

FORT GEORGE POST

The Journal of the Lake George Battlefield Park (Fort George) Alliance

PO BOX 26, LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK 12845

www.lakegeorgebattlefield.org

SUMMER/FALL 2025

Alliance to Commemorate Knox's "Noble Artillery Train" with Triple Tribute on Dec. 12

In early December of 1775, a 25-year-old bookseller named Henry Knox began a perilous 300-mile journey moving 60 tons of cannon from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston. That seven-week journey began by navigating over choppy water from Ticonderoga to the head of Lake George. Knox stayed at Fort George in the modern-day Lake George Battlefield Park for nearly two weeks as he organized logistics for the operation. Ultimately, thanks to the delivery of the artillery to the waiting George Washington at Cambridge, the Continental soldiers were able to force the British army to evacuate Boston.

To honor the 250th anniversary of this audacious feat by Knox and the men he recruited, the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance, in association with the Warren County Commission for the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution, will host three tributes on December 12 at Lake George.

3:00 p.m. Re-enactment at Battlefield Park

Henry Knox arrives at the head of Lake George via a bateau with period weaponry. Soldiers will demonstrate military skills, and Knox will lead representative artillery to Fort George, where he will speak to onlookers about his mission. All are invited to commemorate this pivotal moment in our country's fight for independence.

4:30 p.m. Reception with Historian Rick Atkinson at the Holiday Inn Resort

Pulitzer Prize-winner Rick Atkinson (see inset) will greet attendees and make remarks on the role of the Lake George region in the Revolution. The reception

includes refreshments and a signed copy of Rick's current bestseller, *The Fate of the Day*. Tickets become available for purchase on September 1.

7:00 p.m. Q&A with Rick Atkinson at Lake George Junior-Senior High School

A performance by a brass quintet from the Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra will set the stage for an insightful discussion with author Atkinson, who will take questions from the audience about the American Revolution. The conversation is open to the public free of charge, with books available for purchase.

If you would like to receive updates on the Henry Knox tributes, including ticket sales for the Holiday Inn reception, let us know by sending a brief email to info@lakegeorgebattlefield.org.



Coinciding with the 250th anniversary of the beginning of America's war for independence, Crown Publishing has released *The Fate of the Day: The War for*

America, Fort Ticonderoga to Charleston, 1777-1780, the second volume of the landmark Revolution Trilogy by Rick Atkinson, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The British Are Coming*. "Fate of the Day" debuted at #1 on the *New York Times* Bestseller list upon its release in the spring and continues its strong sales as we enter the summer.

Rick Atkinson's best-selling books are among the rare historical volumes that earn praise from both the public and his peer historians. The Alliance is honored to be hosting Rick for our commemorative tribute to Henry Knox.



Rick Atkinson

NOTICE: Annual Membership Meeting, Sat. Aug. 9, 10am

The annual membership meeting of the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance will take place on Saturday, August 9, beginning at 10 AM at the Fort William Henry Conference Center, Lake George. It will be preceded by a regular meeting of the Alliance's Board of Trustees at 9 AM, which all members are welcome to attend. The membership meeting will conclude by 11:45 AM, allowing those in attendance to witness the annual surrender ceremony at Fort William Henry which begins at noon.

The agenda for the meeting includes the delivery of an annual report by Alliance President John DiNuzzo and the election of Trustees and officers. Our featured presenters will be Matt Moore of Historical Military Impressions, speaking about the 1st Pennsylvania Battalion and its role in the Northern Campaign of 1775-76, and Alliance Trustee Dan Barusch, who will share the latest plans for the reinterment at the Battlefield Park next year of 1st Pennsylvania soldiers and other 1776 smallpox victims.

Fort William Henry's superb "Sunrise Express" brunch will be served to attendees. The cost for Alliance members will be at the subsidized rate of \$20; the charge for non-members is \$30. Parking for the event at Fort William Henry will be complimentary.

Those attending the annual membership meeting are asked to **RSVP no later than August 4** to info@lakegeorgebattlefield.org. We look forward to celebrating a great year—and anticipating an extraordinary year to come—with our members!



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President's Welcome

By John DiNuzzo

The Alliance and our nearly 300 members (!) are coming off a major milestone event: the rededication on June 27 of Lake George Battlefield Park's magnificent sculptures. Since it happened after this issue of the Post went to press, photos of the ceremony will be delayed until our next issue in early 2026. For those who weren't able to attend, the event was magnificent!

We can't thank enough the organizations and individuals who came forward and financed this ambitious restoration of our iconic works of art and history—*Battle of Lake George* (dedicated in 1903), *Mohawk Warrior* (1921), and *Isaac Jogues* (1939). Our major sponsors were the **Society of Colonial Wars in the State of New York**; our beloved ambassador and national traveler, **Lorna Hainesworth**; and the **Lake George Park Commission**.

A recognition plaque of all who contributed to the restoration is on display in the vestibule of our Visitor Center. We especially thank the late sculptor **Dan George**, who conceived of the entire project, and the amazing restoration professionals

at **Workshop Art Fabrication LLC**.

And there's so much more news to share—the *Repose of the Fallen* project is moving forward toward a May 2026 reinterment of 44 individuals who perished at the Lake George Continental Army hospital in the summer of 1776. On the heels of another sold out "Floating History Tour" on June 30—this time on the northern end of our majestic lake—we'll again be presenting a tour of the southern basin on September 2. The December 12 commemoration of Henry Knox's "noble artillery train", featuring bestselling historian **Rick Atkinson** and a first-rate re-enacting team, will describe just how crucial Knox's feat of 250 years ago was in providing an early boost to Washington's army at Boston.

Isn't it wonderful to belong to an organization that regularly presents fascinating programs and projects on Lake George's colonial history? These ideas come from YOU, our members. We are so grateful for your interest and support!



The Battlefield Park's three sculptures were restored this spring. The above plaque is posted at the Battle of Lake George sculpture.



Historian's Corner

Joseph W. Zarzynski, known to friends as ZARR, is a native of Endicott, New York. He resides with his wife in Saratoga County. The maritime archaeologist, now retired from scuba diving, spends his time writing and doing volunteer work at museums.

Maritime archaeologist Joseph W. Zarzynski worked with several volunteers to paint a mural of a 1758 bateau shipwreck onto the floor of the underwater archaeology room at Fort William Henry Museum. The sunken vessel was one of an assemblage of seven British bateau-class shipwrecks mapped by Bateaux Below in the early 1990s (credit: M. P. Meaney).

Please describe your current book and/or work(s)-in-progress.

ℑello. Now that we are into the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution (1775–1783), it is most appropriate to quote from one of the writers of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson. The Virginia statesman once commented: “I cannot live without books.”

My most recent book, my eighth, is **Fort William Henry's Moments in Time** (High Peaks Publishing, 224 pages, 2023). It is mainly an anthology of articles previously published in the *Lake George Mirror* newspaper. Each chapter in the book is about 450–550 words with one or more images. The publication tells the narrative of historic Fort William Henry (1755–1757) and Fort William Henry Museum, the latter which officially opened to the public in May 1954.

Further, I've been working on a couple of new books. One is a long overdue publication with a colleague, **D. K. (Kathy) Abbass, Ph.D.**, as co-author. The book, a work-in-progress, is about the history, archaeological study, and historical interpretation of the 1758 *Land Tortoise* radeau, a British floating gun battery that lies in 107 feet of water in Lake George. The unique, seven-sided warship was discovered on June 26, 1990 by a research team of five people (**Bob Benway, Vince Capone, John Farrell, Dave Van Aken**, and me) using a Klein side scan sonar. Our team was three years old at that time and was known by the name, the Lake George Bateaux Research Team. Soon after the radeau (French for “raft”) discovery, we changed our name to Bateaux Below and became a non-profit entity. I had worked for

a few years for Klein Associates, Inc. in New Hampshire as the editor and chief writer of their corporate newsletter, *The Klein Line*. The remote-sensing company occasionally loaned me one of their \$50,000 side-scan sonar units which we deployed to discover the 1758-built *Land Tortoise* radeau, what **Dr. Russell P. Bellico** would later dub “North America's Oldest Intact Warship.” Dr. Abbass, from Newport, Rhode Island, became our Principal Investigator for the mapping of the one-of-a-kind British shipwreck from the French & Indian War (1755–1763). I served as Project Manager for the archaeological survey, a project that lasted from 1990 to 1994.

In 1992, Dr. Abbass used the “radeau paradigm” of employing volunteer scuba divers, many who had previous underwater archaeology experience, to create a similar-type team called the Rhode Island Marine Archaeology Project (RIMAP). For over three decades the RIMAP group, of which I am a charter member, has been studying Rhode Island shipwrecks, mainly Revolutionary War-era vessels in Narragansett Bay. For over two decades, Bateaux Below members frequently drove to Newport, Rhode Island to help Dr. Abbass with her maritime archaeology projects.

Now with old age beginning to catch up with us, it is time to finish that radeau book. I have my half of the book done, so the proverbial “nudge” to get my mentor to complete her section and find a publisher is now in “full overdrive.”

Further, I am two-thirds finished with another book, that with a Lake George historical theme.

However, most authors today will tell

you that besides the many unfortunate deaths from COVID-19, it was crippling, too, for authors and book publishers. Publishing houses today are now “fewer and far between,” making it a challenge to find reputable publishers. Moreover, there are less bookstores for the public to buy regional titles. So, anytime an author can talk about books, like in this case with “Historian's Corner,” it reminds people about these publications. So, thanks for giving me the opportunity to share my story as an historian and author.

As a historian, what's your sense of Lake George's most important role(s) during the military conflicts of the 18th century?

