

Royal



Yorkers

*With the latest Advices, Foreign and Domestick*

## CHASING THE ELUSIVE SHADE OF GREEN

All of you who have followed the recent uniform investigations prompted by Jim Kochan's research are aware that the shade of green worn by the Royal Yorkers during the first clothing period of 1776-79 is in question. Jim's contention is that the likely shade was Grass Green, as it was the least expensive to dye during our time period. Grass Green was used in French-made patterns for the Continental Marines and Army, as well as for later American Regular and militia coats.

Shades of colour are extremely difficult to describe with words; however, here's an attempt. The Grass Green sample supplied by Kochan & Phillips Historical Textiles is a bright, yellowish-tone, mid-green, quite different from the usual run of rather dirty, dark greens that we have employed for our uniforms. We probably have 20 to 30 shades amongst our 100 uniforms in current circulation, and none, with the possible exception of Maj Reg James's old coatee (now worn by Pte Will Hannenburg of Duncan's) come near to the Grass Green sample swatch.

In the case of red uniforms, it's known that officers coats employed a shade of dye known as scarlet, very similar to the RCMP dress uniform of today, and their coats were tailored in the finest grade of woven, woolen cloth finished 'blind' so that the threads could not be seen, even after substantial wear. Serjeants used a similarly bright shade in a cloth of less threads per inch known as 'middling' quality. The rankers coats were in the cheapest shade of red dye, known as madder, and comparatively, the cheapest grade of cloth known as 'common.'

No one that I've spoken to over the last quarter century has any proof of



*"Did they say they wanted Grass Green or Willow Green?"*

what shade variations were used for green uniforms. They have no trouble postulating that the grades of woven cloth matched those of the red uniforms, but shades of green are an open question, as there are no extant examples of Other Ranks' coats.

On Friday, February 4, I visited the City of Toronto's Collections and Conservation Centre at 98 Atlantic Avenue. Archivist Richard Gerrard and the city's Chief Historian, an old friend and past Jessup's Corps member, Carl Benn, showed me several items of interest.

The first was a Queen's Rangers' officer's coat worn in Upper Canada by William Jarvis, an officer in the Rev War Rangers. This coat was featured in a famous oil painting of Jarvis and his very young son, who was also in a green Rangers' uniform. As Jarvis didn't serve with the 1790's Rangers,

Carl believes the garment may represent his "retirement coat." Whatever the case, it offers us an example of the probable shade of green worn by Ranger officers at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century – note officers, not rankers.

The material used to tailor the coat was superbly finished, finished so 'blind' that it is like a beautifully-sueded leather. Its shade was a rich, clean, dark green. The closest swatch in Kochan and Phillips offerings is Full Green.

A similar coat was worn in another famous oil painting of the former Queen's Ranger captain, John Saunders, who settled in New Brunswick and founded the 8<sup>th</sup> Cdn Hussars. The artist painted this coat as a rich, dark green.

A second uniform in the collection belonged to a subaltern of the Leeds

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County Militia during the War of 1812 (yes, I realize this is getting a bit late). This coat presents a mystery. When Sean Phillips of Kochan and Phillips examined the cloth, he found it 'threadbare,' i.e. the threads were clearly visible. This was typical of American cloth of the time. He later wrote, "whilst this could be due to wear, typically wear only occurs in certain areas. That coat was threadbare all over which suggests that it was never properly finished in the first place." There are also indications that the garment may have been tailored in the United States. Of course, there's no reason why a Canadian militia officer living on the St. Lawrence River would not cross to Ogdensburg, or some other northern New York town before the war, and have his uniform made there, rather than going to Montreal or Kingston, which were possibly his closest Canadian sources. However, none of this theorizing has anything to do with the shade of green, which was a rather dark tone, but not as rich as the Jarvis example, and closer to the Kochan and Phillips

swatch called Willow Green.

