

GEORGE GALLOWAY: A Loyalist's Story

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This story begins with an old letter, written in April 1783 from John and Hannah Galloway to bid farewell to their son George, who was preparing to embark from New York City to an as yet unknown destination. George was a Loyalist, who took up arms in support of the British Army in the latter stages of the Revolutionary War. As a result, when the war ended he was compelled to leave his home (a fate that befell tens of thousands of other Loyalists) and subsequently chose to resettle in Ontario. The letter was possibly the last communication between George and his elderly parents, and he treasured it by preserving it and passing it on to one of his sons as a family keepsake. Remarkably, it has remained preserved in the family to this day.

Details in the history connected to the letter became lost to the family over time. It was written in "Smith's Clove," but no town of that name can be found on the modern maps of the eastern United States. The letter refers to the recent death of George's wife, but she is not named and her identity remains unknown. It refers to a child of George's, who was left with the grandparents due to George's uncertain future, but the child is also not named. It is apparent from the letter that George's life has been shattered; he had recently written to his father that he now "was left alone with God." His parents provide words of consolation, love and comfort, as well as encouragement and guidance for the future. His father tells him that he desires for George to keep the letter, so that he can continue to look upon it to keep him "in remembrance of your father's counsel," a request that George faithfully followed.

The lost history around the letter only began to be revealed in the last few years, due to the benefits of our new "digital age." Prior to this time, the only "back story" I had on it came from some notes written up by my grandfather in 1950, including a family tree diagram showing our line of descent from John and Hannah. My grandfather hoped to find pre-1783 history on the family, but when he enquired at the "Maps" section of the U.S. Library of Congress they were unable to find any "Smiths Clove." He suspected it was somewhere near New York City, but he could find nothing to prove that hunch, or lead him to any further family history covering earlier times. Things stayed that way for over half a century until, in a sudden moment of personal curiosity in April 2007, I found myself on my computer typing "Smith's Clove" into "Google" and quickly discovered that the town is today named "Monroe" – located in Orange County NY, not far outside New York City. It was renamed just 25 years after the letter was written. One mystery solved!

Another two years passed by before I found the time to start some serious research, however. The effort began over a long holiday weekend – ironically enough, the holiday was the Fourth of July, U.S. Independence Day! I found a wealth of information through Google on the topic of Loyalists, including leads to the website for the United Empire Loyalists Association of Canada (UELAC). There, I found a 1790 index of land owners showing a Lieutenant George Galloway, owning 700 acres of land in Kingston, Ontario. My searches also revealed that George Galloway was mentioned in a book, *Voyage of a Different Kind: The Associated Loyalists of Kingston*

and Adolphustown” by Larry Turner, and I immediately ordered a copy from the publisher; I found the book to be a wealth of information. Other internet searches on the history of Orange County NY showed a widespread presence of the Galloway family name there from the mid-1700s on, including a John Galloway born in 1730 – could this have been George’s father? More pieces were starting to come together!

A vacation road trip from Virginia to Vermont in late July 2009 provided the opportunity to make a stop at the Orange County Genealogical Society (OCGS) in Goshen NY for a little on-site research. And at the OCGS library I found the “missing link” for me: a genealogical history of the Galloway family in Orange, Sullivan and Wayne Counties compiled by Keith Nelson, Professor of History at University of California-Irvine. I was stunned to discover that George’s father was actually a John Galloway born in 1700; he was 83 years old at the time the “farewell” letter was written to his son! The John Galloway born in 1730 turns out to have been his first-born child, and George was the tenth child of this elder John Galloway and his wife Hannah. Biographical information and descendant lists for most of the children were provided, but Prof. Nelson wrote that no one was quite sure what ever happened to George; he seemed to disappear off the record around 1779. Prof. Nelson (who is descended from John, b.1730) had a longstanding collaboration with other Galloway family researchers, and he did note that one of them had a theory that George was the same George Galloway that later showed up in Canada as a Loyalist in 1783. However, Prof. Nelson wrote that there was no conclusive evidence of that.

