1775 Fort Frederick, two privateers arrived in the harbour with a warning.



The Planters of Nova Scotia, 1759-1783

Between 1759 and 1768, approximately 8000 New England Planters emigrated to the old colony of Nova Scotia. The area that is now Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick¹. These new arrivals were known as "planters," the old English term for colonists; they were among the first English-speaking immigrants to this area of British America. The Expulsion of the Acadians (*Le Grand Dérangement* of 1755-64) and the Arrival of the Royal Provincials and Refugees (the Loyalists of 1783-4) were far more dramatic events in the history of this area than the peaceful migration of land-hungry New Englanders. Consequently, the Planters have received less attention than their numbers warrant. They are no less important to the history of the 18th century in the Maritimes.²

Captain Francis Peabody led a group of these friendly planters from Essex County, Massachusetts, to establish themselves along the St. John River. Joshua Mauger, the supportive provincial agent in London, played a key role in helping secure approval for their settlement, which they named Maugerville in his honour. In 1762, the land was carefully surveyed, and by the next year, about 260 cheerful settlers began arriving. The initial group planned to settle near Ste. Anne's Point, but a cautious delegation of Wolastoqey, warning of potential conflict, urged them to move twelve miles downriver. There, they happily laid out their land grants. More settlers soon arrived, mostly officers from disbanded colonial regiments of the Seven Years' War and their friends. Despite the Treaty of Peace, tensions remained high, and there were some conflicts. On January 20, 1765, an indigenous group, defending their land, killed Richard Simonds at Simonds' Point (historically Portland Point). In August 1769, Indigenous people burned the house and store of Captain Godfrey Jadis, a trader in the Township of Gage. There were other instances of Indigenous peoples' threats towards British settlers; the history of conflict and attempts at peace during these years was complex and challenging.³

Don Desserud argued, almost 40 years ago, that Nova Scotia developed a distinctly moderate political culture during the decades surrounding the American Revolution. He identifies this moderation in two main areas. First, Halifax newspapers of the 1760s printed a wide range of political commentary from both British and British American sources, fostering open debate; by the early 1770s, as imperial tensions increased, many editors increasingly selected material that emphasised moderate positions. Second, in 1775, the legislative assembly, guided by John Day, drafted a constitutional reform proposal to rebalance executive, legislative, and judicial powers across the empire, demonstrating that Nova Scotians were actively engaged in contemporary political thought.

Day was prominent in the rather turbulent 1775 Nova Scotia legislative session. Skilled in debate, he initiated the assembly's loyal address to the crown, outlining grievances without threatening the parliamentary grant vital to the province. He also submitted bills that passed on public account reform and election regulation. (In November 1775, as an agent victualler for the British army, he sailed to Boston with supplies but was lost at sea.) Unlike many colleagues, Day was both a loyal American and a critic of Nova Scotia's imperialism, and his independence often puzzled both his allies and opponents. Day is also credited with the publication, "*An essay on the present state of the Province...*".

¹ What we now think of as mainland Nova Scotia had been a British colony since 1713, and the whole area we know as the Maritimes became Nova Scotia in 1763. Prince Edward Island became a colony in June 1769 (as the Island of St. John's). New Brunswick and Cape Breton became colonies in 1784. Until 1784, most of New Brunswick was Sunbury County, with the eastern, and smaller part, Cumberland County, Nova Scotia.

² Margaret Conrad, ed., *They Planted Well: New England Planters in Maritime Canada* (Fredericton, N.B. : Acadiensis Press, 1988). Back Cover.

³ William Edgar Campbell, *The Road to Canada: The Grand Communications Route from Saint John to Quebec* (Fredericton : Goose Lane Editions : New Brunswick Military Heritage Project, 2005), 34.



Desserud's interpretation challenged the long-held view (still held by some) that Nova Scotians of New England origin failed to rebel because they had somehow missed the era's political uproar. Instead, he shows continuity between mid-18th-century political culture and later reform movements, aligning with others who typify Planter politics as conservative yet tolerant.

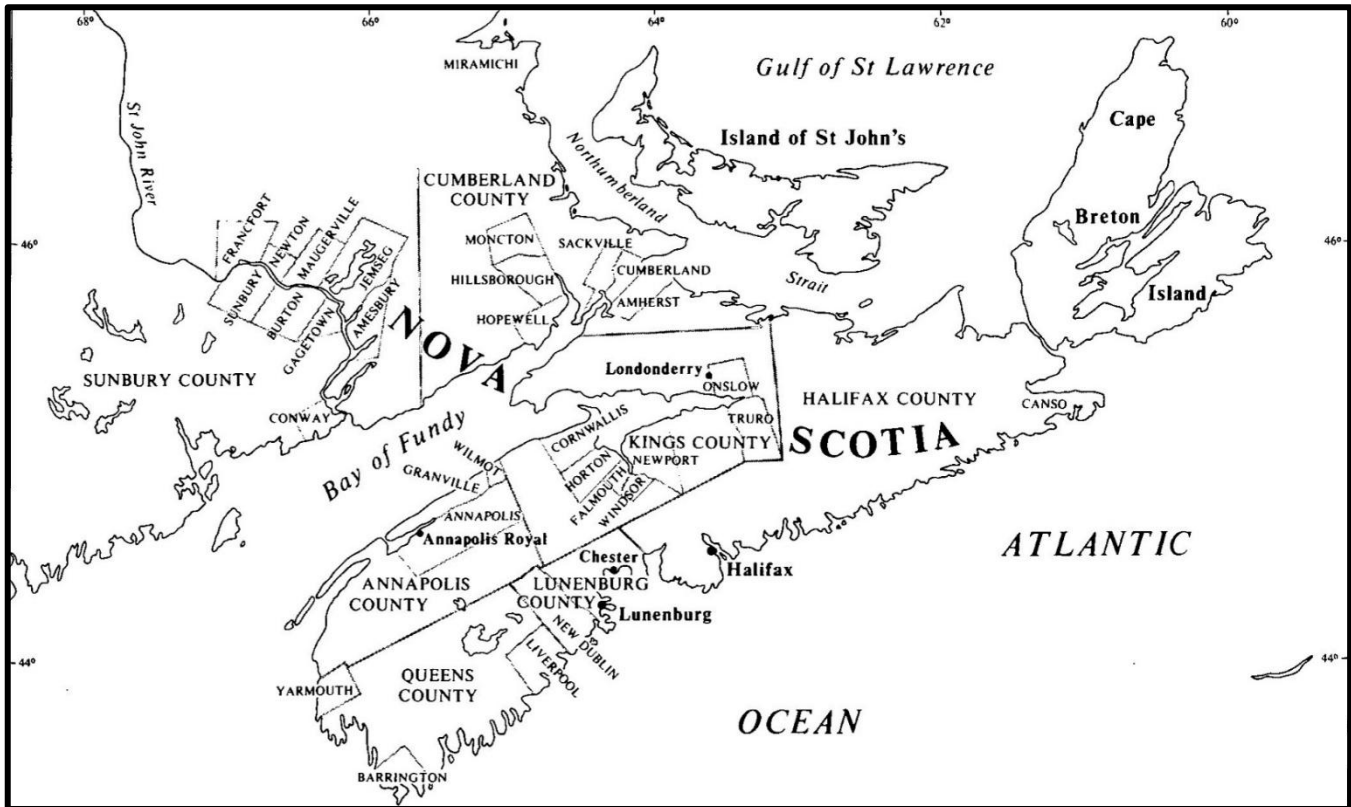


Figure 2 Map of Nova Scotia, 1767. M. Conrad 1988, from Footnote 2.

Another factor may have been that, although the primary motivation was land and a hoped-for avoidance of the increasing taxes imposed by the imperial government, there is evidence that many New Englanders, especially those who lived in coastal communities distant from Halifax, could avoid impressment by the Royal Navy in the Province. (Remember that the British Army could not impress men.) The grantees in that colony had sent a five-man delegation to survey the Bay of Fundy and to negotiate some terms with the provincial government after the significant Expulsion of the Acadians. When they appeared before Governor Lawrence and the Executive Council, they asked about land ownership and quit rents, which were answered to their satisfaction. They also asked if they could be free from impressment into the Royal Navy for ten years. The Council responded yes. The council explained that their goal was to encourage more people to settle in Nova Scotia, and impressment "would be a means of retarding rather than forwarding" that goal. So, an early condition for settling in Nova Scotia was to be free from Navy impressment, at least for the planters.⁴

Often overlooked in this part of the world was the *Grand Communications Route*, the main link for people, information, and goods between interior settlements and the wider world. It became vital for both England/Great Britain and France during their warfare over the territory. After the British took over, they also

⁴ Keith Mercer, *North Atlantic Press Gangs: Impressment and Naval-Civilian Relations in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, 1749-1815* (Halifax: Dalhousie University, 2008), 55-57.



fortified and maintained the route, rebuilding Fort Frederick at Conway (the mouth of the River St. John) to guard its entrance and establishing garrisons along the way to the St. Lawrence, initially against the French and later to defend against Rebel Americans. The route played a key role in the War of Independence. Remember that in 1768, as British troops were sent from Nova Scotia to suppress unrest in the Thirteen Colonies over the Stamp Act, the Fort Frederick garrison was withdrawn, and the fort came under the management and care of James Simonds. As a result, just before the war began, the Grand Communications Route was left unprotected. The Hudson Valley Route (New York to Montreal) was among the first to be affected by the war.⁵ All these communities were situated along the Route.