Now, all of us who have been reenacting for several years are very aware of faded dyes and discolouration. All any of us have to do is turn over our facings or collar to see what changes have occurred to the green of our coats. And, we have to recognize that our coats see only a tiny fraction of outdoor time compared to originals. So, I examined under the facings and the internal seams of the Jarvis and Soper coats. Even so, this doesn't take into consideration the natural chemical changes that probably occurred over time.

The last items I examined were three 18<sup>th</sup> century watercolours of a Queen's Rangers' hussar, grenadier, rifleman and light bob. This set was copied from the originals painted by Ranger captain, James Murray in about 1785, which are now lost to posterity. It is believed that the copy artist was Lieutenant George Spencer of the Rangers, who served from 1778-83 and joined the second raising of the regiment in Upper Canada in 1791. Simcoe commissioned at least two sets of copies of Murray's images and, in 1789, gave

one to King George bound inside a copy of his "Military Journal" and kept another set for himself. As the set given to the King incorporate a few 'scenery improvements,' it is thought that the images retained by Simcoe, which is now in the Toronto City collection, represent Spencer's first attempt, perhaps prepared for the colonel's approval. The shade of green used by Spencer for the coats is a dark tone. The closest of the Kochan and Phillips swatches is Willow Green.

With paintings, whether oils or watercolours, one must recognize that the artist has interpreted colour and, not necessarily with total accuracy, as he had other imperatives to be concerned with. For example, in the case of the Rangers' watercolours, the artist may have used a brighter and lighter shade of green than the actual to create greater contrast between the uniforms and the black accoutrements.

Also, paint discolours with age, pigments naturally changing hue in chemical reaction or by exposure to light. Also, oil paintings are most often over-varnished, which can yellow with

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Coming Events

April 20 ~ Drill - Fort York Armories

April 30 ~ Yorker Party - Dundurn Castle, Hamilton

May 18 ~ Drill - Fort York Armories

May 21-22 ~ Howse Tactics School, Westfield Village

June 18 ~ Laying Up of Colour, Williamstown (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>)

June 19 ~ French Marker Dedication, Cornwall (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>)

June 18-19 ~ Black Creek Pioneer Village, Toronto

July 9-10 ~ Chrysler's Farm (Canadian All-Up Event)

Why You Need To Attend The Drills



*...but I am at the shoulder!!*

# YORKER PARTY

# SAT, APRIL 30



This year the Annual Yorker Party will be held at a new location. Just for a change, our regimental dinner will take place on the upper floor of Dundurn Castle's coach house in Hamilton. Dundurn Castle was the home of Sir Allen MacNab, one of Canada's most prominent and influential men. The mansion (dubbed "Castle" by the locals) was completed in 1835, and today is restored to the 1850's period. The party starts at 5:00 pm, but if you would like to tour the Castle or visit to the Military Museum, come for 4:00 pm (admission fee required). It promises to be a memorable time and perhaps the only occasion for you to visit this site. Here are the details for the Annual Yorker Party:

**Location:** Dundurn Castle, Hamilton.

(<http://www.city.hamilton.on.ca/culture-and-rec/MUSEUMS/dundurn/>)

**Date:** Saturday, April 30

**Cost:** \$25 per adult, \$15 per child (10 or under)

**4:00 pm** - Optional tour of Dundurn Castle (\$6/adult, \$2.25/child), or visit to Hamilton Military Museum. If you don't intend to visit the Castle or Museum, you don't need to arrive until 5 pm.