Since Prof. Nelson included an email address in his genealogical study, I immediately contacted him with news that I could provide the proof of what happened to George after 1779. The past three years have involved a very productive, collaborative effort between the two of us as well as his other colleagues, Jack Plunkett and Paul Galloway, in piecing together their older findings along with more recently discovered information. Loyalist Land Claims that have been digitized and made available online by the Canadian Archives have been invaluable. Specific information regarding George Galloway’s Loyalist military activities has also recently been provided by Mr. Todd Braisted (Honorary Vice President, UELAC). More research remains to be done, but the following provides the most complete story to date on George, his family, and the events leading him to become one of the pioneer settlers in Cataraqui (Kingston), Ontario, Canada:

George was born around 1750, most likely in Orange County NY. His father John Galloway was born in 1700, probably in Scotland, and his mother Hannah Lamb was born in 1709 in New York City. John and Hannah married in 1727 in New York City, and between 1730 and 1750 had a total of 10 children – seven sons and three daughters – with George being the youngest child. At some point they moved their family to Orange County. Their second child, Elizabeth (born 1731) was married in the Dutch Reformed Church in Fishkill in 1748, and Church records list her as being from Haverstraw NY at that time. At just 17 years of age it is highly unlikely she would have been living on her own, so I believe that indicates the family moved out of the city no later than 1748.

George’s name shows up in the history of Orange County in the Minutes of the April 1775 Town Meeting for the precinct of Cornwall – he is assigned the duties of “path-master” for District #6, and his older brothers Alexander and James are assigned the same duties for Districts #4 and #24, respectively. As was expected of most citizens at the time, George signed the General Association in 1775, pledging to support efforts to protect the rights of the colonists in opposition to certain laws passed by the British Parliament that they viewed as illegal. George

also received a commission on 15 September 1775 as a 1st Lieutenant in Captain Steven Sloat's Company in Colonel Jesse Woodhull's Cornwall (East Orange) Regiment in the New York Militia, and was reappointed on 21 February 1778. His brother Alexander was appointed 2nd Lieutenant in Captain Francis Smith's Woodbury Clove Company in 1775, and his brother James replaced Alexander as 2nd Lieutenant in 1778.

George has been identified as both a farmer and as the owner of Galloway's Tavern in Southfields, on the old Clove Road where present day NY State Route 17 runs. Steven Sloat also owned a tavern on the Clove Road, about 6.5 miles south of Galloway's Tavern. Richard Koke, in his book "*Corridor Through the Mountains*," notes that while it had long been a mystery as to whether the actual proprietor of Galloway's Tavern was George or one of his brothers, a circa 1779 wartime map found in the New York Historical Society resolved the mystery, showing the hostelry as belonging to George Galloway. This tavern served as George Washington's Continental Army HQ for three days in July 1777, and was described as an "old log house" in a journal by one of Washington's officers.

George married, probably no earlier than 1778, but the identity of his wife has not yet been discovered. Birth, marriage, and death records for that area at that time are spotty, with the exception of the excellent records maintained by the Dutch Reformed Church. His wife died in either late 1782 or early 1783. They had two children: John, born late 1779 or early 1780, and George, born around 1782 or even early 1783 (it's possible George's wife died in childbirth). She may have come from a family with strong Loyalist sympathies, because at some point between 1778 and early 1779 George shifted his loyalties over to the Tory side. There are reports indicating his wife may have been a daughter of Austin Smith, a staunch Loyalist who actively supported the British cause, but documentation to confirm that has not been found. Additionally, events were unfolding at the time that caused many people to reevaluate where their loyalties should actually fall. Michelle Figliomeni, in her book "*The Flickering Flame: Treachery and Loyalty in the mid-Hudson during the American Revolution*," notes that by 1779 the area where George's tavern was located had been "devastated by the movement of [Continental Army] troops, back and forth along this crucial route between New England and New Jersey. The ruminating troops stripped the hillsides bare of small game and firewood, and purloined whatever livestock or crops were unprotected by the farmers' rifles." This situation could certainly have soured George's opinions on the merits of the rebellion. George also appears to have had a close connection with the Roblin family in Smith's Clove. The Roblins directly participated in the notorious outlaw Tory gangs of Claudius Smith and John Mason that raided and robbed numerous Patriot homesteads, often selling off plundered livestock and other goods to the British in New York City. On 2 June 1779, an arrest warrant was issued for John Mason and Nathan Miller for robbing Nathaniel Satterly, a prominent Orange County citizen and Committeeman. Philip Roblin, George Galloway, and Hendrick Dyer (husband of George's sister Elizabeth) were named as accomplices and also ordered to be arrested. At this point it seems that George left his home and fled to New York City and the protection of the British. His wife either fled with him or joined him later.