With all of this in mind, we come to 1776.

Recruiting on the River

In May of 1776, two privateers entered the harbour at the Mouth of the St. John River and stayed for more than a week. Their whale boats⁶ went upriver to Maugerville, telling residents that the province would soon be invaded from the west, that privateers were everywhere along the coast, and that all commerce would be stopped unless the settlers joined them. They warned that if the ‘Americans’ were forced to conquer the region at their own ‘trouble and expense’, anyone loyal to the Crown should expect to lose their property and land.

A public meeting was held on 14 May at the Maugerville meeting house, during which a series of strongly disloyal resolutions was adopted. One of the leading figures was Rev Seth Noble, who had already written to General Washington stressing the importance of controlling the St. John River. Jacob Barker, Esquire, was chosen as chairman, and a committee was appointed to draft the resolutions.⁷ The Third Resolution stated:⁸

‘that it is our Minds and Desire to submit ourselves to the government of Massachusetts Bay and that we are Ready with our Lives and fortunes to Share with them the Event of the present Struggle for Liberty, however God in his Providence may order it.’

The resolutions were circulated and signed by 120 people, most of them heads of families. The committee claimed that only twelve or thirteen refused to sign, mostly those living near the river’s mouth. If true, the resolutions cannot have been presented to all inhabitants, since evidence shows that at least thirty families outside Maugerville remained consistently loyal to the Crown. From Raymond, we learn the names of some who he felt deserved as much recognition as the Refugees (now referred to as the Loyalists) who arrived from the American colonies in 1783.

In Maugerville itself, there are no records to identify Loyal Americans—if there were any. But in nearby communities, several are identifiable.⁹

⁵ Campbell, *The Road to Canada*, 35.

⁶Used by most ships (not just whaling ships), they were up to about 9m (27 to 30 feet long), narrow (about 2m / 6 feet wide), and double-ended (pointed at both ends) to allow for reversing quickly.

⁷Wm. O. Raymond, *The River St. John: Its Physical Features Legends and History from 1604 1784* (St. John, NB: John A. Bowes, 1910), 224-225. Members of the committee were: Jacob Barker, Israel Perley, Phineas Nevers, Daniel Palmer, Moses Pickard, Edward Coy, Thomas Hartt, Israel Kinny, Asa Kimble, Asa Perley, Oliver Perley, and Hugh Quinton.

⁸ Frederick Kidder, *Military Operations in Eastern Maine and Nova Scotia during the Revolution Chiefly Compiled from the Journals and Letters of Colonel John Allan with Notes and a Memoir of Col. John Allan* (Albany, New York: Joel Munstell, 1867), 64.

⁹ Raymond, *River St. John*, 225.



Location (upper river to mouth)	Known Loyal Settlers
St. Anne's(now Fredericton) in the Township of Sunbury	Benjamin Atherton and Philip Weade.
Township of Burton	John Larley, Joseph Howland, and Thomas Jones.
Township of Gage	in Gagetown, Zebulon Estey, Henry West, John Crabtree, John Hendrick, Peter Carr, and Lewis Mitchell.
Living on the Canabecasis (the Kennebecasis)	Benjamin Darling
Township of Conway	Samuel Peabody, Jonathan Leavitt, Thomas Jenkins, John Bradley, Gervas Say, James Woodman, Peter Smith, and Christopher Cross.
Portland Point (known earlier as Simond's Point), eventually the City of Portland, now the North End of Saint John	James Simonds, James White, William Hazen, John Hazen, William Godsoe, Lemuel Cleveland, Robert Cram, John Nason, Moses Greenough, Christopher Blake, and most of the employees of Hazen, Simonds & White.

Several Acadians are also mentioned. Louis and Michel Mercure carried dispatches between Nova Scotia and Québec during the war. Members of the Martin family: Jean, Simon, Joseph, François, and Amant. Although Louis Mercure is often referred to as a “lieutenant in Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Rogers’ Corps of Rangers,” there is no evidence that he was; he was certainly a well-known and successful courier.¹⁰ He was also M. Gauthier’s nephew; Gauthier, an Acadian, delivered French dispatches from Louisbourg to Quebec in 1756. Haldimand noted the Acadians were savvy entrepreneurs, charging high fees of about \$100 per trip and sometimes requesting more or overlooking previous payments. Haldimand was concerned about cost-cutting and overpayment. Alternative couriers, such as businessmen and military officers, were tried but failed, so the British resumed relying on the Acadians.¹¹ The Cyr family also provided important assistance as guides and pilots.¹² Most of these people were noted by Brigade-Major Captain Studholme¹³ of the RFA¹⁴ for their loyalty and active service.¹⁵

Due to limited records, it’s hard to know exactly how many people were truly inclined toward disloyalty. They had clear reasons to support their old friends in Massachusetts. In Maugerville, the influence of Rev Seth Noble and the leading elders strongly favoured the Rebel American cause. Jacob Barker, who led the May meeting, was both a justice of the peace and a church elder. Israel Perley and Phineas Nevers served as justices and had been representatives of Sunbury County in the Nova Scotia legislature. Nevers even joined the future Expedition to Cumberland, but it seems Israel Perley remained Loyal. Daniel Palmer, Edward Coy, Israel Kinney, and Asa Perley were also ruling elders. Moses Pickard, Thomas Hartt, and Hugh Quinton were important members of the community. These men, along with Asa Kimball and Oliver Perley, were appointed to

¹⁰ Rogers commanded the 2nd Battalion, King's American Rangers. According to Todd W. Braisted, "The 2nd Battalion's records are much more complete, and he never shows up in any pay abstract, which are complete from 1780-1783. So, while he may have been a courier and maybe had a warrant to recruit, he was never a lieutenant in the unit." *Correspondence with Braisted*, 2026 Apr 14.

¹¹ Campbell, *The Road to Canada*, 42-3.

¹² Raymond, *River St. John*, 225.

¹³ Rev. W. O. Raymond, LL.D., *Glimpses of the Past: History of the River St. John, A.D. 1604-1784* (St. John, NB, 1905). 198. Studholme had been around the area for a long time. In the account books of Simonds & White in the year 1764 can be found the name of Lieut. Gilfred Studholme of the 40th Regiment of Foot. He is well known historically, and there is much on the man. Appointed Brigade-Major in December of 1775.

¹⁴ Royal Fencible American Regiment, often simply referred to as the Royal Fencible Americans. Raised primarily, but not exclusively, in Nova Scotia. See Footnote 23

¹⁵ G. Studholme, "Report of Committee of Investigation Claims of Old Inhabitants on St. John River," in *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, ed. James Hannay, vol. 1 (Saint John, 1894), 117.

apply immediately to the Massachusetts Congress for relief from the hardships the community faced.¹⁶ Of the other townships of Sunbury County, Nova Scotia, loyalty seems to have prevailed; Maugerville seems the exception.

The meeting also unanimously agreed that this committee would oversee all civil and military matters until further notice, and that anyone who signed the resolutions would refuse to deal with anyone who did not. Several resolutions openly defied the authority of the Province of Nova Scotia, with signatories pledging to support their committee 'at the expense, if necessary, of their lives and fortunes'.

For a while, everything appeared to support the rebels. But within a year, most of those who had pledged themselves as 'ready with their lives and fortunes to share with them the event of the present struggle for liberty, however God in His providence may order it', were forced either to swear allegiance to King George III or to leave the province.¹⁷

By the autumn of 1776, pirates and picaroons, as Raymond put it, were so active in the Bay of Fundy that the Royal Navy sent HMS *Vulture*, HMS *Hope*, and HMS *Albany* from Halifax. Even so, privateers often slipped past the warships at night or in fog, continuing to plunder unprotected settlements.¹⁸ (Footnotes in *Appendix Two* have information on these 3 ships for the nautically minded.)



Another expedition departed from Machias, an effort much more ambitious than the burning of Fort Frederick. This was an attempt to capture Fort Cumberland.