**5:00 pm** - Reception in Coach House (Cash Bar)

**6:00 pm** - Dinner followed by Toasts & Presentations

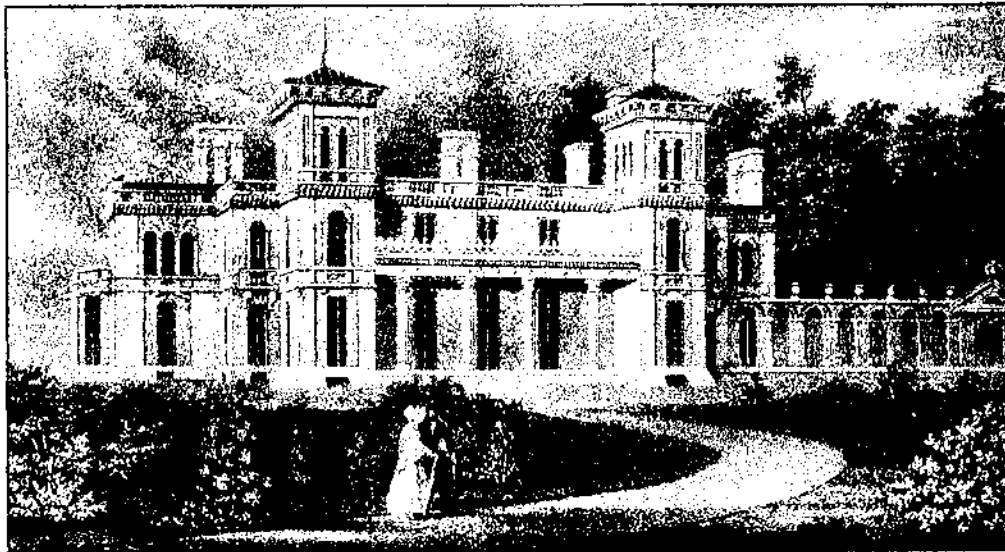
**Silent Auction:** Again this year there will be a silent auction throughout the evening. Please bring an item to donate to the auction table, and some cash so you can participate in the auction. When you arrive, please give your sale item(s) to Lt. Steven Sandford.

**Accommodation:** If you would like to stay in Hamilton on Saturday night, the most convenient hotel is the Admiral Inn, located directly across the street from the Castle (905-529-2311).

**Are You Coming:** Within the next few weeks you will be contacted by your Section Leader concerning your attendance at the Annual Yorker Party. Before Friday, April 22 we will need the answer to three questions:

1. Do you plan to attend the party on Saturday, April 30 at Dundurn Castle? Yes / No (Maybe will be considered a "No")
2. How many will be in your group? Number of adults. Number of children 10 or under. You may invite a guest from another reenactment unit. They should be included in your return. You are responsible for the cost of your group if any or all don't show.
3. Will you be participating in the tour of Dundurn Castle at 4:00 p.m., or visiting the Hamilton Military Museum.

If you are not contacted for this information, you may respond directly to Sjt Dave Putnam at 905-648-4786, or [yorker@interlynx.net](mailto:yorker@interlynx.net).



**Undecided?** Well here's the clincher. Sir Allan MacNab, the original owner of Dundurn Castle, is the great-great-great-grandfather of Camilla Parker Bowles, the future Princess Consort. This may be the closest you'll ever get to dining at the home of royalty. Right then, it's decided. We'll see you there.

**Directions:** From the QEW (at Burlington) take Hwy 403 to Hamilton. Exit at York Blvd. The ramp will merge onto York Blvd E., and the parking lot for Dundurn Castle will be on your immediate left.

# HOWSE TACTICS SCHOOL 2005

## Westfield Heritage Village ~ May 21 & 22

The start of the 2005 campaign season is just weeks away! Again this year the Northern Brigade will start off with a little *Spring Training* at what has become our traditional site – Westfield Heritage Village. Westfield is considered a prime site, especially for an event of this kind. It offers roughly 130 acres of ground, with woods, open meadow and meandering trails. We generally camp in a sheltered cedar grove, which provides lots of space for formal tent lines, and ample fallen brush for those who want to construct their own lean-tos. Various stone lined fire pits dot the site for food preparation and Saturday evening fires.

If you have not been to the School before the format is quite simple.

