

A loyalist and his life



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The called me M. J. , that stood for Michael Jones. It was the early part of April in 1760 when I departed an English port and headed across the waters for the North American colonies where I planned to settle, start a family, and begin what I hoped to be a very prosperous life. It was the summer if 1760 when I planted my feet and my heart in Boston along with several black slaves that I purchased when I arrived here. I brought a hefty 10, 000 British pounds in my purse, which was my entire life savings.

I was twenty-two years old, turning twenty-three in the fall. I had heard so many wonderful things about this place and I could not wait to get here. When I first arrived here, because of my better fortune it was very easy for me to become a landowner and the owner of a small but successful farm. I purchased a decent size piece of land and began to build a constructive family and life. It was not long before things began to take a turn for the worse. Parliament began to throw tedious Acts and Policies at the American colonies.

For example, the Tea Act which placed taxes on all British tea and the Stamp Act which placed taxes on all legal documents such as marriage licenses, wills, and even letter. The Sugar Act placed taxes in all sugar, wine, linen, and silk. It was beginning to be ridiculous. It was then that a continuous patter began. Act...Protest...Repeal...Peace. Everyone seemed to be putting up with that but with each strike by Parliament the other people in the colonies became more and more angry and liked the idea of gaining independence form Great Britain very much.

In my opinion the idea of independence was not necessarily a bad one but I felt that it was necessary to remain loyal to the British crown. I personally chose to adhere to the British cause during the revolution. Those of us who remained loyal to England wore the title of Loyalists and those who chose to turn their backs were referred to as Rebels or Patriots.. The patriots referred to us loyalists as Tories, which was a derogatory nickname that they liked to use.

Although loyalists were found in all classes and occupations, from all different walks of life the majority of us were farmers like artisans, shopkeepers, and myself. Most wealthy shopkeepers also chose to remain loyal to England as did Anglican ministers, especially in Puritan New England (Ward 264). Some of us were even black, these were slaves who the British promised freedom but never kept their promise. Some were Indians, some indentured servants, and some loyalists were German immigrants but only because George III was of German origin (VanDoren 119).

The number of loyalists in each colony varied. John Adams estimated that one third of the colonials were loyalists. Us Loyalists were strongest in the far southern colonies like Georgia and Virginia, in the middle Atlantic colonies, and especially in New York and Pennsylvania. We constituted the majority in some colonies but a very large minority in all the colonies as a whole. It was not long before a very Thomas Paines Common Sense pamphlet hit the colonies like lightning. When his words and thoughts were distributed about the colonies all hell broke loose.

His work was quite simple but just he instigation the colonists needed to stand up to the British crown. He told everyone exactly how he felt about the situation of the colonists. He believe that England had no right to govern the American colonies, for England was but a fraction of the size of America, and not everyone who has settled here has and England decent. Therefore, why should everyone here remain loyal to one such country as England He truly believed that America would be better of without the whole monarchy system.

I remember the very day when one of his pamphlets made its way to my front door. It was windy out side and when I reached to take it from the nail on which it was hanging it blew through the yard and I had to chase it down. When I finally got my hands on it I read it, thought about it, and then I threw it in the fire. Not everyone in the colony read his work and nodded with approval. I was definitely one of those people and there were many others just like me. We considered ourselves the hard-core loyalists.. We had been blind-sided by our once friends, now rebels and some of their powerful propaganda.

I was quite anxious to help England extinguish the fires that Thomas Paine had started. But due to the rebels outnumbering loyalists in my colony I had no choice but to defend my family and myself and had no opportunity to take aggressive action to directly defend any of Parliaments decisions. I had to worry about whether or not my home would still be standing the next day and whether or not I could find anyone to purchase my crops. No one wanted to buy anything from someone who believed in and supported Parliament. I

began to lose everything, my farm and even my friends who joined the rebel cause.

All I had left was my family and my crown. On several occasions in 1775 I was offered regiments in the rebel service from some old neighbors who had become captains. They had hoped that I would change my mind and possibly manage to rebuild the life which I once had. These men were once my friends and when I turned down their offers deserted my family and me for the last time. All they wanted was for me to join in their quest for independence and that was something that I just could not do. I repeatedly turned down offers. It was then that the threats began.

It was then that we began receiving letters threatening my family and me, we would find rebel flags flying high in our yard, and people would shout at us as they passed by our home. Such threats made me by my own admission armed my family and prepared them to defend themselves if needed. My family and I truly feared for our lives and our futures. The merchants in town would not permit us to purchase anything from their shops and no one would buy any of our crops. If it were not for the livestock and other crops which we grew on our farm we would have starved. There was this one family down the road.

The woman's husband was a rebel but she knew of our disposition and did not blame us for what we believed in and she helped smuggle us supplies like medicines, weapons, ammunition, and tools when we needed them. If it were not for her we probably would not have been able to survive or stand our ground. The patriots began to enact harsh penal laws against us and

they confiscated our estates, all of which they could get their hands on (Maier 14). Most of us loyalists did indeed suffer for our views. I myself continued to voice my opinions in parliaments benefit.

It was a miracle that I was not shot on the spot on several different occasions. I just prayed for reconciliation with the British government. Then came along John Lockes theory of natural rights and limited government. Thus, us loyalists just like the rebels criticized a lot of British actions. It was just the case that I wanted to pursue peaceful forms of protest because personally I thought that violence would eventually give rise to the rule of tyranny. I too believed that independence would mean the loss of economic benefits derived from membership in the British mercantile system Nevins 117-119), but we still remained loyal.

When warfare began those of us who did not take to the battle fields on the British side took refuge with faithful friends, who even though had different beliefs they kept us hidden from the rebels who wanted our lives. We American troops won the war and they gained independence from England my family and I immediately left the country and settled in Canada where we hoped to be safe and begin our new lives (Lancaster, Bruce, Plumb 203). Decades after the Revolution Americans preferred to forget about us loyalists but indeed I will never forget the rebels.