

Teenagers, The Same Then and Now

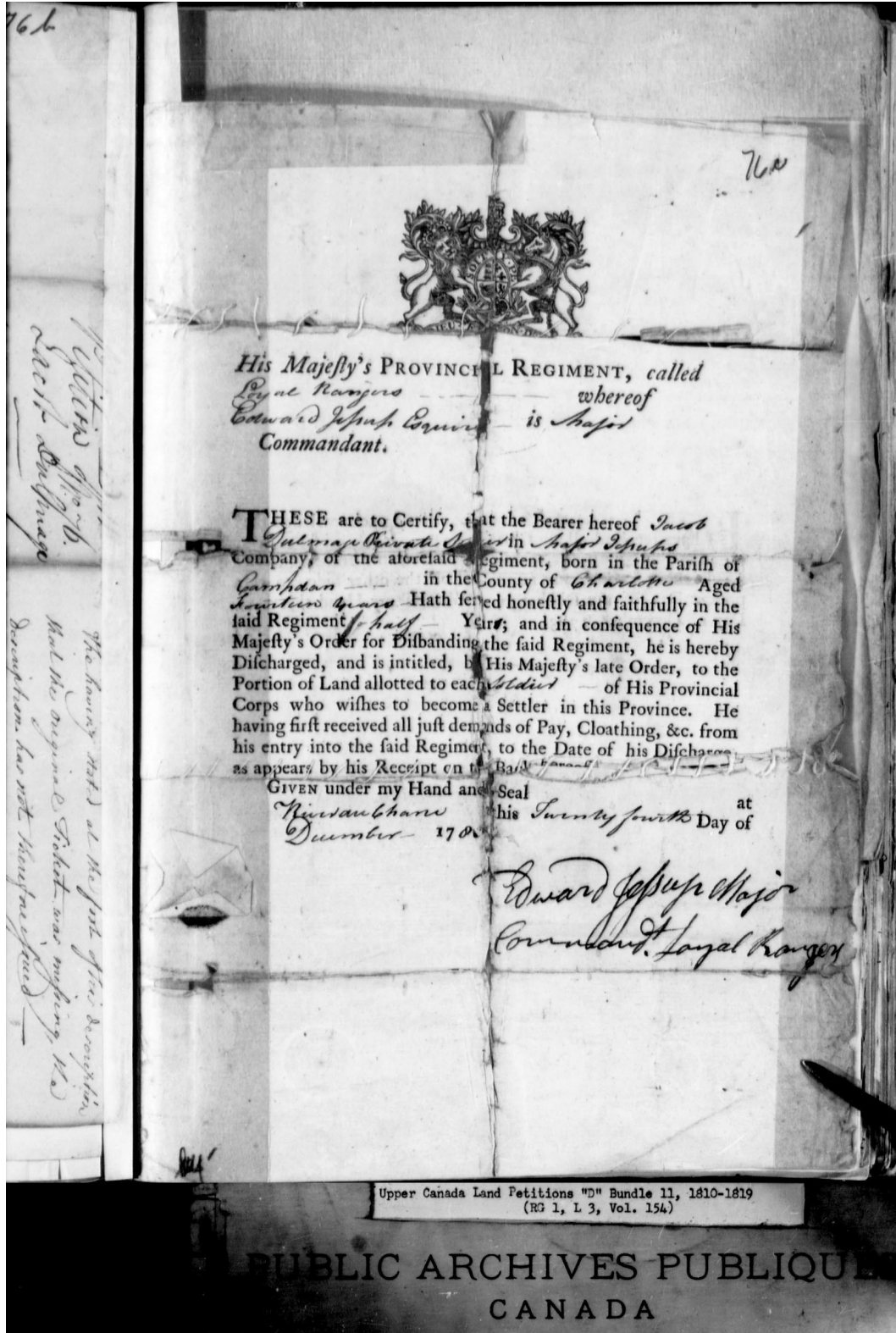
Nancy Cutway UE

It's surprising how many young Loyalists are being discovered in the records. Recently two other members of Kingston and District Branch have spoken about finding 12-year-old drummer boys among their family members who participated in the American Revolution. I have recently learned that my direct ancestor, Jacob Dulmage, likely served as a soldier while he was no more than thirteen years of age.

