

## Brigadier General Timothy Ruggles - A Brief Biography ❧

By Edward J. Dodge

**J**urist, politician, military officer, strongwilled, determined. Such was this man born October 20, 1711, who died August 4, 1795. These combinations of personal traits created a life that was full of hard work, affluence, respect, extreme hatred and personal pain we cannot even begin to imagine.

The Ruggles family came from Eure in Normandy, France where the name was DeRuggele. The family removed to England after 1066, where the spelling of the name became Rugeley. In England, members of the family served as a Fellow at Clare College, one of the founders of the Virginia Company, a playwright of such renown as to receive the appreciation of James I - King of England, the High Sheriff of Suffolk, and a Representative of the county of Essex in Parliament.

The family removed to Roxbury, Massachusetts in 1637. Timothy was born as the first child of Reverent Timothy and Mary (White) Ruggles on October 23, 1711. In North America the spelling of the family name became Ruggles. Timothy was one of twelve children. He was schooled and had his schooling directed by his father. It was such that he passed the entrance examination to Harvard from where he graduated in 1732 at the age of twenty one.

Timothy married a widow Mrs. Bathsheba Newcomb in 1735. He chose law as his profession and practiced it in Rochester and Sandwich, Massachusetts until he settled in

Hardwich, Massachusetts in 1753. By 1753 his practice had grown and he had accumulated a liberal fortune. He had amassed an extensive estate with a stable of thirty horses, an extremely large deer park and a goodly size pack of hounds. Visitors to the estate were lavishly entertained.

He was appointed Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in 1756 and from 1762 to the beginning of the American Revolution; he was Chief Justice of that court. According to the Judicial History of Massachusetts he was faithful, able and incorruptible.

Timothy was personally described as being over six feet tall, well proportioned with stalwart shoulders and a noble head. President Adams stated in 1759, "That Ruggles grandeur was in the quickness of his apprehension, the steadiness of his attention, the boldness and strength of his thoughts and expressions, his strict honor, conscious superiority and contempt of meanness. People approached him with dread and terror. He is proud and lordly as it is easy and natural in him."

In August/September 1755, Timothy Ruggles was a Colonel in charge of a Regiment under Sir William Johnson at Lake George, New York. This was Governor Shirley's planned attack against the French at St. Frederick (Crown Point) on Lake Champlain. Governor Shirley was the Governor of Massachusetts and considered by the other provincial governors as their leader.

Colonel Ruggles Regiment was sited and picketed as the third row back from the southern boundary of the camp, on the west side of the camp next to the swamp which separated the camp from what would become the site of Fort William Henry (see *Blodgett's British Published Map of the Battle of Lake George* in the Fall 2006 newsletter). During the attack by the French and Indian forces in what is known as The Battle of Lake George (see *The Battle of Lake George - 8 September 1755* in the Spring 2005 newsletter) Ruggle's Regiment fought on the west side of the line under the immediate command of Lieutenant Colonel Seth Pomeroy (see *Major General Seth Pomeroy - A Brief Biography* in the Fall 2007 newsletter and *A Second Look at the Battle of Lake George September 8, 1755* in the Spring 2008 newsletter). I have found no information as to Colonel Ruggles location during the battle.

In 1758, Ruggles was in command of the Third Division - Provincial Troops under General Abercombie during the unsuccessful and costly attack against the French at Fort Carillon or Ticonderoga as the British called it.

In 1759, Ruggles was again involved in an attack on Fort Carillon. This time, however, the British forces were under the very able leadership of General (Sir) Jeffery Amherst. Records show that Brigadier General Ruggles' 1st and 2nd Massachusetts Battalions

*continued on page 4*

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# Treasurer's Report

## as of August 15, 2009

By William M. Herrlich

Fiscal 2009, as it ended on March 31, 2009, was a financially uneventful year for the Alliance, and we wrote only 6 checks during the year. Two of those, however, were significant: one was a progress payment for the painting of General Jeffery Amherst's Encampment (Fort George) Summer 1759, and the other was for prep work for copies of it. On May 5, we completed payments for the painting. Revenues for F'09 were \$3,884 and expenses \$1,426. The surplus of income over expenses was

added to our cash balance of \$7,095 at the beginning of the year, creating a fiscal year end balance of \$9,553. Subsequent net receipts have expanded the Alliance's cash balance to \$10,708.86. All of the Alliance's IRS returns have been completed and submitted. Copies of these reports are available by submitting a written request to the Alliance at its Lake George address, marked to the attention of the Treasurer.

