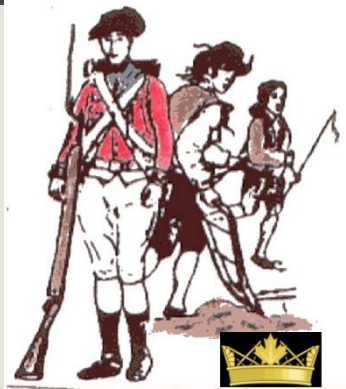


Claremont, New Hampshire Loyalists

By Chief/Elder Paul Bunnell UE



Who They Were

1776 to 1783

- Where did they live in Claremont?
- Who were they?
- Where did they go after the war?

Historical Outline

- **Political Action:** In May 1776, many Claremont residents refused to sign a declaration in favor of the "United American Colonies," according to documents held by the Vermont Historical Society. **Attempted Secession:** Due to strong Loyalist sentiment, Claremont was one of 16 New Hampshire towns that attempted to join the Vermont Republic, which was viewed as a more favorable, or at least less restrictive, jurisdiction.
- **Conflict:** The area saw significant tension, with Captain Simon Baxter famously escaping a death sentence by the Patriots and fleeing to join General Burgoyne's army.
- **Number of loyalists in New Hampshire – Early flights from the colony – New Hampshire refugees with Burgoyne and with the British at New York – Portsmouth as a Tory Center – Liberty granted Tories to depart – Suspicion of the Quakers and prosecution of the Tories – Confiscation of Tory property – Wentworth's volunteers and the associated refugees – The King's American dragoons – Migration of some of the New Hampshire loyalists to Annapolis – The King's American dragoons on the St. John River – Ex-governor John Wentworth in Nova Scotia – Amos Botsford and associates at Digby – Return of refugees forbidden in New Hampshire – Claremont loyalists seek admission to Lower Canada, 1784. Source: Harvard University, 1916**

Historical Outline

- The Loyalists had some form of organization in these frontier towns is evident from the contents of an intercepted letter, dated at Thetford on June 17, 1777, and addressed to Benjamin Brooks of Claremont, New Hampshire. In it the writer said that he had just received news from Canada, where "they are making all preparations to come down & I would have you all stand in readiness to help; your arms are all ready for you and will be sent to some secure place." The writer will inform Brooks in a few days where he should go to receive them. He asked Brooks to give encouragement to "all friends for Government" and to keep everything secret, "for our lives depend upon it . . . & if there [are] any more that have sworn allegiance to the King since I talk'd with you, I sh'd be glad to know it for I must make a return how many we can raise. .
- Source: LOYALISTS IN STRAFFORD By JosEPHINE FISHER, PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY Montpelier, Vermont 9 DECEMBER 1937

TORY HOLE



- The Tory Hole in Claremont, NH, is a historic, natural ravine/cave site located off West Claremont Road, near where the Sumner family house was. It was used during the Revolutionary War by local Tories to hide from Patriots. The site, protected by a swamp, served as a hideout for loyalists opposed to the Revolution. By 1775, it was the general belief that war with Great Britain was inevitable. The following year 16 Claremonters were serving in the Continental Army. During the Revolution, no favor was shown to Tories, either real or suspected, who were in imminent danger of the loss of liberty and even of life itself. A committee of Safety was set up to act against those who had refused to pledge themselves to the American cause. In April 1777, it acted against three Claremonters—Benjamin Sumner, Samuel Cole, and the Rev. Ranna Cossit—ordering them to remain within town limits and to refrain from being “seen conversant together” under penalty of jail sentences.
- When the notorious “Tory Hole,” near Sugar River about a mile below Claremont village, was finally discovered, its occupants were routed; it had for some time served as a Royalist rendezvous. At the initial discovery, two Tories made their escape from the posse that had sought to surround the place. The men swam the Connecticut, fled to the top of Ascutney Mountain, and were overtaken while sleeping there. Since they were armed, they could not be rated as spies, so they were taken into custody as prisoners of war.