Figure 3 Detail from "View taken on the Spot by Capt. J. Hamilton of His Majesty's 40th Regt." Nova Scotia Archives

The Expedition to Cumberland County

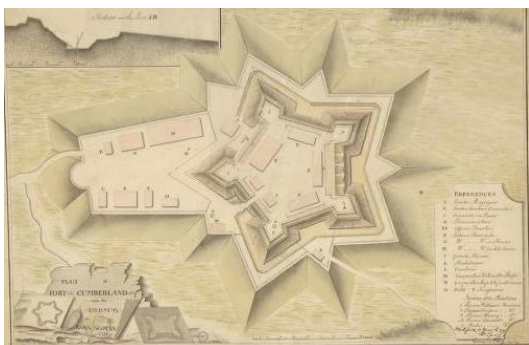


Figure 4 Plan of Fort Cumberland upon the isthmus of Nova Scotia 1778. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

Jonathan Eddy and John Allan, landowners and assembly members in Cumberland County, symbolised this rebelliousness among some of the Planters and others. Allan, born in Scotland and educated in New England, was a justice of the peace, sheriff, and court clerk. Eddy, a Massachusetts-born New Englander, shared American ideals. Neither could turn beliefs into political action. Sympathy for the American cause existed in Halifax and the western counties but was limited by geographic isolation and the governor's control, preventing these areas from becoming rallying points like those in the rebellious provinces to the south. Failing in Nova Scotia, the planters aimed to free the

¹⁶ Raymond, *River St. John*, 225.

¹⁷ Raymond, *River St. John*, 226.

¹⁸ Raymond, *River St. John*, 226.



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Province from British rule by inciting rebellion and invading. Eddy and Allan sought help from rebellious provinces. Early in 1776, Eddy met George Washington and the Continental Congress. His proposal for a sea invasion was poorly received, seen as an attack requiring naval control that the Rebel Americans lacked. Washington rejected a similar plan in Machias, citing Nova Scotia's limited strategic value. Massachusetts approved an expedition against Fort Cumberland but only promised provisions and supplies. After a presentation, Massachusetts authorised Eddy to raise a force but didn't commit troops; it would provide some materiel, primarily muskets, but also ammunition, powder, and a few related supplies for an attempt on Fort Cumberland.¹⁹

Fort Cumberland

The siege of Fort Cumberland began in late October and ended in November. The Fort-Beauséjour—Fort Cumberland National Historic Site sits on the Aulac ridge from the Tantramar marshes, which marks the boundary between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Fort Beauséjour was ordered built by the marquis de la Jonquière, gouverneur du Canada, in 1750-51. Taken by Lt. Col. Robert Monckton with volunteers from New England, known as Shirley's Regiment²⁰, raised by Lt. Col. John Winslow²¹, and aided by men of the Royal Artillery and other British troops, after a long siege, lasting from 3rd June to 16th June, 1755. The British then renamed it Cumberland, and it remained under their control until 1835. As an active military site, it was known as Beauséjour for four years and Cumberland for eighty years.²²

As many have noted, this fort's location can be confusing because of where it was and where it is now. It was located in the original County of Cumberland in Nova Scotia, but is now in Aulac, Westmorland County, New Brunswick. In 1776, Fort Cumberland was to be under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Goreham²³ of the Royal Fencible Americans.

The Summer of 1776

On Friday, 24 May, Gorham and 200 Royal Fencible Americans began their march to Windsor to Fort Edward. They had their women and children with them, and they arrived in Windsor on Sunday, the 26th.²⁴ Just two days later, on Tuesday, 28 May, the (already arrived and waiting) sloops HMS *Tamer* and HMS *Neptune* sailed from Windsor with 12 Transports loaded with the Fencibles and their supplies, heading for Cumberland. Fort Edward (in Windsor) was being defended by the Royal Highland Emigrants.²⁵ It had been eight years since Fort Cumberland had been manned.²⁶ There was a lot of work to do. Expenditure records for Fort Cumberland show that from 4 April to 24 June (Goreham arrived on 1 June), only £204 was spent on the fort; in the next period,

¹⁹ James S Leamon, *Revolution Downeast: The War for American Independence in Maine* (The University of Massachusetts Press in Cooperation with the Maine Historical Society, 1993), 88.

²⁰ Parks Canada Directory of Federal Heritage Designations, https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_nhs_eng.aspx?id=159

²¹ Barry M. Moody, "Winslow, John," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 4, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 2026 Mar 15, https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/winslow_john_4E.html.

²² Ernest Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776: An Episode of the American Revolution* (Montreal ; Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), ix. This book is the only serious work on the subject. It remains the seminal authority of the event.

²³ Joseph Goreham, a former commander of Rangers in Nova Scotia during the Seven Years' War, arrived at Boston in the fall of 1775, meeting up with officers already recruiting for the corps. Over the next year, the unit would recruit extensively in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the Island of Saint John's.

²⁴ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776*, 39.

²⁵ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776*, 40.

²⁶ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776*, 46.



25 June to 24 September, nearly five times that amount was spent (about £1002); and in the next period, 25 September to 24 December (which included the siege), nearly twice as much again was spent (about £1850).²⁷

Captain Edward Thornbrough, Commander of HMS *Tamer*, remained anchored off Fort Cumberland to protect the 12 transports while they unloaded the garrison, then oversaw the loading of supplies, primarily hay and other goods they could purchase from local farmers. Their objective was to sail to New York with their supplies for the British Army. It took more than three weeks to oversee the loading and unloading of the transports. By the time the convoy of 12 transports left for New York on 25 June, *Tamer* had a new commander, Christopher Mason.²⁸ In the meantime, Gorham and the Fencibles, along with some local folks hired to help, began rebuilding and setting up the fort.²⁹

Lieut. Feilding³⁰ of the Royal Marines would later write of the RFA: 'And that the two Companies of the 14th Regiment³¹ and the two Battalions of Marines as Regulars, with the Royal Highland Emigrants, and Fencible Americans' (who are training to be Soldiers) had totally defeated them. The Emigrants the most part are a good body of Men and may soon be brought into some kind of discipline, but the Fencibles not being all Cloth'd look so much like Yankee's that [the shame] of doing with them gives me Horrors.'³² This lack of uniforms and shoes would be a constant concern for Gorham.

The Fort seemed to be surrounded by rebel patriots who lived in the area, including Jonathan Eddy and John Allen, who would come to fame a little later in the year. The rebels were not a strong group, but by working next to the troops, they were able to influence some of the Royal Fencibles to desert, and they helped them escape to Massachusetts.³³ On 10 June, the British navy set sail from Halifax, with the army to head towards New York, while Nova Scotia and, of course, Cumberland, were left behind. Howe's defence strategy was already in place, and militia members had been gathered in key areas, except in Cumberland, which was overlooked.

Taking care of the army and navy put a lot of pressure on Nova Scotia's resources, even affecting farmers' breeding stocks. However, landowners and merchants were able to make profits from the situation. Once the fleet had left and everyday life in the capital had settled down, Lieutenant-Governor Arbuthnot was able to focus on government business. His first step was to call a session of the House of Assembly on 15 June, the first

²⁷ Clarke, *The Siege of Cumberland*, 1776, 254n13.

²⁸ In Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, the reference to the ship's captain is noted as Commander Christopher Mason only in the footnotes next to *Tamer* (pages 39, 40, 46, 47, 56), and Mason is not listed at all nor mentioned in the chapters of the book. However, naval records show he did not become the commander until the 7th of June. Thornbrough is listed as *Tamer*'s captain from 15 April 1774 to 7 June 1776. Mason is listed as transferred to *Tamer* on 7 June 1776 (ADM 6/21/194). It would seem that a ship may have arrived at Cumberland with the new commander and left with the retiring Thornburgh. Not an unusual practice. See: https://threedecks.org/index.php?display_type=show_ship&id=7061

²⁹ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 47.

³⁰ Marion Balderston and David Syrett, *The Lost War: Letters from British Officers during the American Revolution* (New York: Horizon Press, 1975), 81–82.

³¹ If the regiment sounds familiar, the 14th had been on duty in Boston at the time of the 'Massacre' back in March of 1770.

³² Letter 52 of *The Lost War*. From Lieutenant William Feilding, Royal Marines (and a few months later Captain), to his relative and patron Lord Denbigh (Basil Feilding, 6th Earl of Denbigh and 5th Earl of Desmond, 1719 – 1800), who was an English nobleman and courtier who had a great interest in the war in America. The letter is dated in Halifax on 1776 May 23.

³³ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 48-49.



since Legge left.³⁴ The peacefulness in the House was largely thanks to the new lieutenant-governor. Arbuthnot had benefited greatly from Legge's departure. By June, he was enjoying success and popularity.³⁵

The alliance of Indigenous nations came into focus in Nova Scotia in 1776, as a result of the war, shaping the strategic decisions of both sides involved in the revolution. Rebel Patriot leaders relied on the support of Indigenous people for military efforts. This alliance between Indigenous militants and patriot politicians was already clear in Sunbury County. However, it was Washington's stance that most influenced public opinion. His ongoing interest in the Mi'kmaq communities of Nova Scotia was often seen as unfriendly, even by those who didn't have strong political ties, sparking calls for government intervention. After some initial hesitation and delays in administrative changes, Arbuthnot continued Legge's efforts to gain the loyalty, or at least the neutrality, of Indigenous nations.³⁶

The Autumn of 1776

The Rebel expedition was led by Jonathan Eddy, who had recently been appointed a lieutenant colonel by the Massachusetts Congress. A native of Norton, Massachusetts, he had settled in Cumberland around 1763 but returned to Massachusetts when the war started. In July 1776, he left Boston for Machias.³⁷

In mid-October 1776, Jonathan Eddy gathered 20 Machias volunteers for his plan to invade Nova Scotia. Their small number proved convenient: all could fit aboard Captain Elijah Ayer's unnamed schooner, which slipped down the Machias River on 13 October with Zebulon Roe, William How, Samuel Rogers, and the rest of the party aboard. Ayer, though a rebel patriot from Sackville, traded freely with both sides and agreed to carry Eddy and his men to the St. John River. With James Lyon's blessing, literally as he was a Presbyterian minister in Machias and a member of their Committee of Safety, the schooner headed toward Passamaquoddy Bay and the Nova Scotian coast.