You only have to motor up the Northway from Albany, take the exit 21 ramp, and proceed along the lake road toward Lake Champlain to visualize the importance of Lake George in the Hudson River/Lake George/Lake Champlain historic corridor. Lake George was literally in the thicket of the traditional invasion route into New France/Canada, and from New France/Canada toward New York City. I like to call Lake George, the “waterway in the middle.” The old saying, “the middle child is always forgotten,” could sometimes apply to Lake George. However, fierce combat like the Battle of Lake George (September 8, 1755), the mid-March 1757 French attack on Fort William Henry, the August 3–9, 1757 French siege of Fort William Henry, the Battle of Diamond Island (September 24, 1777), and the numerous smallpox outbreaks during these hostilities that plagued colonial soldiers and their Indigenous allies, all show the military importance of the “waterway in the middle.”

Please share your experiences with visiting Lake George Battlefield Park and other historic sites in the region (e.g., Fort William Henry, Fort Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Rogers Island, Saratoga National Historical Park).

With 35 years as an active scuba diver,

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Historian's Corner

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and 2,768 open-water dives, I have been fortunate to have had many experiences with the numerous shipwrecks in Lakes George and Champlain. Not many people get a chance to see these incredible historical resources. It may be an over-used expression, but these sunken vessels really are "time machines." As my Bateau Below colleague Vince Capone once said, shipwrecks bring us back to a period in the past. My favorite scuba diving visits were to the 1758 *Land Tortoise* radeau, a sunken warship with great integrity and in 1998 it was designated a National Historical Landmark. Yet the sunken bateaux from 1758 in Lake George, unfortunately ravaged over the years by unscrupulous divers, have a visual charm, too. Though inanimate objects, these sunken boats cry out for historic preservation. They may be "out-of-sight, out-of-mind" to non-divers, but to the folks that support protection of historic shipwrecks and the terrestrial properties important to the collective memory of our nation, I say—keep fighting the "good fight."

What recommendations do you have for history-lovers to get greater support for historic preservation and awareness?

My recommendation for history-lovers is, if you haven't done so already, join one or more history-related societies. There is strength in numbers, and thus your voice will be louder. Additionally, whenever the opportunity arises, take visiting relatives and friends to one or more of the many local history sites, to lecture presentations about America's heritage, to historical re-enactments, and to military veteran ceremonies. It really is "cool" to appreciate history, especially to programs commemorating the events from the past that happened in your hometown or residential areas.

Author and screenwriter Michael Crichton once wrote: "If you don't know history, then you don't know anything. You are a leaf that doesn't know it is part of a tree." So, be the leaf that knows its tree.

My Favorite History

In each edition of the *Fort George Post* we present this feature, through which Alliance members share their most memorable history experiences. This list is furnished by **William S. Covington, Jr.** of Cedar Hill, Texas.



William at Fort Parker, TX.

My favorite spot within the Lake George Battlefield Park is Fort George. When I first encountered Fort George in the summer of 2017, I did not know the history or details of the fort at all. Since then, I have learned quite a bit about the significance of the site which has only caused my fascination with Fort George to grow. The fort is located within a heavily wooded area at the south end of beautiful Lake George and close to the original site of Fort William Henry. The Visitor Center which is located across Fort George Road opened a few summers ago and is an excellent addition to the site. The Center addresses the history of Fort George from its construction during the French & Indian War up to its destruction and abandonment at the end of the American Revolution. The Visitor Center is well laid out and the new signboards within the site itself are unobtrusive and full of pertinent information regarding the fort. The site is so serene and peaceful and full of 18th century history. I have truly enjoyed voluntarily returning each summer since 2017 in 18th century dress and presenting the history of the fort and the area.

I will close with a brief story of my first time at the fort as a historical presenter. I hope this will make some readers smile at my ignorance since Texas is referred to as an "open-carry" state and I assumed other states were also this way, at least in regards to historical sites. As a historical reenactor, I have always been taken with smaller historical sites and was immediately taken with Fort George. I carefully and reverently walked the site, read all the signboards, and breathed in the history of that spot which I sensed hung in the air itself. The following summer (2018), I voluntarily and quite unannounced returned to the fort with my 18th century uniform, equipment, and musket, took up a place near the entrance of the fort, and began to speak to visitors about the history of the fort as they passed by the ruins. I had seen vehicles with the logo "Department of Environmental Conservation" on their sides and assumed this was some type of water reclamation project conducted by the state of New York. Eventually, a jeep bearing a park personnel member stopped by the fort. I immediately recognized the green shirt and khaki slacks and knew that this was indeed a park ranger and my gig was up. Her name was **June Van Heusen** and she gently, very professionally but firmly, told me that I would need to put the gun away in my car and present "unarmed". My Texas intuition had indeed failed me on this one! Yet, I have loved returning to this site each summer and presenting in my 18th century uniform, but now without my musket. Fort George has grown to become my favorite historical site to visit anywhere.

Other Favorite Historic Sites:

1) **Shaker Village at Pleasant Hill, Harrodsburg, Kentucky** This is the largest Shaker site in existence in the US. The central area of the site occupies at least one hundred acres with just over 30 buildings preserved. Many of these preserved buildings are completely made of stone, and are quite large. The surrounding area was also owned by the Shakers and today has several miles of hiking, biking, and horseback riding trails. At the peak of the Shaker presence in Kentucky, the site consisted of over 3,000 acres and contained 400-500 residents.

2) **Fort Laurens, Boliver, Ohio** This is the only Revolutionary War-era fort within the state boundaries of Ohio. The fascinating facet of the fort's history to me is the brief period it was occupied by Patriot forces – less than nine months. Construction on the fort began in the fall 1778, was completed in early December 1778, and was abandoned by its garrison in August 1779. The garrison never numbered more than 150 troops at any given time in its brief existence. There is a fine museum with several static indoor displays containing items recovered from archaeological excavations of the fort grounds.

3) **West Kennet Long Barrow, Avebury, England** It is a "chambered long barrow" and is located in Wiltshire County, England. The site is within easy driving distance of Stonehenge. The barrow was initially built around 3700 BC by local pastoralists and incorporated stones brought from the Cotswolds, several miles away. It is 160 feet long and roughly 20 feet wide.

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Trustee Profile: Bob Wilcox



Bob Wilcox, is a native Laker having been raised on Helen Street in Lake George village. After high school, Bob received his BA from Boston College, an MA from SUNY at Albany (Criminal Justice) and a JD from Western New England University School of Law. Over his 46-year professional career Bob served as trial counsel for the Hartford Insurance Company, Assistant County Attorney for Saratoga and Rensselaer Counties, Deputy Attorney for the Town of Clifton Park (representing its Planning Board), Counsel to the Clifton Park Water Authority, Corporation Counsel and School District Counsel for the City of Rensselaer, and also engaged in private practice with his brother Charles. Bob enjoyed the courtroom and tried cases in twelve different counties over his career.

Bob's community involvement includes coaching youth basketball and baseball for many years and being active, in multiple roles, with the Adirondack Mountain Club (Distinguished Volunteer Award, Chapter and Club), Adirondack 46ers (winter/summer 46er), the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library, the Clifton Park IDA and Lake George Land Conservancy. He is currently President of Campaign for Saratoga 250, Inc., a non-profit engaged in helping to educate, inspire and engage diverse audience awareness of the significance of the Revolutionary War Battles of Saratoga and celebrate their 250th anniversary.

Bob fondly remembers playing in Lake George Battlefield Park in his youth and

over the years has become fascinated with Lake George's local history as well as that of the French and Indian, Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Bob has read extensively on these subjects and visited numerous sites connected with this history. Bob is grateful for the opportunity to work with the Alliance Board to help promote Ft. George's and Lake George's consequential role in our regional and national history and preserve local historic sites.

Bob and his wife Carol live in Clifton Park and have three children: Sara - a Marketing Executive with CBRE; Abbey - a great mom to two wonderful grandchildren; and Jay - who's currently working toward his Nurse Practitioner license.

NOT AN ALLIANCE MEMBER OR NEED TO RENEW?

JOIN ONLINE HERE: <https://lakegeorgebattlefield.org/join-support>

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info@lakegeorgebattlefield.org
TO HAVE AN APPLICATION
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UPCOMING EVENTS

JULY 4 - 11AM Reading of Declaration of Independence by re-enactors provided through Fort William Henry. Held at Fort George ruins, Lake George Battlefield Park.

***AUGUST 9 - 10AM** Annual membership meeting of Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance, featuring elections of Trustees, annual report. Guest speakers **Matt Moore** on "The 1st Pennsylvania Battalion & the Northern Campaign of 1775-76" and Alliance Trustee **Dan Barusch** with an update on the Repose of the Fallen project. Fort William Henry Conference Center.

****SEPTEMBER 2 - 9:30 AM & 1 PM MEMBERS ONLY** "Floating History Tour--South", hosted by Alliance member-historian **John-Eric Nelson** and Trustee **Todd Earl**. Departure from Lake George village.

****SEPTEMBER 14 - 10 AM MEMBERS ONLY** "Battle of Lake George Guided Site Tour"; historians **John Strough**, **Mark Silo** and **John-Eric Nelson** lead participants to the locations of the three skirmishes: Bloody Morning Scout, Lake George Battlefield Park, and Bloody Pond, with summary discussion afterward. Co-sponsor: Warren County Historical Society.

*****NOVEMBER 19 - 7PM** "Repose of the Fallen at Lake George Battlefield Park". Alliance Trustees **Dan Barusch** and **John DiNuzzo** share plans for the reinterment of 44 early American patriots who died at the Continental Army hospital at Lake George in 1776. Chapman Museum, Glens Falls.