- Time is provided for individual unit drills. It's an excellent opportunity to blow off the cobwebs and begin working together again.
- Part of the day on Saturday is spent rotating through a variety of lectures presented by a host of very qualified speakers. Westfield facilitates this portion of the weekend by opening up a number of their period buildings for our use as classrooms. Cathcart School

No. 24 is a log structure which was erected in 1845 and used as a school until the 1860's. D'Aubignys Inn is an 1820 Brant County home that was converted into an inn and tavern by William D'Aubigny in 1836. And on a nice spring day we can sit on the wooden benches in the oversized gazebo located on the village green.

- After the lectures we move out into the field to apply the new concepts that have been introduced in the lectures and at the winter drills. This year we will focus on some of the ideas the Colonel discussed in a recent newsletter article entitled, "With Zeal and Bayonets Only". Also, as you can see from Gavin's current study of John Simcoe's Journal, we still have a great deal to learn about the techniques employed by Ranger and Provincial units during the Revolution.
- And of course there is always time for a few scenarios that let us just play in the woods. The Brigade is divided into opposing sides and objectives are assigned. Lots of fun.
- For those who say, "Give me some

good old fashioned line tactics", Sunday morning is usually devoted to the more formal battalion drill.

- As always, it is a great social weekend. Local eateries are scarce, so each unit tends to do its own meal preparation on Saturday night. The evening usually takes on a tavern atmosphere, as everyone gathers around the fire pits to warm their hands and exchange war stories.

The event continues to grow each year, as more and more troops and followers discover what a good weekend it is. For the folks in Toronto and west it is an easy Friday evening drive of just over an hour. For those in the east it is a longer trip, but well worth it. And of course, Monday is a holiday which means you can drive home at your leisure. This year promises to be another great School.

**Directions:** *From Hamilton* - Follow Hwy. #8 north-west through Dundas, cross Hwy. #5 and continue to Regional Road 552, just past Rockton. Turn right and follow 1.5 kilometres.

*From Toronto* - Take QEW west to Hwy. 403. Turn north on Hwy. #6 to Hwy. #5. Turn left on Hwy. #5 and then right on Hwy. #8 to Regional Road 552 just past Rockton. Turn right and follow 1.5 kilometres.

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age and alter or darken the colours. The Queen's Rangers' watercolours are now stored most carefully in acid-free paper and an absence of light, however, there are marks on their surrounding borders left by rusting paper-clips which indicate that they have not always be treated with such care.

Well, you're saying, did I come to a conclusion? Yes, I believe the shade used by the Queen's Rangers for Other Ranks' and Officers' coats was medium dark, but not that almost black tone of the Canadian Forces' unification green which, in desperation, we used for a time. Nor, as dark as the majority of our coats, nor as dirty, but certainly deeper than the Grass Green sample.

Next question, "So what"? Well, more on that later.

LtCol Gavin Watt



# SIMCOE'S MILITARY JOURNAL

Those of you who have researched the Revolutionary War know that John Graves Simcoe was recognized as one of the most innovative and successful military practitioners on either side of the conflict. His regiment, the Queen's Rangers, was said to have been the most successful, and best trained and disciplined regiment in the British Army in America. In recognition of its many successes, the Rangers were given the secondary title "1<sup>st</sup> Americans" when the British Army created an American Establishment in 1781. (There were two other establishments at the time, one for England, Scotland and Wales, and another for Ireland). Our Reserve Army friends, the Queen's York Rangers, who host our presence at Fort York Armoury, proudly retain that designation to this day.

While Simcoe enjoyed an immense reputation during the war, he was not considered as successful as the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada. In fact, one historian referred to him as a "fat head." Others blame the 1837 Rebellion on policies that grew out of Simcoe's decisions almost four decades before. All of that aside, my interest in reviewing his journal was to discover some of the reasons for his undisputed standing as an outstanding regimental commander.