Strangely, that same morning, Rebel Patriot John Allan, who had recently escaped from the Cumberland area, was sailing toward Machias. Stranger still, near sunset, men on the two ships recognised each other! Alarmed by their intentions, Allan tried to dissuade them, warning that the Mi'kmaq had refused to join the war, and he carried a letter proving it. Eddy countered with reports that the Wolastoqiyik were ready to fight and insisted the expedition could succeed. Allan tried to change Eddy's mind, but Eddy and his followers remained determined. They agreed only that Ayer would pause at Campobello (since 1765, the capital and seat of Sunbury County) long enough for Allan to send a letter from Machias. Allan departed with Nathan Longfellow (who was to return with the letter), and they reached Machias the next morning, where he found that even Francis Shaw, who had helped recruit Eddy's men, now doubted the venture.

³⁴ Mariot Arbuthnot joined the Royal Navy around 1727 and gradually moved up the ranks. He became a lieutenant in 1739, a master and commander in 1746, and a post-captain in 1747. During the Seven Years' War, he commanded the HMS *Portland*. After a period of service at Portsmouth, he was appointed commander of the navy yard at Halifax, arriving there on 1 November 1775. Soon after his arrival, he decided to retain HMS *Somerset* for Halifax's protection upon hearing that "a body of rebels" was marching "up the country" toward an unknown destination. On April 20, Arbuthnot was officially appointed lieutenant governor of Nova Scotia, taking over from Michael Francklin, who had been acting as governor. When Francis Legge sailed for England in May, Arbuthnot stepped in as the province's administrator. Donald F. Chard, "Arbuthnot (Arbuthnot), Mariot (Marriot, Marriott)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 4, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 2026 Apr 01, 2026, https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/arbuthnot_mariot_4E.html.

³⁵ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776*, 50-52.

³⁶ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776*, 54.

³⁷ Raymond, *Glimpses of the Past*, 226-227.



Meanwhile, Nova Scotia's defences were tightening. The recently knighted (January 1775³⁸) Commodore Sir George Collier³⁹ had reorganised coastal protection by having naval vessels carry provincial troops and deploying small armed schooners to patrol inlets and shallow waters where privateers hid. Land detachments reinforced vulnerable towns, and Collier even sent a warship to harass New England shipping. His integrated land-sea strategy was innovative and increasingly effective, despite strained relations among the colony's military leaders.

One of Collier's ships now guarded the mouth of the Saint John River. As Ayer's schooner approached with barely thirty men aboard, they sailed past the watch unnoticed or unchallenged. After waiting for slack tide, he continued upriver to Maugerville. Hazen, Simonds, and White at Portland Point did not oppose them. Eddy knew they were clearly loyal, so there was no need to spend time there.⁴⁰

Eddy recruited 43 allies on the River St. John. His additional troops were made up of 27 British Americans, now Rebel Americans and 16 Wolastoqiyik. Of the 27 Anglos from the river, 24 have been verified by Clarke. They were not just from Maugerville but from settlements all along the river right down to Conway. The 16 Indigenous allies along the St. John River were led by Chief Ambroise St. Aubin.⁴¹, whom Eddy described as 'behaving most gallantly'. Eddy did not fare well with many Indigenous Allies of the Wabanaki Confederacy. The Abenaki were out of the picture. The Penobscot and the Peskotomahkati said no, as well. The Mi'kmaq also said a definite no, but 4 came from Cocagne (now part of the rural community of Beausoleil), near Richibucto (now part of the town of Beaurivage). (See *Appendix One* for Clarke's amazing work.) Eddy later wrote that he found the people 'almost universally hearty in our cause; they joined us with one captain, one lieutenant and twenty-five men, as also sixteen Indians'. Eddy left Maugerville on 22 October⁴² Ayer was gone with his ship on a previous engagement; thus, Eddy lost his transportation. So, the whole Rebel Army, about 72 odd, left the Mouth of the St. John and used his 3 whale boats and 5 canoes to sail up the bay! Each canoe and whaleboat had sails and used them to advantage in the squalls.⁴³

Military Operations

They arrived at Shepody Point on Tuesday, the 29th of October.⁴⁴ They captured an outpost manned by Royal Fencibles, capturing 1 officer and 13 rank and file (some, including the Lieutenant, were wounded), and one soldier had been killed. The prisoners were transported to Machias.⁴⁵ The Rebels were still intact. The exact

³⁸ William A Shaw and G. D. Burtchaell, *The Knights of England; a Complete Record from the Earliest Time to the Present Day of the Knights of All the Orders of Chivalry in England, Scotland, and Ireland and of knights bachelors*, vol. II (London: Central Chancery of the Orders of Knighthood, Lord Chancellor's Office, St. James's Palace, 1906). 294. Collier was made a knight bachelor on 1775 Jan 27 at St. James's Palace.

³⁹ Julian Gwyn, "Collier, Sir George," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 4, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed 2026 Mar 10, https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/collier_george_4E.html.

⁴⁰ Clarke, *The Siege of Cumberland*, 1776, 70-81.

⁴¹ Ambroise Saint-Aubin (also known as Ambroise Bear, Ambroise Pier, and other variations) was a prominent Wolastoqiyik chief based in the Saint John River valley. He was known for his diplomatic efforts to maintain Wolastoqiyik control over the Saint John River region during this tumultuous period. In September 1775, Saint-Aubin and fellow Wolastoqiyik chief Pierre Tomah travelled to the Penobscot truck house (now Bangor, Maine) to declare their support for the Massachusetts government. In July 1776, he led a delegation to Watertown, Massachusetts, to meet with American officials. He participated in the failed American-led expedition against Fort Cumberland. He died in October 1780, and some of his followers suspected he had been poisoned. There is much more on this man.

⁴² Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 263n135.

⁴³ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 89.

⁴⁴ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 84.

⁴⁵ Douglas Brymner, *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1894 (Ottawa: By Order of Parliament, S. E. Dawson, Printer To The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, 1895), 359.



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location of this outpost, probably established by Joseph Goreham in September, is a bit uncertain. It might have been where Hopewell Cape, New Brunswick, is today on the Bay's western side, or perhaps it was Fort Folly Point on the eastern side.⁴⁶ At Cumberland, Eddy managed to recruit more men, though his overall force was likely never more than 200 soldiers, according to a couple of historians. Eddy himself estimated 180. Clarke has listed 186 and acknowledged that there are more unnamed. (See *Appendix One*, page 19.) They were lightly equipped and without artillery.

On 31 October, HMS *Juno* escorted the supply sloop *Polly* to Fort Cumberland on the Aulac River, loaded with winter supplies. Everyone unloaded immediately. *Juno*, visible from Sackville, concerned Eddy by adding her guns to the general defence of the fort. However, *Juno* sailed on 3 November, leaving *Polly* docked below the fort. Eddy's patrols, which had been moving closer to the fort, alerted Goreham to the troops. At this time, Goreham took no action to protect *Polly*. So, on the evening of 6 November, thirty of Eddy's men surprised *Polly*'s guards, capturing the ship and thirteen prisoners, and seized a nearby Rebel Patriot-owned ship.⁴⁷ The next morning, Goreham, not knowing about the capture of the *Polly*, sent 30 men to guard the ship. All the men were captured by surprise. The ship was then sailed east to Fort Lawrence, avoiding the cannon fire from the fort now that they were aware of the ship's capture.⁴⁸

Goreham assessed his situation. Nearly a quarter of his garrison, over 60 men, had been captured by Eddy, along with vital fuel and supplies that hadn't yet been unloaded from the *Polly* before her seizure. His defences were makeshift, consisting of a hurriedly built palisade surrounding most of the fort and six cannons, only three of which had their mounts finished. The fort was staffed by 176 men, including officers and artillery crews. Over the next few days, more local militia arrived, boosting the garrison to around 200, though some of these men were unfit for duty because of illness.⁴⁹ On the 7th and 8th of November, Goreham tried again to send messengers through Eddy's surrounding forces, but was unsuccessful.⁵⁰ On the 8th, Eddy was joined by about 200 men from Cobequid and Pictou, and was ready to act on Sunday, the 10th, by sending a letter demanding that Goreham surrender his garrison. Goreham refused, suggesting that Eddy surrender.⁵¹

The Siege of Fort Cumberland⁵² — 10-29 November 1776 (2 weeks and 5 days)

The next day, authorities outside the area learned of Eddy's activities. Michael Francklin, patrolling the Bay of Fundy for privateers, recovered a seized ferry and learned from its passengers that Eddy was active in the area. When the news reached Halifax and Arbutnot, he responded on 15 November by dispatching orders for any available ship at Annapolis to proceed to Fort Edward (Windsor) to convoy troops to Cumberland.⁵³

The Commodore, Sir George Collier, had already sent HMS *Vulture* into the Bay of Fundy on rumours of privateering activity there, so he ordered HMS *Hope* to locate *Vulture* so that she could assist. However, *Hope* captured a prize and returned to Halifax; she was then sent out again to accompany a supply ship to Fort

⁴⁶ Clarke, *The Siege of Cumberland, 1776*, 254n20.