DECEMBER 12 - BEGINNING AT 3PM Commemoration of Henry Knox's Noble Artillery Train at head of Lake George/Lake George Battlefield Park, Holiday Inn Resort Lake George, and Lake George Junior-Senior High School. (See page 1 story.)

* Registration requested to info@lakegeorgebattlefield.org

** Members-only event; for details info@lakegeorgebattlefield.org

*** Sponsored by Chapman Museum; call 518-793-2826 to register. Free to Chapman Museum members, \$10 for others.

Follow the Alliance on Social Media



The Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance YouTube Channel Our weekly "Lake George Battlefield Moments" podcasts are uploaded here, plus videos of programs the Alliance has sponsored.

<https://www.youtube.com/@LakeGeorgeBattlefield>

Facebook on which Alliance news is shared and members post their reactions.

An Enlisted Man's Experience in the British Army

By George A. Bray III

There are numerous accounts from participants who fought in the French and Indian War, and most of them are usually in the form of journals and diaries. Most were written by either British army officers or their provincial counterparts. It is seldom, however, that one finds an account that is both written as a letter and published in a newspaper or other public conveyance. Such is the case of a letter written by an unnamed soldier of the 35th Regiment of Foot to his parents and which also speaks of his service at Fort William Henry.

The following narrative dated at Quebec on October 7th, 1759, comes from the British newspaper *The Daily Mercury* for November 30th, 1759.

Honour'd Parents,

This comes from your unfortunate Son, whom, I suppose, you imagine to be dead, as not hearing so long from me; but the Will of the Almighty I am still alive, and in good Health. I expect you was not acquainted that I was press'd in London, (as was the Misfortune of a great many more creditable Persons than myself) to serve his Majesty as a Soldier in North America, in his 35th Regiment, commanded by General Otway. – I was at Fort William Henry when it was taken by the French, and we were barbarously used by the Indians. – After an honourable Capitulation they kill'd, scalpd and took Prisoners a great Number of our Men, and robb'd and stripp'd all the rest. We got down to the City of Albany, where we were cloathed, and furnish'd again with Arms and other Necessaries, and went to Philadelphia for the Winter Season. Early next Spring we sail'd to Halifax, to join the Grand Fleet for this Expedition to Cape Breton, where I have the Opportunity of seeing my Brother and Sister in Lascelle's Regiment; which was a Comfort to me, but a Grief to them to see me in the Station I was in, as they never expected it. My Brother and I were at the Siege of Louisburgh, and we were at this long and tedious one. But it was the more happy for

me, that whenever I liked it, I could go to my Sister's Tent, (one so well I lov'd) and discourse about the old Country, for we hope soon to see it again. – We had several smart Engagements with the French, by which we sustain'd a good deal of Loss, and not likely to gain any Advantage; the Enemy (as we thought) being too powerful for us, and in such strong Works and Fortifications, as made it impossible to come near them. We waited, and watch'd all Opportunities to no Advantage, when the General at last took another Scheme into his Head. A great Number of Ships pass'd the Town with all the Forces put on board them. – This last Attempt prov'd successful; for we landed our Men, and mounted a Hill one hundred Yards high, being forced to creep on our Hands and Knees up it, and hold by the Bushes that grew on it, till we got Possession on the Back of the Town, and there remain'd for some Time, when the French came out upon us flocking like Bees out of a Hive; but we soon made them take to their Heels, and pursued them till they got into the Town, and we were close under the Walls. This Battle broke their Hearts. Before we could erect a Battery, they gave up the Town. The French in this Battle lost their head General, and we the brave General W O L F E, who was universally lamented, as a fine Commander, and the Soldier's Friend. My Sister and I are now in Quebec, and there we shall remain all Winer. You may think it is great Joy to us both to be so near together, in so distant a Part of the World. Her husband is Quarter-master Serjeant to the Regiment, and is well beloved; a good Husband; and they live in Happiness and Content: They have one Child, a fine Girl about five Years old. Since I had the Misfortune of being a Soldier, I bear it with Patience, and think myself not the worse Man for it, to have it in my Power to serve my King and Country in so troublesome a time. But I imagine the War in America is pretty well over, and whenever Peace comes, I shall have my Discharge, being an impress'd Man; and shall be the better for the Progress I have had in America, for I have seen a great deal of it. – For above a

Year before I left London, I durst not look out at Night, nor walk the Streets in the Day, for Fear of being press'd, seeing so many go before me: But it happen'd to be my Turn at last; it will be four Years since next April. – My Brother and Sister join with me in writing this Letter, and it is in their House I do it: And since our Lives have been preserv'd in all our Dangers, we hope your Prayers will still be for us, tho' so far distant from our Friends; and we hope you will write as soon as possible after this comes to Hand, that we may have it with the Fleet next Spring."¹

Let us evaluate some interesting insights this letter provides. First, it is interesting that this soldier was pressed into service. The Parliament authorized and published “An Act for the better recruiting His Majesty's Forces on the Continent of America; and for the better Regulation of the Army and preventing of Desertion therein”² which provided for impressment to raise men for service during the years 1755-1757.³ The pressed were to be “such able-bodied men as do not follow or exercise any lawful calling or employment, or have not some other lawful and sufficient support of maintenance.” They were not to be under seventeen or over forty, a known Papist, or under five feet four inches tall without shoes.⁴ It would seem our correspondent was impressed in April of 1756 as he said it would be four years by April 1760. And, as an impressed soldier, he was obligated to serve until the end of the war (which in this case should have been no later than 1763 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris). The 35th had in fact received no less than 500 impressed men in the spring of 1756.⁵

This narrative also provides information as to what the 35th Regiment did after the siege of Fort William Henry. They did in fact return to Albany and were re-equipped there. Also, they lost their commander, George Munro, while in Albany when he had a fatal apoplectic

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Enlisted Man

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fit in a street there.

It is also interesting that his service reunited him with his sister and brother in Halifax. Lascelles's Regiment was the 47th Regiment of Foot commanded by General Peregrine Lascelles. The 47th had been stationed in Halifax since 1750. His sister seems to possibly have had a tent of her own which probably was shared by her husband who served in the regiment as the Quartermaster Sergeant. Further, they also had a house in Quebec together with their daughter.

Finally, he provides a great description of his service at Quebec in 1759, and the difficulties experienced by Major General James Wolfe who lost his life on the battlefield as did the Marquis de Montcalm, as he relates.



1 *The Daily Mercury*, November 30, 1759.

2 <https://www.rareamericana.com/pages/books/145516/acts-laws/an-act-for-the-better-recruiting-his-majesty-s-forces-on-the-continent-of-america-and-for-the-better>.

3 J. A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 118.

4 Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1755-1763* (Cambridge: The University of Cambridge, 2002), 63.

5 Brumwell, 64.

George A. Bray III is a French and Indian War Historian, Lecturer, Collector and Reenactor. He is a Fellow in the Company of Military Historians, served on the New York State French and Indian War 250th Anniversary Commemoration Commission, and is a US Army veteran.

"Repose of the Fallen" – Summer 2025 Update on the Courtland Street Reinterment Project

By Dan Barusch, AICP

The spring of 2025 was a season of great news for the Courtland Street Reinterment Project, officially known now as "*Repose of the Fallen*". Not only has the Courtland Street Committee surpassed its \$100,000 fundraising goal with recent large donations from the Sons of the American Revolution and numerous private individuals/entities, but the Town of Lake George also heard in late May of the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative's award of \$519,000 toward the project. This solidifies the funding necessary to complete this monumental undertaking.

Earlier this year, the Town sought proposals to erect the columbaria that will be the centerpiece for the reinterment site. A bid was received and has been accepted from an established contractor from the Midwest, Eickhof Columbaria. More recently, general construction management for the project was awarded through a public bid process to Peak Environmental, a local landscape and hardscape company that focuses on stewardship and sustainable design.

With construction set to start after Labor Day this year, we are moving forward to a May 22, 2026 dedication of the Repose site in the Lake George Battlefield Park. More than seven years after the remains of 44 individuals who perished at the Continental Army's smallpox hospital in Lake George during 1776 were first discovered, they will be permanently reinterred in our hallowed grounds, near where they drew their final breaths. The Town of Lake George and the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance are honored to have overseen the process of producing such a tribute to these early American heroes, and to care for the site following its buildout.

Dan Barusch has been the Director of Planning and Zoning for the Town and Village of Lake George since August 2015. He chairs several committees as part of his duties with the Town and Village and is responsible for much of the Town's success in grants, capital projects and planning studies. He is a Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance Trustee and a Board Member on the New York Planning Federation. Dan is an award-winning Urban Planner and holds a Masters in Urban and Environmental Planning and a Bachelor's Degree in Design Studies, both from Arizona State University. ■

My Favorite History

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Favorite History Books

1) *Congress's Own: A Canadian Regiment, the Continental Army, and American Union*, Holly A. Mayer, Oklahoma University Press, 2021.

This intriguing book documents the Canadian refugees who followed the retreating American army out of Canada and into American territory.

2) *Benedict Arnold's Army: The 1775 American Invasion of Canada during the Revolutionary War*, Arthur S. Lefkowitz, Savas Beattie, 2008.