By 1781, the Queen's Rangers was a fully-developed legion, that is, a mixed body of troops of different skills and disciplines. It was considerably stronger, more powerful and flexible than a normal foot regiment. In addition to the regimental structure of two flank companies (Grenadiers and Light Infantry) and eight battalion companies, the Rangers had a Highland company in the role of a second light company, a platoon of Riflemen, an integral Amuzette and 3pr Gun, and, as a particularly powerful element, a troop of 30 Hussars and three of Light Dragoons. (Hussars fought primarily mounted, while Dragoons were mounted infantry equipped to fight mounted or dismounted)

Simcoe was a master of the tactics of

attack and defence, skillfully deploying the Rangers' various elements for maximum tactical surprise and interlocking support. He enjoyed an excellent rapport with other commanders: British, German and Provincial. He often led operations which employed detachments from different regiments.

The war fought by the Queen's Rangers was entirely different from that fought by the Royal Yorkers. For example, there was no cavalry of any type employed in the north. Our expeditions were periodic, were conducted over immense distances, and were utterly fatiguing and tremendously destructive of property. Once in a while, we had a sharp firefight or a brief battle. In contrast, the Rangers were on missions almost daily, most often re-



turning within their own lines the same day or a day later. Hot firefights were common, and small battles quite frequent. The Rangers fought in some truly big battles, which the Yorkers never did. The destruction of private property was very rare in the Rangers' war. Yes, they destroyed the enemy's field works, their arms, their powder magazines, and their forage depots, but not their farms and crops. There was also a strong element of courtesy, even chivalry, to the Rangers' experiences, which could hardly be claimed for the war in the north.

The Rangers were often inserted into the enemy's country by sailing vessels, and in other cases by whaleboats, but they weren't manning unwieldy bateaux, confronting horrific rapids, or

faced with the crushing labour of long portages followed by marches of hundreds of miles on sparse rations.

The Rangers' only exposure to natives was as enemies. In fact, one of their most successful small actions was against a party of rebel Stockbridge Indians, during which they and their fellows inflicted substantial casualties and put an end to Stockbridge participation in the south. Contrast this to the north where natives were critically important allies on every operation.

For all the differences in the northern and southern experiences, there is much enjoyment in studying Simcoe's record, especially when his descriptions reinforce Matt Spring's thesis, "With Zeal and Bayonets Only," which we reviewed in a recent newsletter. Here are some excerpts from Simcoe's Military Journal, with moderate editing (Editor's Note: Gavin's comments are shown in *italics*):

"It was the object, to instill into the men, that their superiority lay in close fight, and in the use of the bayonet, in which the individual courage, and personal activity that characterize the British soldier can best display themselves." *This is a very similar sentiment to John Burgoyne's; however, Simcoe is referring to Provincial soldiers, not British. Perhaps he more accurately should have said the "British trained soldier."*

"The whole corps being together on the Frankfort road, information was received that Pulaski with his cavalry was approaching. On each side of the road, for some distance, there was wood, and very high rails fenced it from the road. His march was not interrupted, and the following disposition was made to attack him. The light infantry in front were loaded, and occupied the whole space of the road; Capt Stephenson, who commanded it, was directed not to fire at one or two men, who might advance, but either on their firing or turning back, to give notice of his approach [*presumably by bugle*], to follow at a brisk and steady rate, and to fire only on the main body when he came close to them.

The eight battalion companies were formed about thirty feet from the light

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infantry, in close column by companies, their bayonets fixed, and not loaded; they were instructed not to heed the enemy's horses, but to bayonet the men.

The grenadiers and Highland company were in the rear, loaded; and the directions given to Capt Armstrong were, that the grenadiers should cross the fences on the right, and the Highlanders those on the left, and secure the flanks...

*At a different time* - "In the mean time, some of the enemy fired upon the advanced posts of the Rangers, and made great noise to draw their attention that way; this was a frequent mode of the rebels; it might have been proper at the moment of attack, but anticipating [i.e. preceding] it for some hours, in general it gave a knowledge of their designs, and increased a just and military contempt for this mode of conducting them."