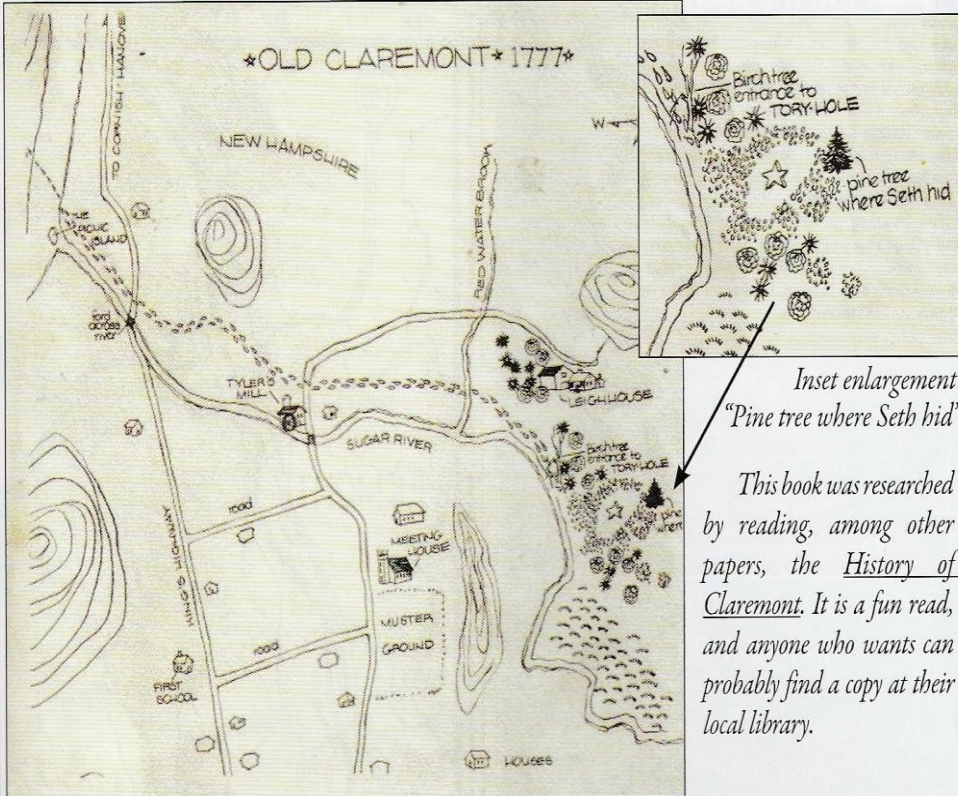
Source: Internet

Claremont Bicentennial 1764-1964

Note: Some of these stories may be inaccurate on description and location of the Troy Hole

More on Tory Hole

Tory Hole



Inset enlargement:
"Pine tree where Seth hid".

This book was researched by reading, among other papers, the *History of Claremont*. It is a fun read, and anyone who wants can probably find a copy at their local library.

From the book, *The Spy at Tory Hole*, a map of the hiding area.

THE SPY AT TORY HOLE

by Elizabeth Honness

illustrated by Pamela Distler

When his two soldier brothers died fighting the British in 1776, youthful Seth Leigh learned to hate the Tories who opposed American independence. Then he learned, with help from his Connecticut cousin Jason, that his own home town of Claremont, New Hampshire had a secret "Tory Hole" hiding place. Patriotic enthusiasm led the two boys into a dangerous adventure that culminated in the capture of a Tory Spy.

This suspense story by Elizabeth Honness, author of eleven successful mysteries for young readers, presents a realistic picture of day-by-day life on the northern frontier during the crisis years of the Revolution.



THE SPY AT TORY HOLE is one of a series of historiettes about Revolutionary New Hampshire and Vermont published by the Regional Center for Educational Training in Hanover, New Hampshire.



A Bicentennial Historiette

A New Hampshire-Vermont Bicentennial Educational Resource

Story of Tory Hole – 467 Main St.

Tory Hole

CLAREMONT'S TORY HOLE

By Charles B. Fletcher

During the American Revolution people who sided with the British were known as Tories. Children of Claremont Tories, it has been said, attended one of Claremont's two school houses. One was situated near the old Union Church, and the second was located on what has been called The King's Highway or Town House Road, and is now known as Jarvis Hill Road. This school had as its schoolmaster Samuel Cole, a known Tory, so it would make sense that Tory children would attend that school. The school was erected in 1769 and was about twenty square feet, made of logs with a dirt floor. Today, nothing remains.

The History of Claremont written by Waite tells us that during that time period, British spies traveled between New York and Canada, looking for information that would help the British military forces. These spies needed different safe locations where they could rest and meet with local Tories. In Claremont that location was on lower Main Street, just past a sharp bend in the road. Waite describes it as "Inaccessible on three sides by a swamp covered by a thick growth of Alders and on the fourth side a steep bank about thirty feet high, it was easily approached by those who knew the area." Nearby could be found a small brook coming from a cove near the old Union Church.