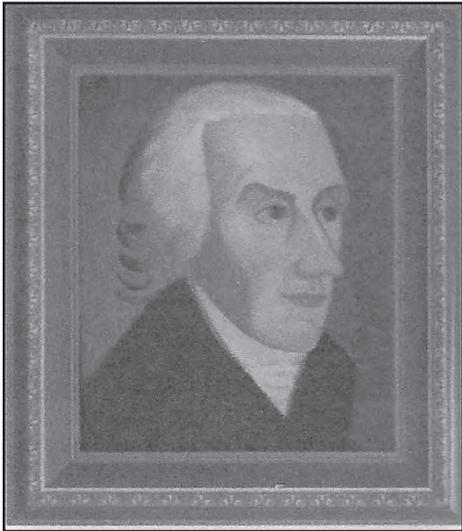
An engaging and engrossing book detailing the American attempt to capture Quebec early in the American Revolution. The book provides information on the men that Arnold gathered around him for the harrowing march through a howling wilderness to the St. Lawrence River, the heroic attempt on New Year's Eve to capture the city, and Arnold's further efforts to besiege the city until their inevitable withdrawal.

3) *Anza's 1779 Comanche Campaign*, Ron Kessler, Adobe Village Press, 2001.

This book is formed by the journal kept by the unnamed scribe of Juan Bautista de Anza, Military Governor of New Mexico, during the course of the American Revolution. De Anza came to his military governorship in 1774 with an extensive array of experience dealing with native peoples of the Southwest in an effort to pacify the region for Spain. ■

Nation-Building: Robert Treat Paine

By Jeff Brozyna



Robert Treat Paine

It is a little-known fact that one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence served as a chaplain in Col. Samuel Willard's Massachusetts provincial regiment at the Lake George encampment in the fall of 1755. Robert Treat Paine's experience in Sir William Johnson's army in the aftermath of the Battle of Lake George had a profound impact on the 24-year-old Harvard graduate. At this time, he was searching for a career path and a way to integrate the lofty principles of his education with a financially secure future. He got more than he bargained for. Like many of his chaplain colleagues, his French and Indian War experience eventually played an important role in his decision to become a Patriot leader during the Revolutionary War.

Robert's early life, as chronicled by historian Stephen T. Riley in the Introduction to volume one of Robert Treat Paine's papers, reads like that of a character in an old novel. His mother's family was populated with Congregational ministers. His father was a minister who eventually changed careers and became a merchant, only to experience financial setbacks. Family money problems negatively impacted

young Robert just when he was trying to select a career. From his earliest years, the Calvinist Protestant religious tradition was ingrained in Robert. However, his formal education also exposed him to the Enlightenment with its emphasis on Natural Rights and the concept of a social contract between government and the governed. After graduating from Harvard in 1749, Robert was able to convince investors to support his efforts to become a successful merchant sea captain. He sailed to the Caribbean and Europe attempting to make a profitable return but was unsuccessful. He even captained a whaling ship bound for Greenland but once again profitability eluded him. Becoming a lawyer would certainly be a safer and probably a more lucrative alternative. However, when the chance to go off to war as a chaplain in Col. Samuel Willard's Massachusetts provincial regiment arose in 1755, he seized the opportunity for adventure.

Col. Willard's regiment was not able to join General William Johnson's army at the Lake George encampment until almost three weeks after the bloody September 8th battle. Historian Fred Anderson tells us the army was still trying to make the camp secure and recover from the emotional impact of so much death and destruction. In an era of disease, warfare and unpredictable mortality, a person's religious faith played a much more important role than it typically does today. That faith had been shaken by the recent bloody events. I believe a review of the Bible verses preached that fall shows us that the army's chaplains were trying to restore the morale and spiritual confidence of the men. However, Robert's correspondence reveals his initial focus was on sharing observations of his new surroundings with his young friends. Robert's correspondence with his superiors was always formal and respectful. However, his private correspondence with contemporaries was filled with humor, satire and a degree of intellectual superiority. He

was unimpressed with the beauty of the natural surroundings, writing that the lake looked like it led to Purgatory. He found the army camp disgusting, foul, wet and disorderly and the men and women in camp somewhat comical in appearance. Some observers may have wondered if young Robert could handle the job of chaplain.

Fred Anderson notes that most of the army's chaplains were established ministers from country towns and that Robert was seen as a junior chaplain as he was not fully ordained. Only one of Robert's sermons was deemed worthy enough to be mentioned in the journals of any of his colleagues. However, my review of his correspondence shows Robert soon settled into his job, worked hard to counsel the men spiritually and preached at least eight sermons to his regiment during his two months in camp.

In my opinion, a careful review of the text of Robert's November 16, 1755, sermon entitled, "There is a Time for War and a Time for Peace", reveals Robert's growing commitment to resisting the French as well as the intellectual framework that eventually led to his becoming a Patriot. The sermon appears to be a true artifact of his thinking at the time. Robert knew his regiment would be going home within a matter of days. Once home, the men would be exposed to questions about the effectiveness of the campaign that had failed to take Crown Point and whether fighting the French was justified. In addition, it was hoped that many of these men would re-enlist for the next year's campaign. Therefore, Robert crafted a sermon that reinforced the Natural Law concept of self-preservation and freedom buttressed by the Biblical concept of a Just War. He argued the French King and his tribal allies had launched unprovoked violence against the people of the English colonies. "And now, can anyone see the clouds of

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Nation-Building

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Popery, Slavery, Superstition, and even Hedonism Darkness gathering around us...?" "Let it be premised that every man has by the Laws of Nature the right to defend himself against unjust violence." "Tis true that every man brings into the world with him a certain Liberty & Freedom, and by the Laws of Nature, no man can be said to be subject to another ..." He went on to preach that Christian belief does not prevent a person from defending his property and liberty. In an impassioned conclusion, he asked his listeners, "Shall we not then be careful to preserve the purity of the Gospel & maintain the true worship of God by defending our Liberty of Conscience, for how then can we worship God in Spirit & Truth if our Spirits be not free?"

Stephen T. Riley's biography informs us that Robert returned home safely after the 1755 campaign. He saw the life of a military chaplain was not for him and decided to continue his legal training. During the 1760s he became a successful lawyer. By the early 1770s he had married and began to raise a large family. Due to his concerns that the Crown's tax policies would harm New England's economy and the rights of their citizens, he became a strong opponent of the British government's actions. Therefore, in 1770 he was chosen as one of the prosecutors of the British soldiers who were criminally charged in the wake of the Boston Massacre. His growing popularity led him to become a member of the Continental Congress in 1774.

Historians Bridgette Henk and Thomas M. Paine provide insight into Paine's later career in their biography which appears on the Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence website. They tell us that Robert initially hoped for reconciliation but when the King rejected the Olive Branch Petition, he knew war was inevitable. He participated in the congressional debate over independence and signed the Declaration in July of 1776. He reasoned that independence

could be a great benefit but if that effort failed, the colonials would be no worse off than they were already. He then returned to Massachusetts to take on various legal and governmental roles. Robert also supported the Revolution by tirelessly working to obtain munitions supplies. He concluded his public career due to ill health in the early 1800s after serving on the Massachusetts Supreme Court. He passed away in 1814 at the age of 83.

Several years ago, I developed a detailed database of 45 provincial chaplains who served on the New York frontier in the French and Indian War. Twenty-six were still professionally active in 1775. Twenty-two of the 26 chose to be Patriots. They generally shared the Calvinist perspective with its ingrained tradition of resistance to arbitrary Crown authority as well as the principles of the Enlightenment and Natural Law. The text of Robert's Lake George sermon of 16 November 1755 is replete with many of the same Natural Law phrases and concepts used by Patriots to justify their actions in 1775. Indeed, Robert used many of these phrases in his own writings at the time. His Calvinist background, belief in Natural Law, the rights of Englishmen and economic factors eventually fueled his patriotism as it did for so many others. Of course, everyone in those days, as well as all of us today, have their own political, philosophical and spiritual beliefs. However, it is fascinating to remember Robert Treat Paine's fundamental beliefs and his remarkable story as we celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution.

Jeff Brozyna graduated from Hobart College as a history major and worked as a tour guide at Fort William Henry Museum in the early 1970s. He became a year-round resident of Lake George after retiring from a career in law and business. Jeff is a long-time student of local history and a member and supporter of the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance.

SOURCES

Fred Anderson, *A People's Army*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1982. (See pages 91-92 for a portion of Paine's description of the 1755 Lake George camp and pages 210-211 for Paine's standing as a chaplain. The low morale of the army after the Battle of Lake George is addressed at pages 144-145. See Appendix D at page 255 for reference to Paine's Oct. 26, 1755 sermon at the memorial service for Col. Willard, which was noted by Rev. Chandler.)

Brigette Henk and Thomas M. Paine, "Biography of Robert Treat Paine", published online by the Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, 2008, 2011, 2022, 2025. (<https://www.dsdi1776.com/signer/robert-treat-paine/>) See this source for biographical information on Paine, especially after Aug. 1774.

Robert Treat Paine, "Robert Treat Paine Papers, Vol 1 (1746-1756)", Stephen T. Riley and Edward W. Hanson, editors, Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1992, virtual edition 2025. See the following in the online virtual edition:

- "Introduction" by Stephen T. Riley provides a detailed biography of Paine, especially his early years through Aug. 1774. (<https://www.masshist.org/publications/rtp/index.php/view/RTP1fm002>)
- "Robert Treat Paine's Commission as Chaplain", letter by Spencer Phips, Esq. to Paine, Aug. 8, 1775. (<https://masshist.org/publications/rtp/index.php/view/RTP1d242>)
- "Allegorical Description of the Camp at Lake George", letter from Paine to unknown recipient, Nov. 1775. Shows Paine's impressions of the Lake George encampment. (<https://www.masshist.org/publications/rtp/index.php/view/RTP1d259>)
- "Sermon: There is a Time for War, and a Time for Peace", provides the full text of the sermon given by Paine on Nov. 16, 1775, which was partially based on Ecclesiastes 3:8. I selected key quotes to include in this article. (<https://masshist.org/publications/rtp/index.php/view/RTP1d262>)
- "Robert Treat Paine Sermons (1749-1755)", provides an index of Bible verses upon which his eight Lake George sermons were based. (<https://masshist.org/collection-guides/view/fa0271>)

Kevin Phillips, *The Cousins' Wars*, New York: Basic Books, 1992. (The Preface at pages xviii-xxiii summarizes the Protestant/Calvinist resistance to arbitrary Crown authority beginning in the English Civil War and its ongoing influence in Revolutionary America.)