⁴⁷ Clarke, *The Siege of Cumberland, 1776*, 106-10.

⁴⁸ Clarke, *The Siege of Cumberland, 1776*, 111-12.

⁴⁹ Clarke, *The Siege of Cumberland, 1776*, 113-17.

⁵⁰ Clarke, *The Siege of Cumberland, 1776*, 120.

⁵¹ Brymner, *Report on Canadian Archives, 1894*, 357.

⁵² As previously stated, the only real work on this entire affair is Ernest Clarke's *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776*. The book is certainly a good read and the best secondary source. It would be a 12 to 14-hour read.

⁵³ Brymner, *Report on Canadian Archives, 1894*, 358.



Cumberland. However, as luck would have it, *Vulture* arrived at Windsor. She loaded some Royal Marines and Royal Fencibles that were at Fort Edward.⁵⁴

Without artillery, the rebels could only storm the fort, which they had prepared for during the night on Tuesday, 12 November. The attack was launched at 0400 on Wednesday. They attempted a feint to weaken defences by drawing men away, but Goreham saw through it and repelled the rebels. One of the Wolastoqiyik managed to get into the fort and almost opened a gate, but was stopped at the last moment by a sword-wielding Fencible who wounded the man just as he was at the gate. The attack failed; the Fort had captured several wounded rebels, including the Wolastoqiyik gate man. After the failed attack, Eddy started to lose control of the situation as a council of leaders came together against him.⁵⁵

Camphill, Eddy's base, was in a mess. Confusion, anger, and an upset rebel council. The next day, the Machias men threatened to return home! A deal was struck. At Ebenezer Gardiner's farm, often a meeting place for the Committee of Safety and its *de facto* headquarters, hurried negotiations aimed to end the crisis until the Machias men agreed to a settlement. The deal required the committee to pay eight dollars a month for three months and provide a suit of clothes to each of Eddy's men, or they would leave. This tax on rebellion sought to restore order and keep the force together, but it might also dampen local support for liberty. John Allan noted that the inhabitants suspected they were being imposed upon. Eddy was hopeful his leadership would return now that his Machias men were pacified. The blockade might weaken the garrison, or with reinforcements, a second attack could succeed, following the recent failure. The siege would continue.⁵⁶

Unbeknownst to the people of Cumberland, on 17 November, there was a regular weekly meeting in Halifax of the Council of the Government of Nova Scotia. The Lieut. Governor Charles Morris and five others resolved to offer rewards for the capture of Jonathan Eddy, William Howe and Samuel Rogers, who were at 'the utmost of their power exciting and stirring up disaffection and rebellion among the people of the county of Cumberland, and are actually before the fort at Cumberland...'. They offered £200 for Jonathan Eddy and £100 for each of the others. 'Also £100 for apprehending of John Allan, who has been deeply concerned in exciting the said rebellion.'⁵⁷

Night attacks ordered by the council on 22 and 23 November succeeded in capturing and burning several buildings, but Goreham held his ground, and the invaders were repulsed yet again.⁵⁸

Early on 27 November, there was a brief skirmish in the hayfield around the fort. The Rebels attempted to run off the cattle and cause as much damage as possible. The Fencibles who responded were noted to be working very competently, becoming more efficient in their trade. They were successful in running off Eddy's men. Then at 10 o'clock, HMS *Vulture* arrived without the sloop *Lavinia* she had been escorting. Separated in the heavy fog, the leaky and past-worn-out *Lavinia*⁵⁹ had on board 120 Royal Highland Emigrants⁶⁰ under the command of Captain Murdoch MacLaine of the Grenadier Company. Along with his Grenadiers was the Light Infantry Company under Captain Ranald MacKinnon. However, on board *Vulture* were Royal Marines. The Marines

⁵⁴ Julian Gwyn, *Frigates and Foremasts: The North American Squadron in Nova Scotia Waters, 1745-1815* (UBC Press, 2011), 61-61.

⁵⁵ Clarke, *The Siege of Cumberland, 1776*, 139-42.

⁵⁶ Clarke, *The Siege of Cumberland, 1776*, 144.

⁵⁷ Joseph Whitcomb Porter, *Memoir of Col. Jonathan Eddy of Eddington, Me., with Some Account of the Eddy Family, and of the Early Settlers on Penobscot River* (Augusta: Sprague, Owen and Nash, 1877), 18-19.

⁵⁸ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776*, 168-72.

⁵⁹ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776*, 175.

⁶⁰ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776*, 183-84.



were under the command of Captain Gilfred Studholme, senior captain, and brigade-major of the Royal Fencible Americans, and Major Thomas Batt, also of the Royal Fencibles (and Fort Edward's commanding officer), was the commander of the entire task force.⁶¹

Great joy erupted in the fort with the arrival of the reinforcements. Food and other items, however, were in short supply in the fort, and now there were an extra 100 men who needed to be fed. At least the fort had the services of the newly arrived Marine surgeon.⁶²

Rather than retreat in the face of the arriving assistance, the rebels increased their guard, with Eddy feeling he was still secure in his Camphill base. Goreham, needing to address the shortage of supplies (they were out in the Bay of Fundy somewhere aboard the *Lavinia*) and with some intelligence on the size of the force opposing him, planned a sortie.

The Marines were ordered to be ready, with attack plans detailed Thursday evening, the 28th. Captains Branson and Pitcairn would lead two Marine companies, each with four junior officers, forming flanking parties of eighty-nine men. The Fencibles, responsible for the attack's centre, would charge the patriot camp with Marines on each flank. Mostly from Batt's and Studholme's companies, the 64 Fencibles, led by Captain Studholme, included two drummers, four sergeants, and three junior officers. The Fencibles chosen were those with the best clothes, especially shoes. Goreham, who had fought for uniforms, had, so far, been unsuccessful. Despite their poor dress and the Marines' jokes, they were becoming a cohesive unit.⁶³

Goreham's intentions unintentionally slipped out to Camphill before he had completed his plan. If Eddy heard of the plan, he didn't go out of his way to act on it, aside from securing some extra guards. The Rebel Patriots rarely slept in Camphill; many returned home each night. Eddy was aware of this, which made assembling his force more difficult, but he didn't do anything about it that Thursday night. The number of patriots was lower, partly because Eddy couldn't gather all his men at once, and partly due to the looming threat. As the temperature dropped and frost appeared, the attacking force was set at 163 men—89 Marines and 74 Fencibles, including officers. Concern about the missing Highland Emigrants was set aside as the focus turned to activities at Fort Cumberland.⁶⁴

At 4:30 AM on Friday, 29 November, the force gathered on the parade square. Major Thomas Batt received final orders from the fort commander, Goreham, and at 5:00 AM, they marched silently to Camphill. They huddled in a hollow at the foot of Camphill in the pre-dawn chill, awaiting 'sufficient daylight to see clearly.' Batt signalled his men to move. Quietly, the force moved up the hill, and soon the advance guard overheard Indigenous voices. The force had remained undetected until then. The troops took their positions: Marines to the sides, Fencibles into the trees lining the road. A break in the mist revealed their target: a country lane with bare trees and evergreens. Suddenly, voices in the woods and muffled sounds of running signalled they were discovered. Studholme took his men into the lane. An urgent drum from the patriot camp sounded, and chaos erupted in Camphill as the Fencibles attacked. With a loud Huzzah, Studholme led his centre force past the rebels' hidden perimeter guards. On the right flank, Pitcairn's Marines quickly moved through the Wolastoquey camp, just seconds after the rebels had fled at the first sign of danger. Camphill was caught almost by surprise. Despite scouts being out all night, they seemed ill-prepared. There were no barricades or trenches, and the

⁶¹ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 159.

⁶² Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 186.

⁶³ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 189-90.