*Contrast this observation with the following account of a small Ranger party covering a withdrawal.* "...the road led through thick woods, the enemy were apprehensive of ambuscades, and were intimidated by Lieut Wickham frequent calling out, as [if] to the infantry, 'to halt, not to march so fast,' &c &c, so that the enemy's cavalry, though more than two hundred, did not rush on him."

*An example of the strange courtesies exchanged by both sides* - "By an error of the guides, at a cross road, the Rangers were pursuing the wrong one, a rebel officer called out the them, 'You are wrong, you are wrong,' but the corps passed by without heeding him, and afterwards took the nearer way across the fields onto the right road, where [the rebel officer] was. The advance men got within a few yards of him, undiscovered. LCol Simcoe prevented them from firing, but called to him to keep at a greater distance."

*An odd observation* "... he was fully convinced of the truth of what an English military author had observed, that a number of firelocks were, in action, rendered useless, by being carried on the shoulders, from casual musket balls, which could not be the case were

the arms carried in the position of advance; he added, that advanced arms, certainly, gave a compactness, and [prevented] the appearance of wavering from a column more than any other mode of carrying them... Capt Armstrong... took occasion to exemplify it now, by advancing the arms of his grenadier company when under fire, and while he led [it] over the rafters of the bridge."

*Composition of the regiment* - "... the Rangers were the last who should have been left as prisoners, since so many deserters from the enemy were in the corps: the soldiers had the utmost reliance upon their own officer's attention to this particular."

*One of Simcoe's wilder schemes* - *After the British withdrawal from Philadelphia due to France's entry into the war,* "... it appeared probable to LCol Simcoe, that America would be quitted by the British forces, he applied... that he might be permitted, with his corps, and other loyalists, to join the Indians and troops under Col [John] Butler, who had just been heard of on the upper parts of the Delaware." *The latter is likely Butler's attack on the Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania.*

*His observations about American frontiersmen* "The inclinations of the Americans, though averse from tactical arrangement, had always been turned to patrolling, in their antiquated dialect, scouting; the Indians, their original enemies, and the nature of their country, had familiarized them to this species of warfare, and they were, in general, excellent marksmen."

*Of field engineering* - "... the winter cantonment of the corps, no time was lost in fortifying it; the very next day, the whole corps was employed in cutting fascines. There was a central hill, which totally commanded the village, and seemed well adapted for a place of arms; the outer circuit of this hill, in the most accessible places, was to be fortified by sunken fleches, joined by abbatiss... the summit was covered by a square redoubt... capable of holding seventy men; platforms were erected, in each angle, for the field pieces... Every separate quarter was loopholed, and surrounded with

abbatis in such a manner that it could not be forced."

*Of the troops' health and diet, speaking of the Rangers' camp at Oyster Bay, Staten Island* - "... the water was excellent; there was plenty of vegetables, and oysters to join with their salt provisions, and bathing did not a little contribute... to render them in high order for the field..."

*Training* - "The corps had constantly been exercised in the firing motions, and the charging with bayonets, upon their respective [company] parades. As the season opened, they were assembled together [and] were, particularly, trained to attack a supposed enemy, posted behind a railing, the common position of the rebels. They were instructed not to fire, but to charge their bayonets with their muskets loaded, and, upon arrival at the fence, each soldier to take his aim at their opponents, who were then supposed to have been driven from the fence. They were taught that, in the position of running, their bodies afforded a less and more uncertain mark to their antagonists, whose minds also must be perturbed by the rapidity of their approach with undischarged arms... The grand divisions were exercised in the manual, and firing motions, by their respective commanders, but they were forbidden to teach them to march in slow time, they were to pay great attention to the instruction of their men in charging with their bayonets, in which case, the charge was never to be less than three hundred yards, gradually increasing in celerity from it first outset, taking great care that the grand division has its ranks perfectly close, and the pace adapted to the shortest men. The soldier is, particularly, to be taught, to keep his head well up, and erect: it is graceful, on all occasions, but absolutely necessary if an enemy dare stand the charge; when the British soldier, who fixes with his eye the attention of the opponent, and, at the same instant, pushes [i.e. thrusts] with his bayonet without looking down on its point, is certain of conquest."