Lieutenant Paul Revere at Lake George, Part 1

By Mark Silo

Nineteen years before he made his historic midnight ride from Boston to Lexington, Paul Revere made a more mundane march from Boston to Lake George.

In May of 1756 Revere and his mates headed west as part of that year's British-American offensive against the French. The ambitious plan for the previous year had brought disaster to Braddock and his army at the Monongahela, failure to Shirley's army at Oswego, an unimportant success to Monckton's force in Nova Scotia, and the failure of William Johnson's army to secure its objective at Crown Point despite a much-heralded battlefield victory at Lake George. After their September victory, Johnson's men began construction of Fort William Henry. The new fort was habitable by November after which, except for a small garrison, Johnson's troops dispersed for winter.

In December 1755, soon after the last of that year's offensives (Johnson's) closed down, Massachusetts royal governor William Shirley, acting British commander-in-chief since Braddock's death, convened a council of war. That council developed a plan for 1756 which reprised much of the 1755 plan, including expeditions against enemy posts on Lake Ontario, Fort St. Frederic at Crown Point, and Fort Duquesne (back at the Monongahela), although the Duquesne thrust was later called off.¹ The Massachusetts legislature committed to raising 3,000 provincial troops for the Crown Point expedition.² A young Paul Revere signed on.

Revere's father Apollos Rivoire, when only 13, sailed alone from France to Boston, sent by his family as a religious refugee. The Rivoires were Protestant Huguenots whose rights were severely limited under France's ruling Catholics. Soon after his arrival Apollos became apprenticed to a wealthy goldsmith and Anglicized his name to Paul Revere, a name he later bestowed on his first-born

son. In 1722 Revere's master died and the talented young man purchased his freedom from indenture for forty pounds and founded his own gold and silversmith shop. The younger Paul, born in 1734, left school and entered his father's business at age 13. When his father died suddenly in 1754, Paul took over the shop and, at the age of 19, became the breadwinner for his mother and several younger siblings.³

For the 1756 campaign Massachusetts provincial privates were promised an



Paul Revere in 1768, by John Singleton Copley

enlistment bounty and monthly pay of one pound, 12 shillings provincial currency, an amount historian Fred Anderson calls "high by 18th-century military standards - about twice as high as a redcoat private's net earnings." They also received a generous daily "billeting fee."⁴ Perhaps the promise of this good income helped induce the young man, who had suddenly assumed responsibility for his family's welfare, to enlist. In any case, Revere left the shop and joined one of the new regiments being raised in Massachusetts. And Paul's pay became substantially higher when he became an officer. Governor Shirley commissioned "Paul Revere Gentleman" as a 2nd Lieutenant of Artillery on February 18, 1756.⁵

The promised 3,000 soldiers from Massachusetts were to be organized into six regiments of 500 men, each divided into ten companies of fifty. The colony came very close to its goal, raising six regiments, but only two with the full complement of ten companies while the other four had nine. All 56 of

these companies were infantry with the lone exception of one company in the regiment commanded by Col. Richard Gridley, which served as the "artillery train." This lone artillery company had 100 men, including 2d Lt. Paul Revere and six other lieutenants.⁶ Revere had clearly made an impression, either in his brief time in the service or in his few years as a teenage businessman in Boston: the average age of officers among the 1756 Massachusetts provincials was 32.8 years and he had just turned 21.⁷ Gridley himself commanded the artillery company as well as the whole regiment. Later, like Revere, Gridley became a key part of the patriot cause; he served as the first Chief Engineer of the Continental Army and designed the square redoubt atop Breed's Hill and the fortifications on Dorchester Heights.⁸

All of the Massachusetts troops were specifically recruited for the campaign against Crown Point. They marched from all over the colony heading for Albany. Most were from eastern Massachusetts and the Boston area. The march from Boston to Albany was roughly 200 miles and could be made in ten days to three weeks. They used two different routes which split just west of Worcester: one route headed northerly via Northampton and Fort Pontoosuck (Pittsfield), while the more commonly used route ran through Springfield and Claverack, New York. The two routes re-converged at Kinderhook, thence to a Hudson River crossing from Greenbush to Albany. Though longer, the men preferred the southerly route via Springfield as it ran through more settled country and they could use their pooled "billeting money" to enjoy the hospitality of the many inns along the way.⁹ Gridley's regiment took the less popular northern route which the men recalled as very rough going - "Ex trodeney bad."¹⁰ - which leads one to question whether the artillery negotiated that route or diverged from the regiment to use the southerly route. From Albany the troops headed north on the Hudson River route via Halfmoon, Stillwater,

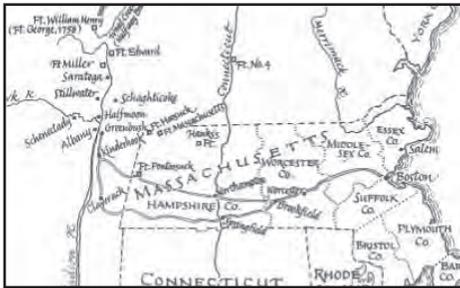
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Lt. Revere

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Saratoga, and Fort Edward. The last fourteen miles of the trek took them from Fort Edward to the southern shore of Lake George over the portage road hacked through the forest by William Johnson's army the previous summer. As we shall see, traversing that last 60 miles from Albany would take two months.

Unfortunately, other than a very brief affidavit prepared by Revere in 1816, two years before his death, he left no personal account of his time in the militia. However, another member of his



Boston to Lake George. From Fred Anderson
"A People's Army."

regiment, Capt. William Bacon, kept a diary that was published in the program for the 1901 dedication of a monument to the men of Walpole, Massachusetts. The published version of Bacon's diary omits his entries between May 11 and October 1, but his entries for October and November provide an excellent window into daily life at Fort William Henry in 1756, its only full year of existence. In addition, in his 2015 book "Hodges' Scout," Len Travers mines several first-hand accounts from Massachusetts troops to describe their experiences at Lake George and, in particular, their participation in an ill-starred scout led by a captain from Gridley's regiment. These sources provide us with a good sense of Revere's time at Lake George.¹¹

With thousands of troops converging on Albany then making their way north toward Fort William Henry, inevitable delays plagued the expedition. Poor roads plus shortages of wagons, boats, horses and supplies dictated very slow progress. Constant enemy harassment and the necessity to deploy defensive

scouts also hindered the advance. Men from Gridley's regiment participated in some of these actions, making it likely that Paul Revere heard his first shots fired in anger somewhere along the route. The army spread out all along the 60-mile route through July. Meanwhile the commanders stewed about losing the advantage offered by the fact that spring generally arrived two weeks earlier in New York and New England than it did in Canada, and feared French forces would multiply quickly on Lake Champlain.¹²

When Revere and his mates finally strode the last half-mile of their long trek from Boston, they would have seen the remnants of the hastily-constructed breastworks used by William Johnson's British-American force during the Battle of Lake George in September 1755 and passed through the campsites of Johnson's 3,200 men. Marching within a few yards of today's Lake George Battlefield Park Visitor Center, they were greeted by their first glimpse of Lake George and likely noted the feverish construction of boats along the lakeshore, boats intended to transport them down the lake to attack the French at Carillon and Crown Point. Turning left and continuing along the lakeshore road they would soon reach Fort William Henry and set up camps they would occupy into November.¹³

*Mark Silo is a native of Yonkers who relocated to the Albany area after receiving his bachelor's degree from the University of Notre Dame and his master's degree from Cornell University, both in civil engineering. He spent his professional career in transportation engineering, most recently as an Assistant Commissioner at the N.Y.S. Department of Transportation in Albany. He has served his local community as a member of the Town of Colonie Planning Board and Conservation Council, and as a board member of Friends of the New York State Military Museum, Capital District Civil War Round Table, Southern Adirondack Audubon Society, volunteer builder at Habitat for Humanity, and his Church Council. Silo is an avid student of American history and is the author of *The 115th New York in the Civil War* (McFarland Publishing, 2007), the unit history of a local civil war regiment. He and his wife, Kathy, split their time among their home in Loudonville, their log cabin on the Schroon River in the Adirondacks, and various bucket-list locales. They have two grown children and two grandsons.*

1 Francis Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe*, (New York, Collier Books, 1962), p. 173. Originally published 1884. Pagination is from the eBook edition.; Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War*, (New York, Vintage Books, 2000), p. 140.

2 John Stetson Barry, *The History of Massachusetts: The Provincial Period*, (Boston, Henry Barry, 1856), p. 210.

3 Charles Ferris Gettemy, *The True Story of Paul Revere*, (Boston, Little Brown, 1905), p. 1-3; David Hackett Fischer, *Paul Revere's Ride*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 6, 14; Esther Forbes, *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*, (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1942), p. 3-7, 39-40.

4 Fred Anderson, *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Year's War*, (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1984), p. 38, 69.

5 Elbridge Henry Goss, *The Life of Colonel Paul Revere*, (Boston, Joseph George Cupples Bookseller, 1891), p. 19-21. Goss includes the full text of Revere's commission.

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7 Anderson, *People's Army*, p. 56.

8 David L. Preston, *Colonial Saratoga: War and Peace on the Borderlands of Early America*, (National Park Service, 2018), p. 100.

