

## **PATRICK AND GEORGE SMYTH**

by Wentworth Smith

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Our president, Major Wentworth Smith, gave a most interesting account of the history of two members of his Loyalist family ancestors, Patrick Smyth and Dr. George Smyth. Patrick Smyth, a lawyer, migrated to America in 1757 settling at Albany where he was assistant judge of the court of common pleas. In 1772 he built a fine house in Fort Edward, New York which he operated as a tavern and in 1774 he was made postmaster at Fort Edward for which service he maintained "a servant and two horses". In 1775 he was joined at Fort Edward by his brother Dr. George Smyth, a surgeon (who had migrated with his wife and two sons Terence and Thomas in 1770). George was appointed member for Fort Edward for the Provincial Congress in the same year (1775).

Fort Edward was, at that time, the northern outpost for the province of New York. Early in 1777 Major General John Burgoyne took charge of British and Loyalist forces which intended to open communications between Canada and New York thus isolating that hotbed of revolt, New England. It was at this time that the Smyth brothers became active in providing information to the British forces. In 1777 Dr. George Smyth wrote a report entitled "a true description of the situation of Ticonderoga (Fort Ticonderoga) with an exact account of its fortifications and the number of forces therein." His code name was Hudibras. When Burgoyne's army began to move southward towards Lake Champlain in June of 1777 George and Patrick Smyth, long suspected of loyalism, were arrested and taken to Albany's jail. Released shortly thereafter they were rearrested and imprisoned for 18 months. Released on parole in January of 1779 Patrick Smyth made several clandestine trips to New York City with dispatches for Sir Henry Clinton while George was employed in the rebel's military hospital keeping an ear to the ground. George shortly had an information network set up for the British and passed messages between Canada and New York. His sons, Terry and Thomas, acted as couriers and on several occasions while her husband was under arrest his wife operated the network.

By 1781, again under arrest, George Smyth was rescued by a British scout, Matthew Howard possibly by spiriting him out of jail at night. They travelled to Lake Champlain, thence to Fort St. Johns and finally Quebec City. His wife and family were later able to join him in Canada (leaving their extensive property and possessions all behind them). One son settled at Smiths Falls as a miller and the settlement was named after him.

Patrick Smyth and his wife Rosamund McDavitt came to Canada with their family after the evacuation of New York by the British forces in 1783. He enjoyed the Military allowance of a Captain till his death and he received in 1787 a grant of 700 acres for himself and 400 acres for his family on the Ottawa River. He died some time before 1810 at Sorel. Patrick Smyth is the U.E.L. ancestor of [the late] Wentworth Smith.