⁶⁴ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 190.



makeshift defences between the buildings were shallow and abandoned as everyone was evacuating. The Marines reached the woods, while Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik ran across the field toward Baie Verte. A Mi'kmaw was struck and killed by a musket ball.⁶⁵

As they left Gardiner's burning farm, the soldiers headed towards Bloody Bridge. It was daylight, the fog gone, but the sky was overcast. The attack quickly devolved into a disorderly retreat, or as Clarke wrote it 'turned into a rout' as Eddy's army fought fiercely along the road. Batt led his troops purposefully: Marines cleared ambushes from the brush, and Fencibles searched houses and barns, separating patriots from loyalists. The burning of Gardiner's place symbolised vengeance beyond its role as the Committee's headquarters. The journey was risky, requiring quick decisions from Captain Studholme, who had to distinguish friend from foe, especially as the Fencibles were eager to burn suspicious buildings. Amid the chaos, the instinct was vengeance, evident also in the rear-guard burning of Eddy's command HQ at Read's farm, fueling the cycle of destruction. This fire provided a visual confirmation of victory to a very large area, including the garrison and the crew of *Vulture*, who were standing out in the Cumberland Basin.⁶⁶

As the Fencibles headed north, rebel-supporting families watched from their farmhouses as patriots travelled along the road, disappearing into the woods or making last-ditch stands in barns before retreating. Some left their weapons behind. Amidst the chaos, the Fencibles tore down fences and killed cattle and sheep. Smoke billowed from farms targeted by the Fencibles and Marines en route to Baie Verte. Melting frost transformed Baie Verte Road into a muddy battleground, with nearly all properties ablaze, including houses and barns, further sapping patriot morale.⁶⁷

Eddy later reported that the King's forces destroyed nearly all the supplies, burned houses and barns, and forced families to flee on that cold November Friday. Major Batt was distressed by the destruction, seeing families' possessions burned and the terrified women and children. He noted the houses held life's comforts but also spare arms and provisions for war. The fires continued. The Baie Verte Road was long, muddy, and dangerous, with resistance along the way. One soldier was killed, and several fencibles and a marine were wounded in skirmishes that couldn't stop efforts to destroy property. Among the resistors were Acadians, many of whom farmed near Bloody Bridge. Major Batt targeted this village, John Allan's home and an Acadian insurgency hub. Many Acadians were tenants on Allan's estate. Families gathered necessities, and some men returned to help. Small groups of men appeared at the woods' entrance with no insignia, but were recognised as the Royal Fencible Americans by their movements and weapons. The patriots had to abandon everything to escape.⁶⁸

The Fencibles attacked Bloody Bridge fiercely, torching Acadian houses, barns, and granaries, and destroying crops and livestock. Isaiah Boudreau, Eddy's Acadian captain, was present. Items from loyal Edward Barron's store in River Hebert were found inside a house before it was burned. Livestock was rounded up or shot. The Allans' farm was plundered and burned, with equipment and crops destroyed, and livestock, including a Cow, Oxen, Horses, sheep, swine, and poultry, taken, leaving it completely destroyed. Batt's busy day was unfinished. Beyond Bloody Bridge, Jolicure, known for its rebelliousness, was scheduled for the same fate but was temporarily spared when the Marines and Fencibles stopped to eat. Clearly, Colonel Eddy had suffered a crushing defeat.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 191-93.

⁶⁶ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 194-95.

⁶⁷ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 195.

⁶⁸ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 196.

⁶⁹ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 197.



Committee-of-Safety member Nathaniel Reynolds avoided the chaos by leaving Cumberland days earlier, supposedly to find a ship, and ended up in Pictou on Friday. While Eddy was diverted from Camphill, Reynolds watched a house where William Lowden, master of the *Molly*, was delivering payment to Daniel Earle Jr. This was a start to Reynolds's plan to seize the *Molly*. The seizure of the ship went according to plan, and in the name of 'Congress', Reynold proclaimed the Molly a Prize. Unfortunately for them, their success was of no use to Eddy. Camphill was reduced to ruins. The Gardiner's, where Reynolds had held council earlier in November, was now embers, while the garrison at Fort Cumberland had stopped to eat beside Bloody Bridge's ashes. Major Batt, realising the damage and that the burning had gone far enough, decided to spare Jolicure, hoping to give them time to reflect on their folly. Batt and his men headed back to the fort. The troops saw refugees and the wounded, but no enemy. They seemed to have retreated into the woods, fled to save their families, or joined Eddy behind enemy lines. They probably regrouped to organise a retreat to Sackville and were simply hiding until the troops returned to the fort.⁷⁰ (See *Appendix Two*, page 21, for Major Batt's After-Action Report to Gorham.)

Batt and his troops pursued Eddy and his men, but poor weather and inadequate footwear forced Batt to abandon the chase. Eddy's forces dispersed, with many, especially those from Sunbury County, in a long and arduous retreating overland to the St. John River. They left Sackville in small groups within a few days of the siege. Clarke notes that, according to one account, it was a struggle on old paths over ice, and that they crossed one river on floating pieces of ice. They eventually reached the River St. John and rested, some in the Wolastoqey village of Aukpaque. They then headed out to Machias and on to Boston. A winter journey that took them two months.⁷¹

Trials were held in the capital, Halifax. Although homes and farms of rebel supporters were burned in reprisal, the British authorities eventually took a lenient approach toward captured rebels. Goreham had issued an offer of pardon on that very Friday night, for those who would surrender their arms, which more than 100 locals accepted. This prompted Major Batt to file charges against Goreham for neglect of duty; Goreham was exonerated.⁷²

However, some arrests were made, specifically Dr Parker Clarke, Thomas Falconer, James Aveiy, and Richard John Uuiacke. They were taken to Halifax, and Clarke and Falconer were detained in close custody until the Easter Term of 1777, when they were tried. Juries returned a verdict of guilty for both Falconer and Clarke, but before sentence and execution, they pleaded the King's pardon, whereupon the Court ordered that the Provost-Marshal hold them until next term, in the meantime, 'their sentence be respited' (in legal terms, it means to postpone a sentence).⁷³

Notably, there was the arrest of Richard Uniacke. He was captured and charged with treason. However, his trial seems never to have happened, so it is generally concluded that he gave King's evidence and was freed.⁷⁴ Uniacke had a very interesting life thereafter and in 1797, and even became the Attorney General of Nova

⁷⁰ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 197-200.

⁷¹ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 206.

⁷² Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 201-08.

⁷³ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 205-13.

⁷⁴ *Report and Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society*, vol. I (Halifax, N. S. : Printed at The Morning Herald Office: Nova Scotia Historical Society, 1879), 110-11



Scotia.⁷⁵ Even Hugh Quinton, one of Eddy's Captains, was pardoned and a year later served as a Captain in the Sunbury County Militia. He would end up fighting Rebels.⁷⁶

The Return to Portland Point, Sunbury County

Eddy's force suffered greatly on their retreat, and some arrived back in the Portland Pt. area in miserable condition. If they had been unwelcome at Portland Point on their advance, they were even less welcome on their return. Hazen, Simonds, and White were forced to supply them with provisions simply to prevent them from looting their store and homes. In return, the partners received the following bill—almost certainly never paid:

Portland, Nova Scotia, December 14th, 1776.

Gentlemen, - At sight of this our second Bill (first of same tenor and date not paid) please to pay to Messrs. William Hazen, James Simonds and James White, or order, forty-one Spanish milled Dollars for value received of them.

Ezekiel Foster, Lt., Edmund Stevens, Capt., David Prescott, Lt., Daniel Meservy, Lt.

To the Honorable Council of Massachusetts States.

James White later remarked that the supplies were given simply to rid the area of "a needy, lawless banditti."⁷⁷

The story picks up again in 1777, in Part 3.

On January 4th, 1777, the Continental Congress listened to John Allan's suggestion of launching another attack on Nova Scotia. Known for his persuasive speeches, Allan found success, and a few days later, they approved his plan and appointed him as their paid representative to the Eastern native peoples. President Hancock believed that an expedition against Nova Scotia could bring great benefits. Massachusetts was ready and eager to organise this mission for late winter or early spring. They planned to raise an army of 3000 soldiers, equipped with all the supplies the state could gather with funds from Congress.⁷⁸

As Clarke sums it up, an excited John Allan began his journey back to Boston, then headed north to Machias to assume his appointed role as an Indian Agent. Along the way, he started to develop plans for a new attack on Nova Scotia.⁷⁹ Unlike Eddy, who had gone far for conquest but left much behind, Allan had full support from Congress. In Connecticut, he read newspaper reports about the disasters at Cumberland, including the burning of his own home, and two days later, he met Jonathan Eddy and other refugees face to face.⁸⁰ Despite their stories of defeat, which he had predicted, he stayed determined to move forward with his plans. In 1777, Allan hoped that a new American invasion would overthrow the loyal Nova Scotians⁸¹ and bring them into the Rebel American fold.⁸² (See *Appendix Three*, page 27)

⁷⁵ B.C. Cuthbertson, "Uniacke, Richard John (1753-1830)," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed May 20, 2026, https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/uniacke_richard_john_1753_1830_6E.html.

⁷⁶ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 210.

⁷⁷ Raymond, *River St. John*, 438.

⁷⁸ Hancock to Massachusetts Assembly, 10 January 1777, Letters of Members of the Continental Congress in Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 213.

⁷⁹ "Some Proposals for an attack on Nova Scotia," Allan to Massachusetts Council, Massachusetts Archives vol. 144, 172-4. This long and detailed attack plan is published in NSHS 1, 11-16.

⁸⁰ Allan Journal, Public Archives of NS RG 1, vol. 364, no. 96.