9 Anderson, *People's Army*, p. 15, 68-69

10 Len Travers, *Hodges' Scout: A Lost Patrol of the French and Indian War*, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015), p. 36-39.

11 George A. Plimpton, *The Dedication of a Monument to the Men of Walpole and Vicinity who Served in the French and Indian War*, (Walpole Historical Society, November 2, 1901), p. 5-15. The entirety of Revere's 1816 affidavit is published in Goss, p. 21-22.

12 Travers, p. 44ff.; Parkman, p. 184.

13 Parkman, p. 176.

The 1756 Sloop Earl of Loudoun

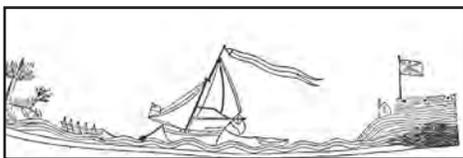
By Russell P. Bellico

One of the exhibit cases in the Lake George Battlefield Park Visitor Center displays artifacts recovered from a French and Indian War shipwreck that had been raised at the southern end of Lake George in 1903. Although the wreckage of the sloop was laden with period military relics and the dimensions were discernible, the name of the vessel has eluded researchers for more than a century. However, by studying original sources, it is possible to deduce the name of this unidentified shipwreck.

BUILDING THE 1756 FLEET

By 1756 Fort William Henry had been largely completed, and a new British campaign to seize the French fortress at Crown Point (Fort St. Frédéric) and the recently-built fortification at Ticonderoga (Fort Carillon) was organized. In March 1756, John Campbell, the Earl of Loudoun, was selected as the new British commander in chief, but he did not reach New York until late July. By then, most of the provincial army (American colonial troops), under Major General John Winslow of Massachusetts, had arrived at Fort Edward and Fort William Henry. The Crown Point army, however, would never advance beyond the southern shore of Lake George. The expedition failed to proceed north as a consequence of the delays in the arrival of Campbell (Lord Loudoun) and the capitulation of the three British forts at Oswego (Lake Ontario) in August 1756. As a result of the turn of events at Oswego, Lord Loudoun cancelled Winslow's expedition to capture the French forts on Lake Champlain and ordered a defensive strategy for the army at Lake George.

The troops at the Lake George camp devoted the remaining season to finishing improvements on Fort William Henry and completing a fleet of vessels at a shipyard located adjacent to the fort. Constructing vessels at Lake George was not new for the provincial carpenters. The previous September, Massachusetts private James Hill recorded cutting timber for "Fla[t] bo[ats]...about 40 [feet] long...to car[ry] the artiller[y]" for Major General William Johnson's planned expedition to capture Fort St. Frédéric at Crown Point.¹ However, progress on the artillery scows



A sketch of a sloop at Fort William Henry in 1756 carved on a provincial (American) powder horn. From the *History of the Town of Queensbury* by A.W. Holden.

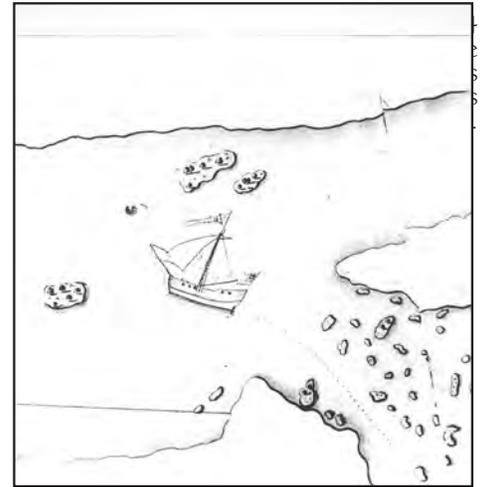
moved slowly due to the reassignment of the carpenters to building the fort. By October 7, 1755, only one vessel had been completed, another half-built, and two partially caulked, according to Stephen Webster, captain of the carpenters.²

In 1756 Winslow's 100 carpenters built four sloops and an assortment of other vessels at Lake George. According to a letter from Fort William Henry, dated June 27, 1756, published in the *Boston Gazette*, "two Vessels [were] upon the Stocks just ready to launch; and four more to be set up."³ French scouts had observed two sailing scows "shaped like flat barges very wide," under construction in late May at Fort William Henry and surmised that the vessels were designed for "the transport of artillery."⁴ By August, two small sloops had been launched and were immediately placed in service. On August 3, Captain William Hervey of the British 44th Regiment recorded that Robert Rogers with a contingent of rangers and provincial troops had left Fort William Henry for a reconnaissance of French fortifications aboard "two sloops of 30 tons that...had lately [been] launched... and [which] carried 4 swivels each."⁵

The largest sloop launched in 1756, the *Earl of Loudoun*, would have a short but notable career on the lake. In September the *Boston Gazette* reported that on the "23d [August] a Sloop was launch'd here & nam'd the Earl of Loudoun."⁶ The new sloop was soon deployed on a voyage to the north end of the lake. On September 2, Major General John Winslow, accompanied by Colonels Richard Gridley, Joseph Thatcher, and Nathaniel Meserve, "set off in the Sloop Earl of Loudo[u]n with 2 Lighters [smaller sloops] and 7 Whale Boats" for a "Tour round the Lake."⁷ Winslow delineated the armament and men on the three sloops: "One Sloop [*Earl of Loudoun*] with two Six pounders [and] One Seven Inch Mort[ar] and Eight Swivels [with] fifty men, One Sloop four Swivels forty men, One [sloop] two Swivels and thirty five men, and Seven Whale Boats Eleven men each."⁸ Encountering a French "Row Galley" at the northern end of Lake George, the crew of the *Earl of Loudoun* fired one of the six-pound cannons at the vessel.⁹

AMBUSH

Two weeks later, the sloop *Earl of Loudoun* would be used on a rescue mission of a detachment of 50 provincial troops, led by Captain Joseph Hodges of Massachusetts. Sent north on a scouting mission, the detachment was ambushed on September 19 in the vicinity of present-day Bolton Landing. On September 16, 100 Canadians and 400 of their indigenous allies had



Drawing of a sloop, probably the *Earl of Loudoun*, in 1756 near present-day Bolton Landing.
(Crown Collection, New York State Library)

One survivor from Hodges' detachment managed to escape and ran back to Fort William Henry with the devastating news. Winslow immediately sent Major Richard Saltonstall with "150 men" on a relief mission.¹⁰ Saltonstall's troops followed the trail on the west side of the lake, while Captain John Nixon, commander of the sloop *Earl of Loudoun*, was sent northward on the lake, accompanied by troops in two whaleboats and a bateau. About a dozen miles north of the fort, a second survivor was spotted on the west shore by the crews of the *Earl of Loudoun* and the whaleboats. A Massachusetts private was rescued, who subsequently guided the crews of the vessels to the scene of the massacre.

"In the evening one of the Boats returned [to Fort William Henry] and brought the Bodies of the Captain [Hodges] and 9 others," according to the *Boston Weekly News-Letter* and other newspapers.¹¹ The relief force had found the bodies "mangled in a most shocking Manner, some with their Heads off, some their Noses off and others had their Bellies ripped open"; others reported that the men had also been "Scalped & cut to pieces in a most Barbarous Manner."¹² Only a handful of Hodges' men escaped and 17 others were taken captive. Several of the latter were killed by their Native American captors the day after the attack.

THE END OF THE 1756 SHIPBUILDING

At the end of the 1756 campaign, a number of observations and reports listed the vessels in the Lake George fleet. On October 14, Lord Loudoun, accompanied by his officers and 500 troops, along with an entourage from Fort Edward, marched to Lake George "with Drums beating & Music playing" for an inspection of the fort

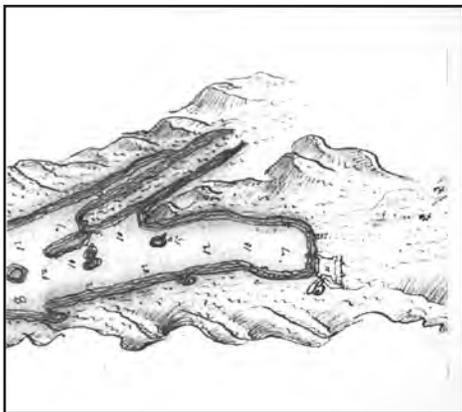
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The 1756 Sloop

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and vessels. ¹³ Dr. Ammi Ruhamah Cutter, a surgeon stationed at Fort Edward, observed that “the Fleet consists of 1 Sloop about 40 tons, 2 smaller about 20 Tons each, another Sloop on ye Ways ready to Launch of ye Bigness of [the] former.” ¹⁴ A month earlier, Colonel Jonathan Bagley from Massachusetts had reported two sloops of 38 tons each, two sloops of 24 tons, five bay boats [smaller boats] and three scows. ¹⁵

Captain Joshua Loring, who would oversee the shipbuilding at Lake George in 1758 and 1759, had been assigned to the Great Lakes in 1756 to supervise the construction and deployment of British vessels. However, the surrender of the British forts on Lake Ontario in mid-August ended Loring’s logistical management of the fleet. In a letter to Lord Loudoun, written on September 9, 1756, Major General John Winslow wrote that “Capt Loring will Examine into the State of the Vessels [at Lake George] and will Doubtless find that the Anchors are Vastly too Small.” ¹⁶ Contrary to recent literature, Loring was not in charge of the shipbuilding at Lake George during the summer of 1756. By the time that he reached the lake, the vessels had been largely completed.