Thank You for your continuing support! ■

# Welcoming New Members

By Nadine M. Battaglia

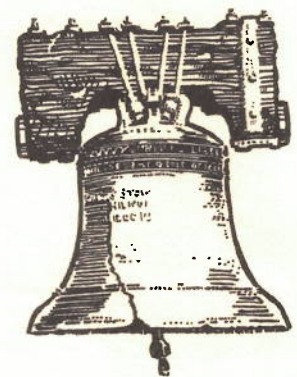
As the days draw to a close of 2009, the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fort George, the days are chilly, the leaves have fallen into their final stance on the sloping beauty of our colonial Fort and the waves on Lake George are as dark as the late autumn clouds.

We are filled with Thanksgiving gratitude for a good year, and for the addition to our membership rolls of the following kind people to whom we offer a warm welcome!

- Charles Doty of Washington, D.C.
- Perry L. Pickert of Silver Bay, Lake George & Middletown, Connecticut
- Mrs. & Mrs. Stephen and Ann Thompson of Staten Island, New York

- Mrs. & Mrs. J. Paul and Doris V. Ward of Albany, New York.

Rest assured as the frosty winter months come upon us, I will travel down the mountain to visit the snowy blanketed Fort George with each and everyone of us in mind! ■



## President's Message

By Herman C. Brown

The Alliance's signature event for the celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Fort George was the unveiling of the painting "Gen. Jeffrey Amherst's Encampment (Fort George) Summer 1759" at the Fourteenth Annual War College of the Seven Year's War held at Fort Ticonderoga on May 2nd. The painting's Artist Ernest Haas, Historian Russ Bellico and I unveiled that work of art and lead a 30 minute forum on the research and background of its creation. The audience of about 250 persons were so captivated by the piece and its historic background, that the questions raised and the discussion that ensued following its unveiling continued well beyond the allotted time for our presentation. Copies of this painting continue to be available in various forms at certain levels of one time donations to the Alliance (see the enclosed donation form).

Our eight annual membership meeting and picnic was held at the pavilion at the Park on Saturday, August 15, 2009. Those arriving early were treated to a guided and interpreted tour of some of the Park's

Historic features (see photo). Notables and Honored Guests in attendance during the day's events were Mr. Thomas W. Hall, Special Assistant to the Director, Region 5, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) from Ray Brook and Mr. Gary West, the Senior Operations Supervisor from the NYSDEC's Warrensburg Office.

During the annual meeting of the membership, the annual election of officers was held. The specific topics of discussion at the meeting included: the continuing need for controlling the sapling and small vegetation growth on the walls of the Fort's SW Bastion which could damage that sensitive feature and the concern of membership pertaining to the Alliance's continuing effort but slow progress in nominating the Park to the National Registry of Historic Places.

Following the meeting a GREAT picnic lunch, catered by the East Cove Restaurant, was enjoyed by all those attending, followed by a cake cutting in celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Fort George. Following lunch, Al-

liance member Retired US Army 1st Sergeant Clifford L. Mullen gave a most informative and entertaining talk on Fort George during the later period of the Revolutionary War, 1778-1780.

On the 1st of October, the participants of the Stars and Strips Field and Walking Tour visiting a number of Roger's Rangers and the French and Indian War sites in our area visited the Park and were offered a view from and commentary on William Johnson's defensive lines during the Battle of Lake George, September 8, 1755.