Pencil sketch from the book.

there without exciting the least suspicion among the active and vigilant Whigs."

Things began to unravel in the autumn of 1780. A stranger with a heavy pack was seen traveling in that location, and as he went around the curve disappeared from sight. His disappearance was communicated to the Whigs and a search party was formed. A search was started; however, due to darkness, it was called off until morning. A watch was left to guard the area. Morning brought several interested persons and the search continued. Two men were spotted, and the chase was on. The two men found their way to the Connecticut River and swam across. The search party also swam across and camped for the night, the next day the two fugitives were captured near the base of Mt. Ascutney, and were taken to Charlestown, then sent to Boston, where they were treated as prisoners of war. It was stated that had they not been armed they could have been tried as spies.

Author Elizabeth Honnes published a book titled *The Spy at Tory Hole*. The back page reads as follows. "When his two soldier brothers died fighting the British in 1776, youthful Seth Leigh learned to hate the Tories who opposed American independence. Then he learned, with the help of his Connecticut cousin Jason, that his own town of Claremont, New Hampshire had a secret "Tory Hole" hiding place. Patriotic enthusiasm led the two boys into a dangerous adventure that culminated in the capture of a Tory Spy."

Note: Some of these stories may be inaccurate on description and location of the Troy Hole



Possible Real Location of the Tory Hole

Some reports say it is this ravine, grotto, or gully at the base of this 400-foot hill. A good hiding place.



Who Were Some Claremont Loyalists?

- 1. Benjamin Sumner, favored the Crown and faced persecution, leading to attempts to join the Vermont Republic in 1777 to escape Patriot control. A prominent resident is associated with the Tory cause. Levi Warner and Captain Simon Baxter were also known Claremont Loyalists who joined British forces. The Cupola Farm in West Claremont is historically linked to this period, having been a tavern built by Benjamin Sumner.
- 2. Levi Warner of Claremont, NH. Loyalists known to have been part of Burgoyne's Campaign of 1777. From the History of Claremont 1764-1894, by Otis F.R. Waite. WARNER, Levi of Claremont, New Hampshire, claims he served with the British during the entire war and was at St. Johns at the head of Lake Champlain in 1783. Says he joined Burgoyne during Fall of 1777. Settled at 1784, Fredericksburgh, Lennox & Addington, Ontario. King's Rangers 5 years service.
- Source – NHL From The New Loyalist Index Vol 3, by Paul Bunnell
- The following Loyalists were confined as prisoners in the town of Claremont, ever since the 12th of April, 1775;

More - Who Were Some Claremont Loyalists?

- 3. Daniel Dodge, Member of the Episcopal church.
- 4. John Marsh, John Marsh, Jr., Member of the Episcopal church.
- 5. John and Ichabod Hitchcock, Member of the Episcopal church.
- 6. James Steel, Member of the Episcopal church.
- 7. Bill Barnes, Member of the Episcopal church.
- 8. Joseph Norton, Member of the Episcopal church.
- 9. Ahner Cole, Member of the Episcopal church.
- 10. Asa Jones, Member of the Episcopal church.

More - Who Were Some Claremont Loyalists?

- **11. Timothy Grannis, Member of the Episcopal church.**
- **12. William McCoy, Member of the Episcopal church.**
- **13. Daniel Curtis, Member of the Episcopal church.**
- **14. Abner Meiggs, Member of the Episcopal church.**
- **15. Ambrose Cossitt, Member of the Episcopal church.**
- **16. Loyalist Ranna Cossit, who's 1787 home is a museum in Sydney, came to Sydney from Claremont, New Hampshire. You will read about him in the Early Cape Breton**
- **17. Benjamin Brooks of Claremont, New Hampshire.**
- History book. From:
file:///C:/Users/bunne/Desktop/Paul%20Bunnell/Documents/Research%20for%20Others/Libbey%20-%20O'Brien,%20Budd%20Loyalists.html
- Source: From the History of Claremont 1764-1894, by Otis F.R. Waite

Where Did the Claremont Loyalists Go?