Detail of “A Draught of Lake George, and part of Hudson’s River taken September 1756 by Capt. Joshua Loring.” (Map Division, Library of Congress)

Upon his return to Albany after visiting Lake George, Loring wrote to the secretary of the Admiralty on September 29, 1756, noting that he had been sent by “Lord Loudoun to See what sort of Vessels they had [and] what services they were fit for” and how to protect them from ice over the winter; “I found two small Sloops of about 38 Tons Each, two open Lighters [sloops] of about 25 Tons each.” ¹⁷ Loring also recounted a “Short Cruise” with two sloops “that Genl. Winslow [had] Suppy’d me ... & went down as far as the Lower Narrows,” observing “a party of [French] Advance guards encamp by the side of the Narrows,”

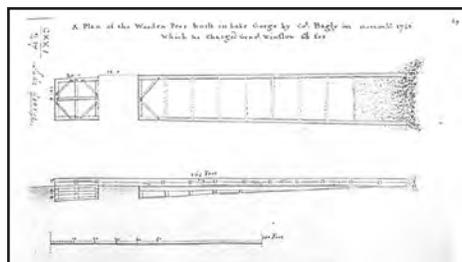
but because he had two small sloops “of no force [armed only with swivel guns]” and was hindered by adverse winds, he “turned back.” ¹⁸ In the same letter, Loring requested that he be reassigned to the British fleet in Halifax, Nova Scotia, because he had “no Vessel nor Men to Command [at Lake George], nor can I see any sort of Service that I can be of.” ¹⁹ Nevertheless, in September Loring produced a map of Lake George and the Hudson River.

More research is needed to establish the identity of the officer who directed the construction of the vessels in 1756. Although Nathaniel Meserve, colonel of the New Hampshire troops and captain of an independent company of carpenters, was assigned to Fort Edward in 1756, he also had troops under his command at Lake George and may have had some input in the shipbuilding effort there. Meserve was a noted shipwright from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, who had the respect of Lord Loudoun.

The final “Return of the Sloops, Boats etc. Left at Fort Wm. Henry” was sent to Lord Loudoun on November 19, 1756, by Nathan Whiting, colonel of the Third Connecticut Regiment and the quartermaster general of the provincial forces: “4 Sloops, 5 Bay Boats, 4 Gundelas, 12 Whale boats, 208 battos [bateaux].” ²⁰

Although Loring’s return listed two sloops of 38 tons, only one of these sloops saw active service—the sloop *Earl of Loudoun*. The other sloop remained on its ways at the shipyard at Fort William Henry. None of the returns named the sloop still on the ways. While the name George for one of the sloops has surfaced in some secondary sources, no original sources definitely verify the name to date.

In November 1756, a 165-foot-long wharf was completed near the present location of the steamboat dock. Built by provincial troops under the direction of Colonel Jonathan Bagley from Massachusetts, the wharf consisted of 9-10 stone- and earth-filled cribs.



“A Plan of the Wooden Pier,” built in November 1756 by troops under Colonel Jonathon Bagley (also spelled Bagly) (Crown Collection, New York State Library)

SLOOP EARL OF LOUDOUN BURNED IN MARCH 1757 RAID

A 1,600-man army, led by François-Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil (the brother of the governor of New France/Canada), departed from Fort Carillon (Ticonderoga) on March 15, 1757, on a mission to destroy Fort William Henry. After traveling south on the frozen lake, the French force began its attack on the fort after midnight on March 19, “determin[ed] to assault the Fort by Escalade [scaling the walls with ladders] in three different Places at once.” ²¹ The garrison at the fort (outnumbered more than 3 to 1) was alerted by ranger sentries and repelled the assailants with a fusillade of muskets and the deafening thunder of cannons, firing grapeshot (bags of iron balls) and canister shot (tinned containers with musket-size lead balls). Major William Eyre, the British commander of the fort, later disclosed that before the attack “the Enemys approach was heard very distinctly upon the Ice, and this was followed by an Attempt to set on Fire our Largest Sloop [Earl of Loudoun]” trapped in the ice near the wharf. ²² In the morning, the French and their indigenous allies renewed their assault and set fire to the bateaux at the fort before retiring at sunset. After midnight on March 20, a third onslaught commenced and the raiders “set on Fire two Sloops and burn[ed] Almost all our Bateau[x],” according to Eyre. ²³ During the day, the French force was paraded across the lake to intimidate the fort’s garrison. Rigaud dispatched a messenger with a long letter to Eyre offering surrender terms, which Eyre summarily rejected. Once again a night attack occurred, which resulted in the burning of two storehouses and 17 ranger huts. The next day heavy snow suspended the fighting, but on the night of March 22, the French assailants finally succeeded in burning a large sloop on the stocks “whose bowsprit touched one of the bastions of the fort.” ²⁴ Contrary to recent books, this was not the sloop *Earl of Loudoun*, which has been well-documented as a vessel in service on the lake in 1756. The name “Loudoun Sloop” was written in the bow lines in a drawing of a sloop on the lake shown in John Williams’ 1756 “A Plan of Fort William Henry” (See illustration).



French attack on Fort William Henry, March 1757. Drawing by Frederic Ray. (Author Collection)

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Although Eyre informed Lord Loudoun in a letter (dated March 25, 1757), that only the “Whaleboats, Scows or Gondolas & Bayboats, h[ad] Escaped the Conflagration,” only two of the four sloops had actually been burned in the raid—the sloop on the stocks and the sloop *Earl of Loudoun*, locked in the ice near the new wharf.²⁵ On June 20, 1757, Lord Loudoun noted “one Sloop unhurt, and another that wanted little repair” at Lake George, and on July 27, Major James Montresor, the British chief engineer, recorded “2 Sloops” on his list of the remaining vessels at Lake George.²⁶ On August 1, 1757, just prior to the French siege of Fort William Henry, Major General Daniel Webb at Fort Edward reported that “two of the Old Sloops” were present at the fort.”²⁷

After the surrender of Fort William Henry on August 9, 1757, the two sloops, along with two scows, were used by the French army, commanded by Major General Louis-Joseph de Montcalm, to transport captured provisions and artillery to the northern end of Lake George. A short time later, a scouting party led by Captain Israel Putnam, commander of the Connecticut provincial rangers at Fort Edward, viewed “Fort William Henry... entirely demolished... one of our [captured] Sloops lies out in the Lake, at Anchor, in order to give the earliest Intelligence.”²⁸ In September Major General Webb informed Lord Loudoun that “French deserters” had revealed that troops from Fort Carillon “were not able to get the two sloops... beyond the falls [as a result] they have dismasted them and sunk them” in the middle of the northern outlet.²⁹ Two years later provincial troops in Major General Jeffery Amherst’s army raised “two Large Flat bottomed Boats [scows]” near the northern landing, but another vessel remained underwater.³⁰

The remains of the two sloops sunk by the French in 1757 at the northern Lake George outlet still survive underwater. The sloops were studied by archaeologist **Scott A. Padeni** during the 1990s. The construction details of the hulk that had been raised in 1903 at southern end of Lake George, when compared to the two sloop shipwrecks at the northern end of the lake, showed “a remarkable resemblance,” which led Padeni to conclude that the “shipwrecks are the remains of the two sloops captured at Fort William Henry in August of 1757.”³¹ One of the sloops, lying in the middle of the channel at the outlet, had been reduced to pieces, probably as a result of the removal of a large portion of the wreck at the turn of the twentieth century, followed by decades of souvenir hunting. To preserve and stabilize the remains of this vessel, Padeni worked with the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, Fort Ticonderoga, Bateaux Below (I was the underwater photographer.),



Archaeologist Scott Padeni examining the remains of one of the British sloops taken by French forces to the northern Lake George outlet in August 1757.

(Photo by Russell P. Bellico)

and the others to study the remains and relocate the timbers to deeper water, which offered protection from boat traffic. The more intact sloop shipwreck at the outlet was left in place and a sign, provided by New York State, warns divers of the archaeological significance of the wreck.

RAISING THE SLOOP EARL OF LOUDOUN

The remains of a large, submerged hull, visible from the southern steamboat dock at Lake George, began to raise the curiosity of the public during the nineteenth century, and descriptions of the vessel appeared in many guidebooks. Henry Marvin’s 1853 *A Complete History of Lake George: A Descriptive Guide* noted that “part of the hulk of a vessel” lay “a few rods east of Fort William Henry, in about fifteen feet of water.”³² B. F. De Costa’s 1868 guide reported that the hull “appears to be nearly full of cobble-stone... near the steamboat landing” and that “many years ago one of the residents of Caldwell” had raised “a portion of the timber of the bow.”³³ Seneca Ray Stoddard’s *Lake George: A Book of To-Day*, published in 1873, provided additional details about the shipwreck: “under water is the old [colonial]...dock, out from the dock a little way, may be seen on a still day, the charred remains of an old hulk, her blackened ribs and keel half hidden in the sand. It appears to be about 40 feet in length, supposed to have been one of the number destroyed by [François-Pierre de Rigaud de] Vaudreuil in [March] 1757. Shell and cannon balls have been taken away at different times, and, in 1820 two small cannon were removed

from the wreck.”³⁴ In 1899 two separate salvage operations hoisted two frame sections from the wreck site, which were temporarily exhibited at the Delaware and Hudson train station at Lake George.³⁵

The final chapter in the long saga of the sloop shipwreck unfolded in 1903. William S. Tuttle, a Glen Falls businessman who had legislative approval to raise shipwrecks at both ends of Lake George, hired a hardhat diver during the fall of 1902 to remove the stone ballast from the wreck. With the assistance of a Delaware and Hudson locomotive, on July 2, 1903, Tuttle succeeded in raising the shipwreck, which was described as “a sailing craft 44 feet long, 14 feet wide and seven feet deep... of white oak with black oak ribs... located about 150 feet northeast of the D. and H. railroad dock.”³⁶ The wreck yielded “a peck of musket balls and about fifty round shot or cannon balls,” as well as a 1743 Spanish coin, two pewter spoons, pipes, grapeshot, and military buttons and buckles.³⁷ A week after the vessel was raised, the *Lake George Mirror* described the wreckage as “the keel, outer planking and ribs, the ends of which are charred from the fire that burned them to the water’s edge,” and theorized that the vessel had been destroyed during the French raid of March 1757.³⁸



Wreckage of the sloop *Earl of Loudoun* raised on July 2, 1903. Photo by A.N. Thompson.