A HEARTY THANK YOU is extended to ALL our new and renewing members. A SPECIAL THANK YOU goes to Stelfer Steel and Pipe, LLC of Fairfield, Connecticut for continuing their support as a Sponsor Member and Charles F. Eaton of Frederick, Maryland for upgrading to the Paid Up For Life membership ranks. Again THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!, it is because of YOU ALL, that the Alliance is able to continue to carry out its mission and goals. ■

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

## Book Review

By Thomas V. Krug, Jr.

**WAR ON THE RUN.** By John Ross. (Bantam Books NY, NY, 2009, Random House, pp. 549, \$30 US \$35 CDN)

ROGERS!!! The name still evokes that long ago era of American frontier wilderness of rangers, redcoats, Indians and French Canadian partisan fighters and John Ross brings this period to life again in a very stirring book. Also, just in time for the 250th anniversary of the St Francis Raid, Ross makes a determined effort to uncover the soul

and character of Robert Rogers and comes as close as any previous author on the subject of Robert Rogers.

Frontier youth, whose endless curiosity of Indians, and wilderness survival; a man convicted of counterfeiting, which in 18th century America was punishable by hanging. Rogers beat the conviction when war broke out. A military genius, whose extreme risk taking and daring made him a force to be reckoned with by the French and a suspicious character by the British high command.

We follow Rogers on the path that other authors have covered, but we get to see more intimate aspects of Rogers also - his love and passion for Elizabeth Browne, who he eventually married and had a son with. Even with all his abilities, Rogers is portrayed as a flawed individual. However, he was also a leader who put the welfare of his rangers above his own. Forever in debt, and hounded by creditors, Ross picks through the chaos and we see that Rogers fought *continued on page 7*

## Brigadier General Timothy Ruggles - A Brief Biography

*continued from page 1*

were present at the capture of Fort Ticonderoga from the French in 1759. Ruggles and his two Battalions were in Camp at the south end of Lake George by July 14, 1759.

On July 15, 1759, at least one of his Battalions was out firing at marks at 5 o'clock in the morning. The same day, he had five battoes and 4 whale boats assigned to him for movement of himself and his family down Lake George when the army moved north. On July 17, 1759, his men received three days provisions. On the 18th he was Colonel of The Day and his Regiment's complement of muskets was completed. At noon on the 19th, his Battalions changed their defective arms and viewed their ammunition, flints, and bayonets. On the 20th they drew three days provisions. Upon embarkation of Amherst's Army on July 21, 1759, Ruggles 2nd Battalion was on the right in the 1st of 4 columns drawn up two boats deep from the east shore of Lake George, while his 1st Battalion was in the 3rd column with the artillery.

In 1762, Timothy Ruggles was chosen Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives. In 1763, as a reward for his military service, he was appointed "Surveyor General of the King's Forests". This was in the nature of a sinecure, carrying considerable honor, dignity, and 3000 pounds annually.

In October 1765, he was chosen as one of the delegates from Massachusetts to The First Colonial Congress and The Stamp Act Congress. Both were really one and the same. They met as one Congress. He was chosen President of that Congress. The Congress adopted memorials to the two Houses of Parliament and a petition to the King praying for a more humane policy and justice to their subjects of America while professing loyalty to the King. Ruggles disagreed with the memorials and petition as he felt the documents

were the seeds of revolution. For this he was censured and reprimanded by Massachusetts. He did not change his opinion. His wife and several of his children did not share his feelings and he incurred the hatred of his neighbors and friends. The Crown appointed him one of the "Mandamus Council". His younger brother warned him if he took the oath and became a member of the "Council" he would never be permitted to return alive. The "Council" was for all intent and purpose the "Royal Court in North America".

He took the oath. His devotion to duty, as he saw it, cost him everything. Family members would serve with General Washington. His wife and eldest son stayed loyal to America and remained there. From the time he took the oath until his death, he never saw his wife again.

As a "Mandamus Councilor" in Boston he raised a Battalion of two hundred plus men, composed of merchants known as "The Gentlemen Volunteers" or "Loyal American Associates". The Battalion left Boston when the British forces left in 1776. It has been claimed that he and his Battalion went to Long Island, but there is no real evidence to support that claim.