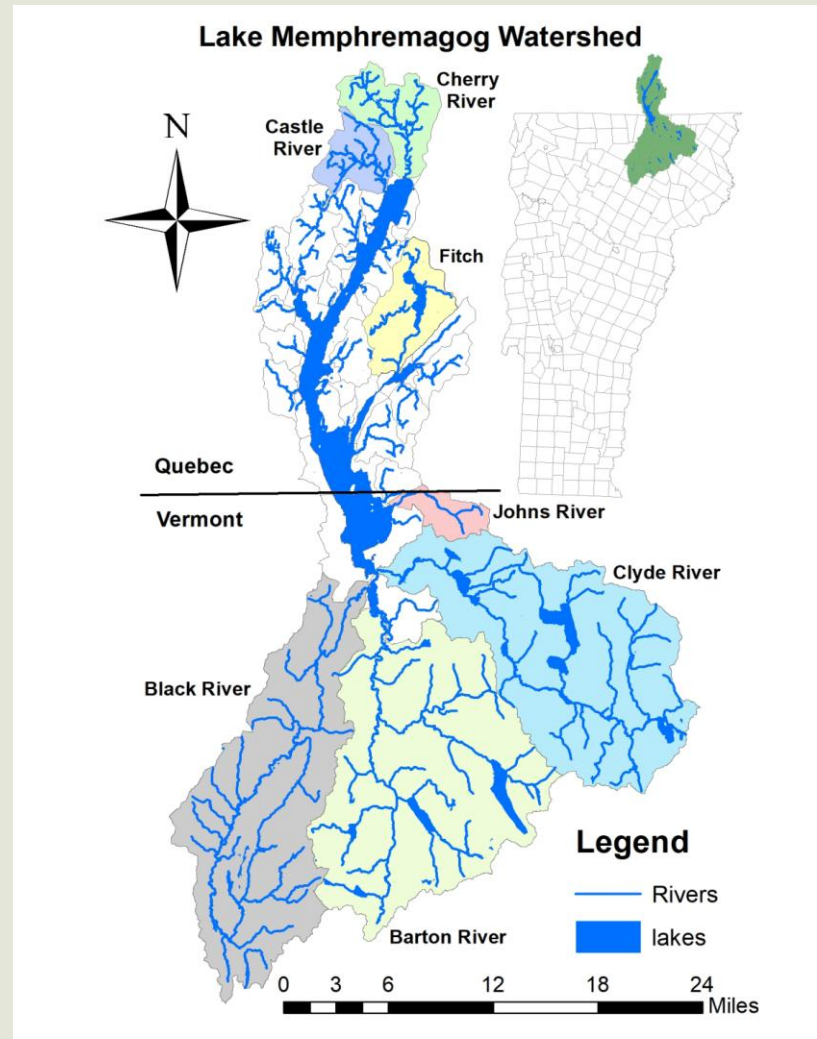
**Cupola Farm - Claremont New Hampshire
Built in 1796 as a Tavern by former British
Loyalist Benjamin Sumner (1737-1815)**



Relocated Loyalists

- 1. In 1785, the Rev. Eanna Cossitt left this church and was appointed missionary at Sidney, in the island of Cape Breton, where he remained until his death in 1815.
- 2. There were 22 Claremont Loyalists seek admission to Lower Canada, 1784
- 3. March 4, 1784, to Governor General Haldimand at Quebec, requesting permission for their own and 46 other families of Claremont to settle on Lake Memphremagog, or on the west bank of the Connecticut River.

Where Did Some Loyalists Go? – Lake Memphremagog



A notable instance of this sort is disclosed by the petition of Ebenezer Rice and Lieutenant Benjamin Tyler, March 4, 1784, to Governor General Haldimand at Quebec, requesting permission for their own and 46 other families of Claremont to settle on Lake Memphremagog, or on the west bank of the Connecticut River. They explained that they had always been loyal subjects of King George III, were members of the Church of England, but were "overburdened with Usurpation, Tyrene, and oppression from the Hands of Violent Men," who had used every art to include them among the proscribed in the late Revolution, and that they were therefore impatient to find an asylum in their "Royal Master's Dominion." They hoped that after those who had been meritorious in service should be provided for, their own petition might receive favorable consideration. Not content to depend solely on a written plea, the petitioners sent Captain Benjamin Summer to Quebec with a letter for Surveyor General Samuel Holland from the clerk wardens and vestrymen of their church begging his assistance in favor of their request. It is interesting to note that the list of 48 names submitted with the petition contains a number that also appear among those of the non-jurors of Claremont, May 30, 1776.