(Author Collection)

The recovered hull came to an unfortunate end, as did many other historic shipwrecks that had been raised from the depths of Lake Champlain. Rather than being displayed in a museum setting, “the old sloop was cut up and the pieces sold as souvenirs.”³⁹ What happened to the remains of the hull after the souvenir sale? After scrutinizing a June 24, 1920, article in the *Warrensburgh News*, which reported that an “old boat... for a number of years has

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been going to decay on the [Lake George] beach has been removed and burned," archaeologist **Joseph W. Zarzynski** wondered if this vessel could have been the remains of the 1756 sloop.⁴⁰ Even though the hull had been destroyed, some of the souvenirs have survived. Several four-foot-long timber sections from the shipwreck were donated to the Lake George Historical Association in 1990, and the Fort William Henry Museum received similar donations. Two finely-crafted gavels, fashioned from the wood of the vessel, are displayed in the Warrensburgh Museum of Local History.⁴¹



Wreckage of the sloop *Earl of Loudoun* raised on July 2, 1903. Photo by A.N. Thompson. (Author Collection)

In 2008 Zarzynski arranged the donation of a box of assorted hull timbers from the 1756 sloop, acquired by a local antique dealer, to the New York State Museum. These pieces are now in a display case in the Lake George Battlefield Park Visitor Center, on loan from the State. Using six surviving 1903 photographs of the 1756 shipwreck, Zarzynski, with the assistance of independent archaeologist **Brigid Shaw**, produced several plastic 3D models of the warship hull with photogrammetry computer technology. Because the 3D printer could not duplicate the inside ceiling planking of the wreck, I purchased wood strips from a ship model company to complete the planking. The model was subsequently mounted in a custom-made glass/mahogany case and displayed with the original sloop artifacts at the Visitor Center.

NAMING THE SLOOP EARL OF LOUDOUN

Assigning the name *Earl of Loudoun* to the sloop wreck salvaged in 1903 is based on the following evidence:

1. Period documents verify that the largest armed sloop on the lake in 1756 was called the *Earl of Loudoun*. The sloop *Earl of Loudoun*, launched on August 23, 1756, was fully documented by original accounts in diaries and contemporary newspapers. In addition, the 1756 "Plan of Fort William

Henry," drawn by John Williams, depicted the sloop on the lake showing "Loudoun Sloop" written in the bow lines. After the March 1757 French raid, the sloop *Earl of Loudoun* never appeared in any original documents or period newspapers.

2. The tonnage (38) of the sloop that Captain Joshua Loring and others recorded in 1756 approximates the tonnage of the shipwreck raised in 1903 derived by applying an eighteenth-century formula, based on the measurements taken from the wreck in 1903.

3. *The Earl of Loudoun* carried "two Six Pounders [cannons] [and]...One Seven Inch Mort[ar] and Eight Swivels," whereas the two smaller sloops only carried small swivel guns.⁴² The wreck contained "about fifty round shot or cannon balls ranging from two pounds to five pounds in weight."⁴³ The largest cannonballs, weighing five pounds (probably originally closer to six pounds before corrosion), would indicate that the vessel was the *Earl of Loudoun*, which carried two six-pound cannons.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The artifacts from the sloop *Earl of Loudoun* are fragments of history that transcend generations. All the people who built and manned this sloop are long gone, yet pieces of the vessel survive. The subsequent owners of the artifacts were only temporary custodians. These objects, like others in the Lake George Battlefield Park Visitor Center and other museums, represent the vestiges of our past and the sacrifices of those who built the foundation of this country in the wilderness of the Lake George—Lake Champlain valleys. The protection and interpretation of these artifacts will be the responsibility of succeeding generations.

Alliance Curation Committee member Dr. Russell P. Bellico is a professor emeritus at Westfield State University (MA) and the author of Empires in the Mountains: French and Indian War Campaigns and Forts in the Lake Champlain, Lake George, and Hudson River Corridor (Purple Mountain Press) and four other books on the two lakes.

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2. James Sullivan, ed., *The Papers of Sir William Johnson* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1922), Volume 2, 152.
3. *Boston Gazette and Country Journal*, 19 July 1756; *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 29 July 1756; Dr. Thomas Williams mentioned "six vessels from 20 to 40 tons...4 large gundaloes" at Lake George on July 31, 1756; Thomas Williams, "Correspondence of Doctor Thomas Williams, of Deerfield, Mass., A Surgeon in the Army," *The Historical Magazine* 7 (April 1870): 215.
4. Gaspard-Joseph Chaussegros de Lery, "Diary kept

at the Fort," *The Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum* 6 (July 1942): 136.

5. William Hervey, *Journals of Hon. William Hervey* (Bury St. Edmunds: Paul & Mathew, Butler Market, 1906), 33; See also Timothy J. Todish, *The Annotated and Illustrated Journals of Major Robert Rogers* (Fleischmanns, NY: Purple Mountain Press, 2002), 49.
6. *Boston Gazette and Country Journal*, 13 September 1756; See also Loudoun Papers, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, LO 1599; In an inspection report, Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Burton noted that a sloop had been launched on August 23 and mentioned that another sloop was under construction, as well as two large scows, and another scow. Public Records Office (London), Colonial Office Papers 5/47, UP microfilm reel 2, frame 23.
7. *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 16 September 1756; LO 1710; See also Ammi Ruhamah Cutter, "Dr. A. R. Cutter's Journal of his Military Experience, 1756-1758," in *A History of the Cutter Family of New England*, by William Richard Cutter (Boston: David Clapp & Son, 1871), 65.
8. LO 1710; *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 16 September 1756, named the large sloop on the cruise the *Earl of Loudoun*; See also Hervey, *Journals*, 38.
9. LO 1710.
10. An eyewitness at Fort William Henry recorded "150" men in the relief force. French and Indian War Collection 1754-1774, A Soldier at Fort William Henry, 1756," Octavo Volume 2, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts; Other authoritative sources have 300 troops in the relief force. Len Travers, *Hodges' Scout: A Lost Patrol of the French and Indian War* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015), 11; *New York Mercury*, 11 October 1756, reported a relief forces of "311" men.
11. *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 7 October 1756; *New-Hampshire Gazette*, 7 October 1756.
12. *New York Mercury*, 11 October 1756; See also French and Indian War Collection, AAS, "A Soldier at Fort William Henry"; Louis Antoine de Bougainville wrote that the "Indians...performed cruelties even the recital of which is horrible." Louis Antoine de Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness: The American Journals of Louis Antoine de Bougainville 1756-1760*, trans. and ed. Edward P. Hamilton (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 40.
13. French and Indian War Collection, AAS, "A Soldier at Fort William Henry."
14. Cutter, "Journal," 66.
15. Admiralty & Secretariat Papers (ADMI), C-12856, Volume 2045, image 267, National Archives Canada, Ottawa.
16. LO 1752.
17. Admiralty & Secretariat Papers (ADMI), C-12856, Volume 2045, image 265, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa.
18. *Ibid.*, images 265-66.
19. *Ibid.*, image 265.
20. LO 2242.
21. PRO, CO 5/48, UP microfilm reel 2, frame 366.

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22. PRO, CO 5/48, UP microfilm reel 2, frame 350; L0 1710.

23. PRO, CO 5/48, UP microfilm reel 2, frame 358; See also *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 14 April 1757; *New-Hampshire Gazette*, 15 April 1757.

24. E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York* (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, 1858), Volume 10, 572; Bougainville, *Journals*, 97; Arthur G. Doughy, ed., *Report of the Public Archives for the Year 1929* (Ottawa: F. A. Acland, 1930), 52; See also *New-Hampshire Gazette*, 15 April 1757; PRO, CO 5/48, UP microfilm reel 2, frame 361.

25. PRO, CO 5/48, UP microfilm, reel 2, frame 362; For more information on the March 1757 raid see Russell P. Bellico, *Empires in the Mountains: French and Indian War Campaigns and Forts in the Lake Champlain, Lake George, and Hudson River Corridor* (Fleischmanns, NY: Purple Mountain Press, 2010), 98-102.

26. Stanley Pargellis, *Military Affairs in North America 1748-1765* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1969), 371; PRO, CO 5/48, UP microfilm reel 2, frame 546; L0 4020A; James Montresor, "Journals of Col. James Montresor, *Collections of the New-York*

Historical Society 14 (1881): 37; Montresor also noted two galleys under construction.

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31. Scott A. Padeni, *Colonial Shipwreck CV-2 Study and Stabilization Final Report* (Ballston Spa, NY: Scott A. Padeni, 2001), 40.

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33. B. F. De Costa, *Lake George* (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph, 1868), 63; *Possons' Guide to Lake George, Lake Champlain* (Glens Falls, NY: Chas. H. Possons, 1888), 24.

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38. *Lake George Mirror*, 11 July 1903.

39. Ross, *Steamboats of Lake George*, 34; Harris, *Lake George*, 27.

40. Zarzynski, *Ghost Fleet*, 32.

41. Joseph W. Zarzynski, *Fort William Henry's Moments in Time* (High Peaks Publishing, 2023), 96-98.

42. L0 1710.

43. *The Standard Union* (Brooklyn, NY), 22 November 1903.



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