*More from Col Simcoe in a later issue.*

In the 2002-6 issue of the Yorker Newsletter you will all recall the article about Sir John Johnson's escape to Canada. (*What do you mean, you can't even remember what was in the last newsletter!!*) One of the most heart warming anecdotes from Sir John's trek north concerned the loss and recovery of a young boy who accompanied his mother on the journey. The version quoted in the article went as follows:

"One woman, Mrs. Ross, had with her twin boys, babies just beginning to toddle. One day in struggling through the brush carrying the two in her plaid on her back, one of the boys fell out. Through exhaustion and the roughness of the way the loss was unnoticed for some time. When the mother discovered her loss the hue and cry was raised and, returning they found the poor wee fellow trying to clamber over a burned, blackened log. The state of his hands and face may be imagined, and in the endearments lavished by the mother upon her little one she used the expression 'spoghan dubh', or 'black paw.' This she repeated again and again and for the rest of the journey the bairn was known as Spoghan Dubh. The name stuck and although Thomas Ross lived to a good old age, he was never known by any other name than Spoghan Dubh."

Richard Atkinson, Duncan's Coy, is all too familiar with this story, since it is very much a part of his family heritage. You see, Thomas 'Spoghan Dubh' Ross was the youngest son of Thomas Bain Ross, who Richard is descended from.

## Spoghan Dubh



Thomas Bain Ross was a private in the KRRNY around 1779. He, like many other Loyalist soldiers, left his wife and children in the province of New York, where they suffered terribly at the hands of the "rebel scum". Thomas, and twenty-two other Yorkers petitioned Sir John Johnson for his assistance in bringing their families to Canada. They wrote:

*To the Honourable Sir John Johnson, Lieutenant-Colonel Commander of the King's Royal Regiment of New York.*

*The humble petition of sundry soldiers of said Regiment sheweth, -*

*That your humble petitioners, whose names are hereunto subscribed, have families in different places of the Counties of Albany and Tryon, who have been and are daily being ill-treated by the enemies of Government.*

*Therefore we do humbly pray that Your Honour would be pleased to procure permission for them to come to Canada.*

*And you petitioners will ever pray.*

It went on to name the petitioners and the numbers in each family. It was endorsed, "Memorial from several soldiers of Sir John Johnson's Corps, received 27<sup>th</sup> July".

Richard has read many versions of the popular 'Spoghan Dubh' story, and has been able to piece together information from his own family history that matches the events. It is evident that the Rosses did not accompany Sir John Johnson's party during their escape in 1776. In fact, Thomas Jr. wasn't born until 1779, and he was probably 2 or 3 years old when he traveled with his mother to join his father in Canada. It is likely that their trek didn't occur until as late as 1782 or 83.

In 1809 Thomas Ross married Christy Urquhart, the daughter of William Urquhart, also of the KRRNY. He died on October 27, 1879 at the age of 90. Not only was Thomas nicknamed "Spoghan Dubh" throughout his life, but the descendants of Thomas are known as the Spoggy Rosses.

I think Richard has just acquired a new nickname in the regiment.

DWP

## ~ Yorker Cap Badge ~

The Colonel has received information that a KRR hat badge was recently sold at auction. It was originally found in the 1940's at Rome, NY near the Strough Junior High School. The land that the school is situated on was the site of the British camp during the Fort Stanwix siege. The badge was added to Chester William's collection, who ran the Fort Stanwix museum for about 40 years. Apparently, the badge had a star burst design, with KRR in the centre and New York in small letters below (like the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion button). Such a find would add more ammunition to the argument that the Yorkers wore caps, although it would not prove that every Company wore them. It could simply have been from a Light Coy cap. An attempt is being made to obtain a picture of this rare artifact.