In New York City, George joined up with the Loyal Refugee Volunteers (LRV), a group that was organized in November 1779. The city was in desperate need of firewood during the later years of the war, and the primary mission of the LRV was to set up bases across the river in New Jersey to fell trees and cut up the wood, fending off periodic attacks from the Continental Army

and NJ Militia in the process. They built a series of four wooden Blockhouses from 1780 to 1782 to defend their position, with a notable battle occurring in July 1780 at the Blockhouse at Bulls Ferry, where a group of about 75 LRV under the command of Thomas Ward fought off an attack of more than two thousand men led by General “Mad Anthony” Wayne. Interestingly, Thomas Ward also happened to have been a member of the Mason Gang in the Clove! Post-battle muster lists do not show George as having been present during this battle, but a provisioning roll from early 1782 shows that he served at that time under Major Ward at the largest and most substantial Blockhouse, known as Fort DeLancey, located on Bergen Point (now Bayonne NJ). His brother-in-law Hendrick Dyer (Henry Dier), as well as Philip Roblin and Austin Smith are also listed on this roll. Even though the fiercest hostilities ended with the surrender of General Cornwallis at Yorktown in October 1781, there was still a good bit of fighting going on around New York City until the peace treaty was signed in 1783. The 1782 provisioning roll lists several LRV names as being killed in action.

Evidence shows the LRV had their HQ encampment at Smithtown, Long Island, where the Volunteers’ families would live, and George’s wife possibly gave birth to their two children there. As the war was nearing its end, in September 1782, the British compiled a list of refugee men who desired to emigrate to Nova Scotia, along with the number of women and children who would accompany them. The list includes George with a wife and two children; Roblin and Austin Smith and other members of the LRV are also named. However, by April 1783 we know from his parents’ letter that George’s wife has passed away and one of the two children is living with John and Hannah. The second child must have also been temporarily placed with other relatives (possibly on the mother’s side) because 1784 records show George settled in Catarqui with no children, but 1791 records show both sons John and George living there with George’s new family.

The decision of some of the refugees to emigrate to the Catarqui area, on Lake Ontario in “Upper Canada,” rather than to Nova Scotia or other Maritime provinces came about as a result of a plan proposed in New York City in May 1783 by Michael Grass and Peter Van Alstine. Grass and Van Alstine had both served as officers for the British and each had spent time in Upper Canada, and they viewed the mostly uninhabited area around Catarqui as a more promising opportunity for resettlement than throwing their lot in with the thousands of other refugees looking to be relocated to the already established areas in the east. They recruited several hundred refugee families eager to be pioneer settlers in Upper Canada, and George Galloway – having lost everything to this point – decided to go the more adventurous route and join with them. They were organized as Companies of Associated Loyalists, with George being a Lieutenant in Company #4 under Captain Daniel McGuin. In early July 1783, nine ships carrying the first group of Associated Loyalists, under the overall leadership of Michael Grass, set sail from Staten Island bound for Quebec; Company #4 with George sailed on the ship *Elizabeth*. Accounts indicate it was a difficult voyage, with the ships straggling in to Quebec City from mid to late August. The Governor of Quebec, Sir Frederick Haldimand, had received very little notice from the British officials in New York City regarding the plans for the Associated Loyalists, and as a result he was not well prepared for their arrival. A camp was set up for them at a new British post at Sorel, about three-quarters of the way up the St. Lawrence River from Quebec City towards Montreal. The second group of Associated Loyalists under Peter Van Alstine sailed from New York City in September, arriving at Sorel in October.

The Associated Loyalists spent a difficult winter in Sorel, surviving under very trying conditions with the limited shelter and provisions the Governor was authorized to provide them. It was likely at this time that George first met his second wife, Catherine “Olive” Aussem. Catherine was the daughter of Dr. Johannes Heinrich (John Henry) Aussem and Anna Elizabeth Weberen, who had emigrated from Germany to Philadelphia, probably around 1764. Catherine and her older sister, Marie Elizabeth Appoline (“Polly”) were born in Germany, and baptismal records for St. Joseph’s Catholic Church in Philadelphia record four additional children, one girl and three boys, baptized between 1765 and 1773. The Aussem family settled in Ulster County NY prior to the Revolution, and Dr. Aussem took an active role in support of the Loyalist cause. The Aussems sailed from New York City on the *Blacket* as part of Associated Loyalists Company #1 under Captain Alexander White. Polly married Ezekial Ousterhout, a Loyalist farmer from New Jersey, and they sailed with the Aussems in Company #1. A listing compiled in Sorel on 2 February 1784 of Loyalists desiring to settle in Canada includes the Aussem family, with two male and two female children; Ezekial Ousterhout and his wife; and also George Galloway, with no wife and no children. A later listing, dated 12 September 1784, of Loyalists settled in Sorel includes both the Ousterhout and Aussem families, but the Aussems are listed with only one female child and a notation is included that “a daughter married since last.”