In the Act passed in September 1778 by the Continental Congress, forbidding the return of loyalist refugees under penalty of death, Timothy Ruggles name is number four on the list.

It is not precisely known when Ruggles left for Nova Scotia. Records put him in Annapolis, Nova Scotia in 1783. He filed an application for a grant of lands and received ten thousand acres in the town of Wilmot, Annapolis County, Nova Scotia. There he built from scratch a large roomy house, planted orchards and successfully raised a multitude of various types of trees and shrubbery. His wife died in 1787. His two younger

sons went and lived with their father in Nova Scotia. His daughters stayed in Massachusetts.

Ruggles must be admired for staying with what he felt and saw as being right. Was it worth it? You draw your own conclusions. He lost a country, his wife, most of his family, all his friends and even worse a daughter in an arranged marriage that resulted in her being convicted of a felony that resulted in her death by hanging and the death of her unborn son.

General Timothy Ruggles died on August 4, 1795 at the age of 84 years. He is buried in an unmarked grave eastward of the chancel of the church in Wilmot, Nova Scotia. ■

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## A 253 Year Old Mystery

By Edward J. Dodge

**H**istory is a mystery until five questions have been asked and hopefully answered - The Who, What, Where, When and Why?

The subject mystery is known and unknown, answered and unanswered, and may never be completely solved as some questions may always remain unanswered.

French Mountain is sited so that both its western and eastern slopes end on its north in Lake George with its eastern slope footing on the valley that runs north and south from Assembly Point/Cleverdale on Lake George to Glens Falls. The mountain's western slope foots on the narrower valley that runs north and south from Lake George Village to Glens Falls. Due to the mountains contact with Lake George, the mystery becomes a part of Lake George's history.

On May 22, 1756, Captain Gaspard DeLery at Fort Carillon (now Fort Ticonderoga) entered in his diary that Captain Colombiere had left the fort with a force of 403 French LaMarine, Militia and Indian Allies to raid Fort Edward. Colombiere returned to Fort Carillon on the 29th with four prisoners and three scalps. Colombiere had proceeded south by way of the eastern slope of French Mountain.

Somewhere on the mountain the French force encountered a British Provincial patrol commanded by a Lieutenant Thomas Brooks of Colonel Bagley's Regiment from Massachusetts that was stationed at Fort Edward. As to the specifics of what actually happened, that is unknown. It, however, is known that shots were fired and a Moses Burlong an interpreter with the French was killed as well as was Lieutenant Brooks. The Provincial patrol was probably a section in

strength of six men plus the Lieutenant. According to an entry in DeLery's diary at least two other Provincials were killed.

In 1999, I received a request from a descendent of Lieutenant Brooks to see what I could find out about the incident. The request was occasioned by the descendant's daughter finding a stone grave marker in the "Wilsey Cemetery" in the village of Thurman, Warren County, New York. The stone marker was engraved: "Thomas Brooks, Slain in The French War near The French Mountain". The daughter felt that this was a memorial only as no dates were reflected.

I searched the militia records of New York State and found that the records for 1756 were missing and had been since 1862. I next contacted a friend who was and still is involved with the reenactor group that portrays Colonel Bagley's Regiment. He checked and found a Thomas Brooks as an Ensign in Captain Samuel Brooks Company in Colonel Bagley's Regiment in September 1746. There was no further information on Thomas Brooks until the appearance of a newspaper article in the New York Mercury dated Monday, August 23, 1756.

The article related that during the questioning of three French prisoners on or about July 25/26, 1756, it was learned that Lieutenant Thomas Brooks had been killed some five or six weeks earlier on approximately the 26<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> of June. Now here is part of the mystery. DeLery's diary puts Colombiere outbound from Fort Carillon on May 21st and back on the 29th. These dates could well be actually in the month of June, the entries not being properly dated or having been misread on translation of the diary.

Now for the second part of the mystery, who is Captain Colombiere? It has taken me ten years to identify this person.