Rev Ranna (Rene) Cossit

Birth; 29 Sep 1744

Granby, Hartford County, Connecticut, USA

Death; 13 Mar 1815 (aged 70)

Yarmouth, Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia, Canada

Burial; Anglican Church Hill Cemetery

Yarmouth, Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia, Canada

United Empire Loyalist. Church of England clergyman and politician. Married June 1774 to Thankful Brooks in Claremont, N.H., and they had 13 children.

Graduated from Rhode Island College with an BA in 1771 and then studied theology in England, where he was ordained by the bishop of London early in 1773. He immediately began his ministry as a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Claremont. As a result of his strong loyalist stand during the period leading up to the American revolution, the local committee of safety had by April 1776 ordered him to be confined and disarmed; he nevertheless refused to sign the declaration of independence of the people of New Hampshire that July.

Source: R. J. Morgan, "COSSIT, RANNA," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 5, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed September 4, 2016,

http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/cossit_ranna_5E.html.

[https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/169356801/ranna_\(rene\)_cossit](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/169356801/ranna_(rene)_cossit)

He shortly began the construction of a church, which was completed by Christmas, and actively ministered to the surrounding settlements of Chebogue, Plymouth, and Tusket. After his removal from Sydney he was not involved in political affairs.

Source: R. J. Morgan, "COSSIT, RANNA," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 5, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003—, accessed September 4, 2016,
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/cossit_ranna_5E.html.
[https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/169356801/ranna_\(re ne\)_cossit](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/169356801/ranna_(re_ne)_cossit)

***GENEALOGY LINE OF LEVI WARNER of
CLAREMONT NH***

<https://uelac.org/Loyalist-Info/extras/Warner-Levi/Levi-Warner-cert-app-by-Maralynn-Wilkinson.pdf>

Other New Hampshire Loyalists From the Claremont Area Towns

BAXTER, Simon

A yeoman from Alstead, New Hampshire (and listed with William Baxter). The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778. On the confiscation list of 28 Nov. 1778.

Source – NHL

BAXTER, Simon, Capt.

Condemned to death by the Whigs, but escaped on the day of his execution with the rope around his neck later reaching Burgoyne's army. After the war, he went to Fort Howe at Saint John, (now New Brunswick), Nova Scotia and settled at Norton, King's County, New Brunswick and received a 5000-acre grant there. He died there in 1804.

Source – NHL

BAXTER, William

A yeoman from Alstead, New Hampshire (listed with Simon Baxter). The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778. On the confiscation list of 28 Nov. 1778.

Source – NHL

CUTLER, Thomas

A gentleman from Keene, New Hampshire. The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778.

Source – NHL

Other New Hampshire Loyalists From the Claremont Area Towns

GILLMORE, Robert

A yeoman from Keene, New Hampshire. The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778.

Source – NHL

MORRISON, John

A clerk from Peterborough, New Hampshire. The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778. Was attached to the Commissary Department of the King's forces after the battle of Bunker Hill.

Source – NHL

Other New Hampshire Loyalists From the Claremont Area Towns

- POMPOY (Pomroy), Josiah Dr.
- A physician from Keene, New Hampshire. The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778. He was also on the confiscation list of 28 Nov. 1778.
- Source – NHL
- SAWYER, Eleazer
- A yeoman from Keene, New Hampshire. The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778.
- Source – NHL

Other New Hampshire Loyalists From the Claremont Area Towns

- **SNOW, Benjamin**
- Graduate of Dartmouth College in New Hampshire and arrived at Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia on the ship, Amphitrite in Oct. 1783. The following year he opened a grammar school near there.
- Source – NHL
- **STEVENS, Enos**
- A gentleman from Charlestown, New Hampshire (listed with Solomon and Phineas Stevens). The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778.
- On the confiscation list of 28 Nov. 1778. On petition with Phineas to change Conway to Digby, Nova Scotia in honor of Read Admiral Robert Digby on 20 Feb. 1784. Later he settled at Weymouth, Nova Scotia, 17 miles south of Digby.
- Source – NHL

Other New Hampshire Loyalists From the Claremont Area Towns

- STEVENS, Phineas Dr.
 - A physician from Charlestown, New Hampshire. Listed with Enos and Solomon Stevens). The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778. On petition with Enos to change Conway to Digby, Nova Scotia after Rear Admiral Robert Digby 20 Feb. 1784. Later he settled in Weymouth, Nova Scotia, 17 miles south of Digby.
 - Source – NHL
- STEVENS (Stephens), Solomon
 - A yeoman from Charlestown, New Hampshire. The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778. He settled at Musquash, New Brunswick, Canada and died there in 1819.
 - Source – NHL