Haldimand did not receive final approval from the Crown for the settlement at Cataraqui until June 1784, causing a good bit of despair among many of the refugees that they would not be able to relocate in time to prepare for the next winter. As a result of the difficult living conditions and the uncertainty regarding final settlement, a large number of the Associated Loyalists who originally signed up to move to Cataraqui had a change of heart along the way and looked elsewhere for settlement – Cape Breton, or Montreal/Sorel, or other locations in Quebec. J.H. Aussem and all his family (except for Catherine) chose to stay in Montreal/Sorel. Captain McGuin’s Company #4 started from New York with 135 people, but only 19 stayed over the winter at Sorel. And only McGuin, George Galloway, and one other person from the original Company #4 actually arrived in Cataraqui. The groups that still desired to press on to Cataraqui began mustering in Montreal in late May 1784, where they received desperately needed supplies and joined with Canadian batteaux-men for the physically challenging journey upriver, finally arriving at Cataraqui later in June.

Land surveying for the prospective townships at Cataraqui had begun in the summer of 1783, and Township #1, which became Kingston, was assigned to those who were left from Michael Grass’ companies. The land was divided up into parcels and the parcels were distributed to the settlers by a lottery system, with acreage received based on the settler’s rank and whether he had a family. An index of land owners from 1790 shows LT George Galloway owning three 200-acre lots and one 100-acre lot in Kingston.

A 9 October 1784 muster of the Loyalists settled in Township #1 shows George living there with a wife but no children, indicating that George and Catherine most likely married while encamped at Sorel in the spring of 1784, or in Montreal just before departing for Cataraqui. Henry, the first child of George and Catherine, was born 20 November 1785. George and Catherine had a total of 10 children – two boys and eight girls – born between 1785 and 1803. At some point after settling in Kingston, George arranged for his two children from his first wife (John and George Jr.) to leave New York and join with him and his new family in Kingston. A Militia Roll for Kingston and Ernestown compiled by Captain Robert Macaulay in March 1791 shows George

(age 40) living with Catherine (age 31), sons John (age 10) and George (age 8), as well as the three children born by Catherine at this point (Henry, Margaret and Hannah). John, like other children of George, was eligible as an adult to receive 200 acres of land by virtue of being a son or daughter of a United Empire Loyalist. In John's land petition in 1822 it says he served in defense of Ontario during the "late War," presumably the War of 1812. John settled in West Oxford Township and lived to age 87, but George Jr. disappears from the record and it is currently unknown what happened to him.

As the years passed, George and his family prospered in their new home in Kingston. George served on the first recorded jury in Kingston in 1789, and court records show he served on juries four additional times between 1792 and 1795. Vestry Meeting Minutes for St. George's Church in Kingston show George as an active parishioner. By 1807 George moved slightly further west to Ernestown (Bath), which had been Township #2 in Cataraqui. His life followed a truly remarkable arc, achieving early respect as a leader in an idyllic, rural Orange County community; then falling into tragedy and exile in time of war; and ultimately triumphing in peace and prosperity in his new homeland. On 6 September 1812, three of his grandchildren were all baptized by the Rev. John Langhorn at St. John's Anglican Church in Bath – George Aussem Galloway, son of Henry Galloway and Phebe Clark; George Henry Nicholson, son of Chester Nicholson and George's daughter Catherine; and George Hagedorn, son of Charles Hagedorn and George's daughter Hannah. What a proud day it must have been for him to have three grandsons baptized honoring his name! George passed away just four months later, on 18 January 1813, but Catherine lived on in Ernestown (Bath) until 1858. George and Catherine were both buried at St. John's in Bath. George handed down the 1783 letter from his parents to his son Henry. Henry died in 1870 in Prescott, Minnesota, where he was living with his son Joseph, who acquired 160 acres of land there under the 1862 U.S. Homestead Act. Joseph was married to Sarah Jane Ruttan, who was the daughter of Joseph Brant Ruttan and granddaughter of Peter Ruttan, UEL. Joseph gave the letter to his daughter Alice, but she had no children so she later passed it on to her cousin, L. Dexter Galloway. It has since been passed on to the eldest son in each generation – a total of six generations now, down from George – still to be preserved today!