Colombiere was born in Canada (New France) at Fort Frontenac in 1703. He joined LaMarine as a Cadet in 1719, was promoted to 2d Ensign in 1722, Ensign in 1727, Lieutenant in 1738, and to Captain in 1744. He married in 1744. He was in the fur trade. He saw action in Acadia for which he was awarded the Cross of Saint Louis. The Cross of Saint Louis of that time was basically the equal to our Congressional Medal of Honor or the Victoria Cross. He was at St. Foy where he was wounded which result in his death in 1761 at Quebec.

He was born Louis-Francois Chapt De Louis La Corne. The exact reason for his use of the name de La Colombiere is not known. I may well have been to separate him from his younger bother St. Luc de La Corne, who is remembered as the Officer in Charge of General John Burgoyne's hyenas.

Are the mystery's five questions answered? Let us see:

The WHO is Lieutenant Thomas Brooks vs. Louis-Francois Chapt de La Corne (Colombiere).

The What was a small unit (patrol) action.

The WHERE was on the Eastern slope of French Mountain.

The WHEN was probably in June 1756 (possibly May 1756).

And, the WHY was it was just another episode in a War.

As for any UNANSWERED QUESTIONS? The reader can make up his or her own. Yet, one question where

*continued on page 7*

# Fort Ticonderoga War College of the Seven Years War

By Rich Strum

**F**ort Ticonderoga hosts its Fifteenth Annual War College of the Seven Years' War May 21-23, 2010, in the Deborah Clarke Mars Education Center. A distinguished faculty from across North America shares their insights on this pivotal war that shaped the history of North America. The War College provides a unique, informal setting that promotes interaction between speakers and attendees throughout the weekend.

Highlights include authors John F. Ross (*War on the Run: The Epic Story of Robert Rogers and the Conquest of America's First Frontier*), John Grenier (*The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814*), and Thomas Truxes (*Defying Empire: Trading with the Enemy in Colonial*

*New York*). The War College begins with a Friday evening session focused on 18th-century bateaux. Saturday's sessions run all day and includes an evening session on the role of music in the French and British armies presented by Fort Ticonderoga's Drum Major Mike Edson. Session wrap up at noon on Sunday. ■

A complete listing of speakers and a downloadable registration form are available on the Fort Ticonderoga website at:

<http://www.fort-ticonderoga.org/events/war-college.htm>.

If you wish to receive a copy of the War College brochure by mail, contact Rich Strum at (518) 585-6370 or by email at [rstrum@fort-ticonderoga.org](mailto:rstrum@fort-ticonderoga.org).

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## A 253 Year Old Mystery

*continued from page 6*

are the remains of Lieutenant Brooks body? Simply, for all the passing two hundred and fifty three years he has been a part of French Mountain. As good a spot as any. ■

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## Book Review

*continued from page 6*

endlessly for the back pay for his men. Even at times taking away from himself to take care of other rangers.

The continental visionary in search of the Northwest Passage, military genius, socialite in the London social scene, and one of the most notable men of North America and England.

Ross also, on a couple of occasions, departs from the reporting of Robert's exploits, and lets the reader in for added details such as how many wolves, moose, deer, cougars, and squirrels lived in a 10 square mile of wilderness in 18th century America. You will have to get the book to get the details of this bit of Americana.

The starvation retreat from St. Francis - when ranger hunting parties could only find a few squirrels and owls at a time when Rhode Island hunters killed thousands and thousands of squirrels and New England children were being set upon by black bears in settled parts.

The picture of Rogers, due to his upbringing between the wilderness identity and the edge of settlement caused Rogers to be suspected at various times as a spy for France, a questionable ally, and finally a suspected British spy by George Washington. The never ending confrontations, between Rogers and Gage, Johnson, Abercrombie continued to put pressure on Rogers' reputation.

What we learn from John Ross about Rogers is the nature of his true leadership qualities, coupled with complex human flaws performing under the most trying of circumstances for any individual.

Perhaps WAR ON THE RUN should be required reading for everyone, especially our politicians, and corporate chiefs who need to learn what real leadership entails. Could they pass muster, like Robert Rogers was able to do? It will be left up to the reader of this very fine piece of history to make that decision. ■