This came to light in 2019 when I began to explore Jacob Dulmage's connection to Ernestown Township in Lennox & Addington County. His name appears on the 1783 map of "Ernesttown" that was drawn in Quebec, assigning lots to the members of Jessup's Rangers prior to their actual arrival at Bath in 1784. The map can be found at the Archives of Ontario at http://ao.minisisinc.com/FS_IMAGES/I0043486.jpg. (I had always associated my Dulmage family members with Marysburgh Township in Prince Edward County, and had not realized they were assigned land further east – although probably they never resided in Ernestown, or not for long.)

Jacob apparently enlisted in Jessup's Rangers alongside his father David, and served for six months up to the end of the American Revolution in 1783. His age at the time is open to question. The traditional year of his parents' marriage is 1770 in Pennsylvania; if he was born after their marriage, he would have been only about 12 when the war ended. If, as he states in the documentation supporting his petition, he was 14 at the time, then he would have been born in 1768, two years before their marriage; or else the accepted year of their marriage is incorrect. Descendants will likely never know the exact dates of either the marriage or Jacob's birth.

Fourteen may have been the minimum age required to enlist as a soldier (rather than drummer boy) during the Revolution, so fourteen was the age Jacob claimed to be. In 1819 he submitted a claim to Samuel Smith, Administrator of the Government of the Province of Upper Canada for replacement documentation of his ownership of Lot 13, Concession 5 in Ernestown Township, because he needed rightfully to own it before he could sell it. (He did sell it, on 11 February 1820, to Michael Asselstine of Ernestown Township, for £75. By that time he was living in Marysburgh Township, and probably had been almost since arriving in Canada.) As proof of the service that earned him Lot 13, Concession 5, Jacob submitted his discharge paper which was signed by Major Edward Jessup on December 24, 1783.



Petition of Jacob Dulmage, accompanying document 76c: Certificate of service in Major Edward Jessup's company at age fourteen in December 1782. Library & Archives Canada, microfilm C-1744.

Why did Jacob Dulmage request confirmation of his right to the land? Because he was indeed a teenager when he was first given his land ticket, and apparently teenagers in 1783 were as unfocused as some can be in 2020. As he states in his petition (below), he lost his ticket. I can almost hear the conversations:

1783 or 1784:

Clerk (handing him the land ticket): "Now keep this safe, lad – it's your right to 50 acres of land."

Jacob, age about 14 (placing piece of paper into his knapsack): "Yeah, whatever."

1818:

Sarah Huff Dulmage (Jacob's wife): "Well, you'd better find it. We need to sell that land, we're not using it and we can use the money. Don't forget, we now have 11 mouths to feed." [Two more children were born after the sale of the land.]

Jacob Dulmage (age about 48): "I've looked everywhere. I'll have to apply for a new document."

Memorial
The humble petition of Jacob Dulmage
of Marysburgh, Gloucest. Co.
New York.

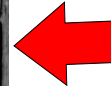
That your petitioner more than twenty years ago obtained an original Ticket, (as they are then termed) for the West half of Lot No. 13, in the 5th Concession of Queenstown. Under which Certificate your petitioner took possession of the said Lot, and has made many large improvements thereon.

That your petitioner some time after, unfortunately lost the said Ticket of Location, which accident has hitherto prevented him from obtaining a deed for said land. Your petitioner now begs leave to refer your Honor to an annexed affidavit, whereby it may appear that he was in possession of a Ticket for the said described Lot, and prays your Honor may be pleased to order him a Grant for the same.

And as in duty bound your petitioner shall ever pray—
Jacob Dulmage by his
Attorney Willt Carey

Done 10 March 1818.

Upper Canada Land Petitions
"D" Bundle 11, 1810-1819 (RG1,
L3, Vol. 154 - microfilm C-1744,
Library & Archives Canada)



"That Your Petitioner Some time after, unfortunately lost the Said Ticket of Location, which accident has hitherto prevented him from obtaining a deed for said land."

Fortunately the government officials looked favourably on Jacob's application, no doubt because they could see from the 1783 map that he was assigned the 50-acre property.

A rough calculation using various online converters shows that £75 in 1820 is equivalent to at least \$10,000 today, a significant amount of money.

Jacob Dulmage drowned on September 26, 1841, at the age of about 71, while rowing across Hay Bay after preaching at a church meeting (he was a Methodist lay preacher). Newspaper reports suggested that an oar may have broken in rough water.

Jacob Dulmage is my 3-greats-grandfather.