## Future of Butlersbury

On Switzer Hill, near Fonda, NY, overlooking the Mohawk River, the homestead of John and Walter Butler still stands, despite more than two centuries of indifference to its historic and architectural significance. The simple frame house, built in 1742 by "Old" Walter Butler, has survived the modifications of successive former-owners, who masked its cherry paneling and hand-hewn beams with lath and plaster, made rambling additions, and covered its clapboard siding with asbestos shingles. The magnificent view over the Mohawk to the west from the 700-foot hill remains virtually unspoiled.

The Butler estate was confiscated by the rebels during the Revolution and later bought by John Fonda. In 1834 his widow and son Jelles sold it to Henry Wilson, whose family occupied the house and farmed the land for many years. For a few years the house remained unoccupied and neglected, until bought by Mrs. Eleanore Rockwell in 1959. Extensive restoration of the interior was completed. A post-Revolution addition to the back of the house was taken off, which eliminated

the "saltbox" character of the house (a penny dated 1826 was found under the structure confirming its vintage). In late 1971, after Mrs. Rockwell's death, her daughter Cynthia Lang moved into Butlersbury with her family.

What does the future hold for Butlersbury? A representative from the Board of Fort Johnson recently took an engineer to the site to assess its potential. He concluded that it would be too expensive a project to consider, and that Fort Johnson should not take it on. Although Cynthia Lang is in failing health, she and Wanda Burch (Manager of Johnson Hall) are committed to doing whatever it takes to save the house. Unfortunately, there aren't many people lining up behind them. In fact, many Mohawk Valley residents aren't even aware that the house exists, let alone its historic significance. There are developers however, who would like very much to obtain the land, knock down the house, and put up a luxury home or two.

Peter Betz, a good friend of the Colonel and the Yorkers, recently had

a look at the structure. He concluded that the foundation and cellar are "strong and straight". It is a small wooden house on a firm foundation, far from being a "lost cause".

Although the house is a private residence and not open to the public, it can be seen from the road. Next time you're traveling to Johnson Hall, take a little side trip at Fonda to see this important historic home.



## The War of 1812 Through Native Eyes

The 41st Regiment of Foot Military Living History Group is presenting a Regimental Lecture Series. Their next lecture deals with the role of the Native people in the War of 1812, particularly those who supported the British and Canadian side of the conflict.

Okwaho (Wolf) Thomas of the Mohawk Nation from the Six Nations Grand Territory will share the Native perspective of the conflict and their account of many significant events. Elements of this talk will come from the oral tradition of the Six Nations, which cannot be found in historical treatments of the War of 1812.

Okwaho is the War Captain of the MAMH Rev War unit, "British Native Allies." His unit appears at War of 1812 events. In so doing, the unit creates public awareness of the contributions, sacrifices and cultural aspects of the Native peoples during this time period.

How about a party of Royal Yorkers and Butler's getting together in Guelph to support Okwaho?

Date: Friday, April 22

Time: 7 - 10 pm

Location: Iron Duke Room

Wellington Brewery

950 Woodlawn Rd. W

Guelph, Ontario

Cost: \$10 per person

Ticket Info: [www.fortyfirst.org](http://www.fortyfirst.org)

To reserve a seat, send an email to: [register@fortyfirst.org](mailto:register@fortyfirst.org).



## Shirts For Sale

Company stores have two superbly-crafted, dark, earthy coloured, linen work shirts for sale - one for about 42" chest, the other for about 44". Every soldier should have one to protect his small clothes when he labours in the works under brutal taskmasters such as Mr. Cubbison. Also great for after-action hanging about in the camp.

Price - \$50.00 each. First come, first served. Email: [gk.watt@sympatico.ca](mailto:gk.watt@sympatico.ca)

## A New Camp Follower

John and Caroline Pulinski are pleased to announce the birth of Alexandra Agnes on December 23 in Toronto. In addition to this welcome addition to their family, they have recently moved to a new home, and John has been on the road, with a short deployment in Puerto Rico and training exercise in Texas. Congratulations to John and Caroline on the safe arrival of Alexandra.