Other New Hampshire Loyalists From the Claremont Area Towns

- **WARNER, Levi**
- **Of Claremont, New Hampshire and claims he served with the British during the entire war and was at St. Johns at the head of Lake Champlain in 1783. Says he joined Burgoyne during Fall of 1777.**
- **Source – NHL**

- **WILLARD, Levi**
- **A gentleman from Charlestown, New Hampshire. The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778.**
- **Source – NHL**

Other New Hampshire Loyalists From the Claremont Area Towns

- **WILLIAMS, Elijah Esq.**
- **Fled from Keene, New Hampshire, after the battle of Lexington. The New Hampshire General Assembly listed him and 75 others as the enemy in Nov. 1778. Listed on Act of Confiscation 28 Nov. 1778. Was a Second Lieutenant in the Corps of Volunteers associated with New Hampshire and was with Loyalist Gov. John Wentworth at Flushing, Long Island, New York on 16 Oct. 1777. Was on petition 20 Feb. 1784 to change Conway to Digby, Nova Scotia, after Rear Admiral Robert Digby. Around 1784 he went back to Keene, NH, to transact some business and was caught and placed before the court of sessions at Charlestown, NH. He was ordered to leave the State, which at that time returned to Nova Scotia. He became very ill and again returned to Deerfield, NH where he died.**
- **Source – NHL**

United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada (UELAC)

On 9 Nov 1789, Lord Dorchester had proclaimed by the King a special name distinction for all Loyalists and their descendants, to have a U.E or UE (Unity of the Empire) placed after their names in honor.

You can join the UELA by submitting your direct lineage to your loyalist to UELA of Canada, George Brown House, 50 Baldwin Street, Suite 202, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Each province has a UE branch that you can register at where your ancestor lived.



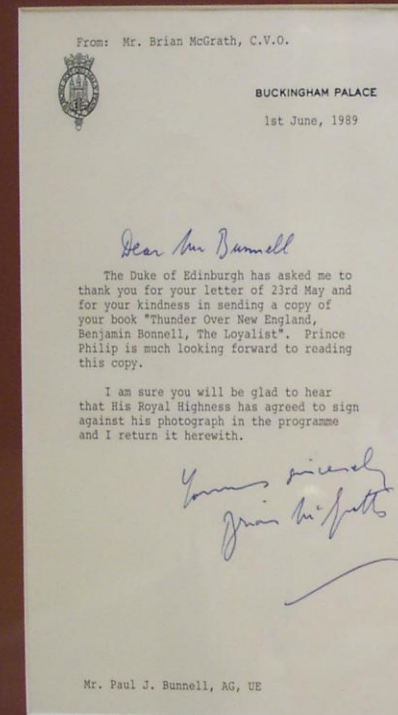
Chief & Elder Paul Bunnell, UE Loyalist Bio – Meeting Prince Philip 1989 in Quebec, Canada Loyalist Conference

For nearly 46 years, Paul has devoted himself to genealogy and Loyalist studies. He later took degree-accredited classes through Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, greatly improving his skills and knowledge in the field. Accomplishments are wide; awarded an Accreditation and later a Fellowship at the American College of Genealogists of Illinois in the mid-1980's; certified and registered lineage member of The United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada (New Brunswick); and The Hereditary Order of Descendants of The Loyalist and Patriots of The American Revolution, Washington, D.C. He has 3 Registered Loyalist ancestors. Lord Dorchester in 1789 declared Loyalists and descendants the royal honor of UE after their name "United Empire Loyalist." Prince Philip came to Lennoxville, Quebec, to honor descendants who uphold that distinction in 1979, the 200th anniversary. This photo was him meeting me.



A ROYAL HONOR

At the UELA Convention in Lennoxville, Quebec, Canada in 1989, I met Prince Philip, and later he accepted my Book, *Thunder Over New England*, Benjamin Bonnell, *The Loyalist*, and it was added to the Buckingham Palace Royal Library. He signed my program and sent a letter from Buckingham Palace.



THANK YOU

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Loyalty is Everything

A Loyalist Story & Family Genealogy
Including Other Loyalist Bunnell/Bonnell Genealogies



Revised and Updated