⁸¹ Allan Proposals, Nova Scotia HS 1, 14

⁸² Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland*, 1776, 213.



Appendix One

Forces at Fort Cumberland: related information

Ernest Clarke's book provides what is probably the most comprehensive list of those Rebel and Loyalist forces involved as combatants at the Siege. It is the go-to reference for that information. Found in Clarke's Appendix One and Two, they are essential for those seeking detailed information on those involved.⁸³

The Bad Americans and their allies

In Clarke's Appendix One (starting on page 215), there are 8 pages of names that have been confirmed as those in Eddy's force. Clarke notes that the Rebel forces "conversed in four languages and represented Native, Acadian and English-speaking communities in nine separate contingents from Massachusetts to Nova Scotia."⁸⁴ There are 186 rebel patriots listed.

1. **American [Massachusetts Rebels] Contingent:** The names of eleven of the "about Twenty" recruits from Machias, Maine, and adjacent communities can be verified.
2. **Passamaquoddy Contingent:** Only four of Eddy's nine Passamaquoddy recruits can be verified. 1 Crow (e) , William – charged with treason . 2 Elvill , William (Elwell) - charged with treason . 3 Kenny , William 4 Wilson , Robert - from Campobello Island ; charged with treason ; drowned at Cobscook Falls , Maine, in 1782.
3. **St John River Contingent:** Of the twenty-seven English-speaking recruits from Sunbury County in the St John River valley, the names of twenty-four can be verified. They were not just from Maugerville but from settlements all along the river.
4. **Maliseet [Wolastoqiyik] Contingent:** Among the Maliseets on the St John River and in Passamaquoddy there were "computed to be about 140 fighting men, and much superior in every degree to the Micmacs." At least eighty families lived in the Maliseet capital of Aukpaque. The names of all sixteen Maliseet recruits are known.
5. **Micmac [Mi'kmaq] Contingent:** Eddy's four Micmac recruits came from Cocagne near Richibucto . 1 Bear, Andrew 2 Bear, Charles 3 Nicholas 4 Paul, Pierre.

⁸³ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776*, 215-229.

⁸⁴ Clarke, *The Siege of Fort Cumberland, 1776*, 215.



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6. **Acadian Contingent:** The 21 Acadian recruits came from the Memramcook River Valley and some were tenant farmers on the estate of John Allan on the Baie Verte Road.
7. **Cobequid Contingent:** Only ten of the "about 25 men" of this contingent can be verified, the bulk of which came from Onslow.
8. **Cumberland Contingent:** Because other contingents had to form up and travel long distances to join the rebellion, they are more identifiable than the Cumberland contingent, whose members already lived within the influence of the siege in the various settlements across the isthmus. Only those patriots whose record of service survives are named, and for this reason, the actual number of Cumberlanders who helped Eddy is likely to have been larger than the 88 listed here.
9. **Pictou Contingent:** The Pictonians in Eddy's army were chiefly former Cumberlanders. The Earle family was heavily represented in this contingent, the service of which centred on the capture of the ship Molly in Pictou Harbour.

The Good Americans

In Clarke's Appendix Two, pages 222-229, is the list of the Royal Fencible Americans at Fort Cumberland in 1776.



Appendix Two

Cumberland Letters and related documents Navy and Army

Sir George Collier To Captain James Feattus, H. M. Sloop *Vulture*

From the Journal of Colonel Goreham

Sir George Collier to Captain George Dawson, H. M. Sloop *Hope*

Royal Fencible Americans & Royal Highland Emigrants, 29 Nov. 1776. Major Batt's After-Action Report to Gorham



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Sir George Collier To Captain James Feattus, H. M. Sloop <i>Vulture</i>^{85 86}			

In consequence of a representation from Lieut Governor Arbuthnot, that a Pirate Sloop of Eight Carriage Guns and upwards of a Hundred Men, has done infinite Mischief in the Bason of Minas, You are hereby required and directed to proceed to Sea at Daylight with His Majesty's Sloop under your Command, and make the best of your Way into the Bay of Fundy, and from thence into the Bason of Minas, and so on to Windsor, and follow the best Intelligence You can procure for pursuing the said Pirate Vessel, or any other who may infest that Coast, For the accomplishing which you are to apply for Intelligence to Col: Tounge, or Mr Deschamps at Windsor

But in case you should not receive any Material Information at Windsor, you are then to proceed to Cumberland and advise with Colonel Goreham, or the Commanding Officer of the Kings Troops at that Place; after which if no Intelligence of consequence presents itself, You are to look into the Harbour of Annapolis [Royal] and act as Circumstances may require.

In going allong the Coast of Nova Scotia, if you should meet with the Gage Armed Vessel, or the Loyal-Nova Scotia Armed Schooner, You are to take them under your Command, as you may judge it necessary to send them up the Bay of Cobequet, or on some other Service.

If you find every Thing quiet, and that the Inhabitants have no Apprehension of an Invasion from the Rebels, You are afterwards to return to this Port for further Orders.

Given on board His Majesty's Ship Rainbow⁸⁷ in the
Harbour of Halifax the 9th of November 1776.
Geo: Collier

⁸⁵ *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, vol. 7, *American Theatre: November 1, 1776–December 31, 1776; European Theatre: October 6, 1776–December 31, 1776; American Theatre: January 1, 1777–February 28, 1777*, ed. William James Morgan, foreword by President Gerald R. Ford, introduction by Vice Admiral Edwin B. Hooper, USN (Ret.) (Washington, DC: Naval History Division, Department of the Navy, 1976), 93–94. (Original in the PRO, Admiralty 1/1611, 2, 14.)

⁸⁶ HMS *Vulture* was a 14 to 16-gun ship sloop of the Swan class, launched for the Royal Navy on 18 March 1776. *Vulture* was commissioned in April 1776 under Commander James Feattus. She then sailed for North America on 9 September. She served during both the American Revolutionary War and the French Revolutionary War, and was sold by the Navy in 1802. *Vulture* was the warship that transported Benedict Arnold from the Hudson River in 1780 after unsuccessfully trying to surrender the Continental Army fort at West Point, New York, to the British. Retrieved 2026 02 24. https://threedecks.org/index.php?display_type=show_ship&id=6650

⁸⁷ HMS *Rainbow* was a 44-gun fifth-rate launched in 1747. She was used as a troopship from 1776, then, after being equipped experimentally with 48 carronades, captured the French frigate *Hébé* off the coast of Brittany in 1782, served in harbour from 1784, and was sold in 1802. https://threedecks.org/index.php?display_type=show_ship&id=6062

Sunday the 10th.⁸⁹ Two of the Inhabitants living just under the Garrison, came early this Morning to inform me of their being between six & seven hundred Men in Arms at their House, most all Night, waiting for a favorable opportunity to attack, that they approached in small partys, near the Fort, during the Night, but found our Centrys so alert, & firing on them, they retired. - Said they intended to send a Summons this day to the Commanding Officer to surrender the Garrison, that among these people, there appeared all the French Acadians of the Country, & Inhabitants of Amherst, Westcock, Joly Cour &c. - One Clough⁹⁰ a trading Vessel from Halifax, lying in Bay Vert, was taken by the bloody Bridge French Acadians. -

	Men	
<i>Vorture</i> * to land	50	The above Number of Men Sir Geo. Collier,
<i>Albany</i>	50	commanding ' the Kings Ships here, promised
<i>Hope</i>	50	the[y] should land to Cooperate with any Detacht
<i>Gage</i>	30	none came or has appear'd but the <i>Voluture</i> * while I
<i>Diligent</i>	30	remain'd at Windsor –
<i>Nova Scotia</i>	30	
	240	
* H. M. Sloop <i>Vulture</i> .		

⁸⁸ *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, vol. 7, 99. (This statement and list of ships are in a different hand; possibly written by General Massey. Found in Proceedings at Fort Cumberland, PRO, Colonial Office, 217/52), 315.

⁸⁹ Sunday, 10 November 1776.

⁹⁰ No records of *Clough*, but probably a small, privately owned merchant vessel. The expression is typical of 18th-century language in reference to a ship. In 1779, under a different commander, she was captured by the Rebels and became a privateer.

Part II: The Bay of Fundy, 1776

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As there is the greatest Reason to imagine that a Body of His Majesty's Rebel Subjects have taken Arms with a Design to invest Fort Cumberland and ravage the adjacent Country, you are hereby required and Directed to proceed immediately to Sea with His Majesty's Sloop under your Command in search of His Majesty's Sloops Albany and Diligent; (a Copy of whose Orders you will receive herewith)' to whom you will give Directions to proceed immediately to Fort Cumberland and destroy if possible the Rebel Armament now employed against that Place.

You are to direct Lieutenant [Michael] Hyndman; (the Commander of the Albany) that if He finds the Fort actually invested, He is to endeavor throwing as large a Body of Seamen and Officers into it as He can spare from the two Sloops, and to use every Endeavor in His Power to distress and harrass the Enemy, and assist the Kings Troops in those Parts.

He is to be attentive to the Bason of Minas, and Windsor, and if He finds He can spare the Diligent, He is to Dispatch Her for the purpose of keeping that Channel clear of the Pirate Boats which have lately infested it.

You are to acquaint Lieutenant Hyndman, that He will probably meet with the Vulture Sloop in the Bay of Fundy, to whose Captain He will communicate these Directions, and apply to Him for further Orders.

And as the earliest Communication of the State things are in is of the utmost Consequence, it is my desire that Expresses are sent to the Governor or myself, as often as opportunity serves, and any thing of Moment Occurs.

After sending away the Albany and Diligent, if you find His Majesty's Service does not require your further Stay in the Bay of Fundy, you are to proceed and put your former Cruizing Orders in Execution.

Given on board His Majesty's Ship Rainbow in
the Harbour of Halifax the 14th of November 1776.

Geo: Collier

(A COPY)

⁹¹ *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, vol. 7, 133. (Original in the PRO, Colonial Office, 217/52,340-41.) HMS *Hope* (14) had been purchased in Boston, Massachusetts, in December of 1775 for £1055. The "(14)" is a reference to her main armament (on the Gun Deck). *Hope* carried 14 British 4-Pounders on the gun deck. Also on the gun deck, not part of her rating, she carried 4 British 1/2-Pound Swivels.



Royal Fencible Americans & Royal Marines Attack on the Enemy, Nov. 29, 1776⁹²

(This is Major Thomas Batt's After-Action Report to Lieut. Col. Gorham)

Near the Rebels Head Quarters, 29th Nov. 1776

Sir,

Pursuant to your orders I marched at half an hour after five o'clock this morning, to attack the rebels, with Captains Branson and Pitcairn's companies of light Marines, Capt. Studholm, Lieut. Boduwain, Lieut. Shearman, Lieut. Connor, four serjeants and 64 rank and file of our regiment.

We took the right hand road, leaving Danks and Gay's house on the left, and continued our rout along the edge of the marsh, under the hill, which prevented our being seen or heard by the enemy.

When there was sufficient day light to enable us clearly to distinguish objects, we began to ascend the hill, in a short time the advanced guard heard the Indians talking at their wigwams, and finding we were wholly undiscovered, I detached Capt. Branson's company to fall upon their right flank, and Capt. Pitcairn's on their left, whilst I pressed forward in the center, with our detachment.

But just as we reached the top of the hill, I heard them beat to arms, on which the men gave a loud huzza, and ran like lions.

The villains fired on us from right and left of the road leading to Eddy's head quarters, which we surrounded.

The rebels who occupied the house darted out of it at our approach and fired as they fled, leaving only a negro man behind, who beat the drum.

We pursued, however, as fast as we could.

The next house we entered was the rendezvous of their wretched committee, and owned by one Gardiner, this I burnt, with every rebel's house and barn for six miles, including the whole French settlements at Bloody Bridge, every man belonging to which were this day in action against us.

All the houses I destroyed contained the comforts and many of the luxuries of life, with numbers of spare arms; and the barns of the French were receptacles for quantities of salt provisions, flour, rice, and pease, besides grain of different kinds: circumstances which denoted mature ideas of war.

In sight of the French village of Bloody Bridge stands the settlement of Jolly Ceur, about a mile distant:

After the men had taken a little refreshment, I intended to have crossed the marsh, and laid the other nursery of rebellion in ashes, but recollecting the superiority of the detachment under my command, and the correction the enemy had just received, I determined to return to the Fort, to give them time to reflect on their infamy and madness, to wait the operation of executive justice, and the offer of mercy and oblivion.

Indeed, notwithstanding the resentment which their conduct as rebels highly merits, I should not have added fire to the sword, had they not introduced that calamity, by wickedly burning all the buildings near the fort.

Our regiment had one man killed on the spot, one mortally wounded, one dangerously, and two slightly.

The Marines had one man wounded in the body, and when the Doctor applied the bandage, the ball dropped out.

⁹² Todd Braisted, "Loyalist Institute: Royal Fencible Americans & Royal Highland Emigrants Attack on the Enemy, 1776," The On-Line Institute for Advanced Loyalist Studies, 2026, Accessed 2026 Feb 11. <https://www.royalprovincial.com/history/battles/rfarep1.shtml>.



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The loss of the enemy cannot be ascertained, we did not search for their dead, the thickness of the cover, rendering it exceedingly difficult to find them, but in the pursuit we saw two Indians and one white man who had received the just wages of wanton, unprovoked rebellion.

The behaviour of the officers and men was equal to the cause that inspired them, and the cheerfulness with which the Marine light companies underwent every fatigue deserves the highest encomium⁹³.

I have the honour to be, Sir, with respect,
your obedient and most humble servant,
Thomas Batt, Major R. F. Americans

[To:] Lieut. Col. Gorham.⁹⁴

⁹³ encomium/noun/en·co·mi·um/ a piece of writing, speech, etc. that praises someone or something / Cambridge Dictionary. Not a word that pops up too often these days.

⁹⁴ As printed in *The Royal American Gazette* (New York), January 16th, 1777.



Appendix Three

After Fort Cumberland: Rebel Plans for 1777

“The proposals to the Massachusetts State Government for attacking Nova Scotia are undoubtedly the work of John Allans, a native of this Province and son of William Allan, Esq., late of Cumberland, well known among the early settlers of that County. Careful review of our records, those of Massachusetts, and Washington's archives, leads to the conclusion that John Allan of Cumberland was one of the Revolution's most harmful figures against the British. His energy, resolve, and bravery significantly contributed to preserving a large part of Maine for the United States, and if his proposals had been accepted, the original states could have numbered fourteen. Halifax's vulnerable state when the proposals were made is well known to students of history, and a force smaller than the proposed might have captured the Province. Colonel Allen, while eager to disadvantage the English, advised Captain Jonathan Eddy against invading the Province, recognizing that Eddy only commanded a small band of men without artillery or supplies.”⁹⁵

The President of Congress [John Hancock, who was the longest-serving president of the Second Continental Congress] to the Massachusetts Assembly.⁹⁶

“Baltimore, Jany 10th, 1777.

Gentlemen.

I have it in Command to forward the enclosed Resolve, and to request you will bestow that Attention to it, which its great Importance demands.

To you, the Congress have submitted the Propriety of making an Attack upon the Province of Nova Scotia, with a View to destroy the immense Quantities of military Stores, that are there deposited to be employed against us. I need not particularise the vast Advantages, or the Glory, resulting from this Expedition, could it be happily carried into Execution. Nor need I suggest Motives to stimulate you to undertake it. Being fully convinced, that if it shall appear to you practicable and calculated to advance the Interest of America, you will most certainly adopt it. I shall only add that the Destruction of above Half a Million of Stores, must be a severe Blow on the Enemy, and may possibly prove a principal Mean of ridding our Country of those cruel Foes, who with impious Hands have been spreading Ruin and desolation over it, to the utmost of their Power.”

⁹⁵ Proposals for attack on Nova Scotia in 1776-7, in *Report And Collections of The Nova Scotia Historical Society for The Years 1879-1880*, Vol II., Halifax, N. S. : Printed at The Morning Herald Office, 1881. 11.

⁹⁶ Edmund C. Burnett, ed., *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress, July 5, 1776, to December 31, 1777*, vol. II (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1923).



Appendix Four

Fort Howe, 1777



Plan of Fort Howe and surrounding lots, A. Lockwood, Surveyor General, 1821, P243-182X, NBM, with overlay redrawn by H.E. Wright, Heritage Resources, 1999, 28

In fall 1777, Studholme returned to Saint John with troops from the Royal Fencible Americans, bringing a prefabricated blockhouse and four 6-pounder guns. To ensure safety during construction, HMS *Vulture* anchored in the harbour. Studholme decided Fort Frederick was too damaged and accepted land from the Portland Point traders. The new blockhouse, built on a limestone ridge above Fort La Tour, offered a commanding view of the harbour. Named Fort Howe after Lt.-Gen. Sir William Howe, the construction was finished by midwinter, ready for use.

When Crabtree, the American privateer, returned in the spring of 1778, expecting some easy plunder, the sight of the Union Jack flying over an armed blockhouse quickly made him change his mind. He turned around, and neither he nor any other privateer ever came back. Fort Howe was soon expanded to include a barracks for twelve officers and 100 men, surrounded by a sturdy palisade and abatis (trees with sharpened branches laid down as a barrier). In 1779, an American spy estimated the garrison's strength at about 120 men. The fort guarded the harbour with eight guns—two 18-pounders, four 5-pounders, and two 4-pounders—and two 51/2-inch brass mortars. Later, Studholme built a second blockhouse at the eastern end of the hill, where the replica building still stands today. Without firing a single shot, Fort Howe achieved its main goal of securing the area. The harbour remained completely safe from privateers, and unless they were ready to seize the fort, no enemy forces could enter the river.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Roger Sarty and Doug Knight, *Saint John Fortifications, 1630-1956*, vol. 1 (Fredericton, N.B.: Goose Lane Editions and The New Brunswick Military Heritage Series, 2003), 27-8.



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