

## Loyalist

Madame Fredericka von Riedesel, with their three children, joined her husband who was a general in Burgoyne's army. With her were also a maid, a cook, and an old servant of the family. As fighting intensified prior to the British surrender at Saratoga, she witnessed firsthand the casualties of war. In her journal she described what happened on October 7, 1777.

I had just sat down with my husband at his quarters to breakfast. General Fraser, and ... Generals Burgoyne and Phillips ... were to have dined with me on that same day. ...

About three o'clock in the afternoon, in place of the guests who were to have dined with me, they brought in to me, upon a litter, poor General Fraser ... mortally wounded. Our dining table, which was already spread, was taken away, and in its place they fixed up a bed for the general. I sat in the corner of the room trembling and quaking. The noises grew constantly louder. ... The general said to the surgeon, "Do not conceal any thing from me. "Must I die?" The ball had gone through his bowels ... Unfortunately ... the general had eaten a hearty breakfast, by reason of which the intestines were distended, and the ball ... had not gone ... between the intestines, but through them. I heard him often, amidst his groans, exclaim, "O, fatal ambition! Poor General Burgoyne! My poor wife!" Prayers were read to him. He then sent a message to General Burgoyne, begging that he would have him buried the following day at six o'clock in the evening on the top of a hill, which was a sort of redoubt. ...

Early in the morning ... he expired. After they had washed the corpse, they wrapped it in a sheet, and laid it on a bedstead. We then came into the room, and had this sad sight before us the whole day. ... We learned that General Burgoyne intended to fulfill the last wish of General Fraser. ... Precisely at six o'clock the corpse was brought out, and we saw the entire body of generals with their retinues on the hill assisting at the obsequies. The English chaplain, Mr. Brudenel, performed the funeral services. The canonballs flew continually around and over the party.

The American general Gates, afterward said, that if he had known that it was a burial he would not have allowed any firing in that direction. ... The order had gone forth that the army should break up after the burial, and the horses were already harnessed to our calaches. ... we drove off at eight o'clock in the evening.

Narrative from *In the Words of Women* pages 82-83.

Baroness Frederika von Riedesel: prisoner's journal

"Before we passed the so-called Blue mountains, we were forced to make a still further halt of eight days, that our troops might have time to collect together again. In the mean time such a great quantity of snow fell, that four of our servants were obliged to go before my wagon on horseback, in order to make a path for it. We passed through a picturesque portion of the country, which, however, by reason of its wilderness, inspired us with terror. Often we were in danger of our lives while going along these break-neck roads; and more than all this we suffered from cold, and what was still worse, from a lack of provisions. When we arrived in Virginia, and were only a day's journey from the place of our destination, we had actually nothing more remaining but our tea, and none of us could obtain any thing but bread and butter. A countryman, whom we met on the way, gave me only a hand full of acrid fruits. At noon we came to a dwelling where I begged for something to eat. They refused me with hard words, saying

that there was nothing for dogs of Royalists. Seeing some Turkish [Indian] meal lying around, I begged for a couple of hands full, that I might mix it with water, and make bread. The woman answered me "No, that is for our negroes, who work for us, but you have wished to kill us."

. . . The place of our destination was Colle in Virginia, where my husband, who had gone ahead with our troops, awaited us with impatient longing. We arrived here about the middle of February, 1779, having, on our journey, passed through the provinces of Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland, and having traveled in twelve weeks, six hundred and seventy-eight English miles. . . . The passages from the Baroness's journal appear on pages 268-69 of *In the Words of Women*.

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. . . . The inclination of this country is . . . far from being generally for this work [of revolution]. Indolent and inactive, they have no desire to move, even where their own immediate interest calls them. All they are promised is too distant to interest them; they suffer none of those abuses they are told of and feel their liberty invaded only by the oppressive power of the Congress and their Agents, who at this Season are pressing them from their harvest, for they know not what purpose. . . . Three months ago, a very small number had not any thing to apprehend; a few troops landing and a general amnesty published would have secured them all at home. . . . At present the martial law stands thus: An officer or committeeman enters a plantation with his posse. The alternative is proposed. Agree to join us [Whigs] and your persons and properties are safe . . . if you refuse, we are directly to cut up your corn, shoot your pigs, burn your houses, seize your Negroes and perhaps tar and feather yourself. Not to choose the first requires more courage than they are possessed of, and I believe this method has seldom failed with the lower sort.

Farewell unhappy land, for which my heart bleeds in pity. Little does it signify to you who are the conquered or who the victorious; you are devoted to ruin, whoever succeeds. Many years will not make up [for] these few past months of depredation and yet no enemy has landed on their coast. Themselves have ruined themselves; but let me not indulge this melancholy. . . .

Janet Schaw, *Journal of a Lady of Quality, being the Narrative of a Journey from Scotland to the West Indies, North Carolina, and Portugal in the Years 1774 to 1776*, Evangeline Walker Andrews and Charles McLean Andrews, compilers and editors (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), Electronic Edition, pages 153, 197-199, 211-212.

During the Revolution, property belonging to Loyalists was subject to seizure. Very often some part of that property had belonged to their wives. But under English law, any property a woman owned at the time of her marriage became her husband's, unless there had been a premarital agreement. As a result, many Loyalist wives had no legal claim to their inheritance; they found themselves in dire circumstances, evicted from their homes and forced to seek refuge with relatives or friends.

### A **Loyalist** viewpoint from Phebe Fowler Ward, a farm wife

East Chester [New York] June 6th 1783 Kind Husband

I am sorry to aquant you that our farme is sold also that Land and salt medow in East chester town and that ajoyning to Stephen wards [her brother-in-law] Land is all sold. Major Dilevan bought it he told me that one [David] williams that took major andrew [Major André] is to have five hundred pounds woort out of it and he the Remainder. I told them thay had no Right to servey It nor sell it. He said he was ordered to do it and shood sell it. Thay accordingly survaed it and there was foure men to vallue it—there high sheruv, one of there Judges of there cort and two more men to say what it was acre for at

[and] what it was to be sold for & dilevan told me they said £7.10.0 an acre for the whool the number of acres bing not cast [added] up.

they said if I did not quitt posesion that they had aright to take any thing on the farme or in the house to pay the Cost of a law sute and imprisen me. I have sufered all most Every thing but death it self to keep posesion all most sevin years in your long absens. Pray Grant me spedy Releaf or God only knows what will be com of me and my frends les Children.

they said my posesion was nothing. youre husband has forfeited his astate by Joining the British Enemy with a free and vollentery will and thereby was for feted to the Stat and sold.

all at present from your cind and Loveing Wife phebe Ward

pray send me spedeay anser

### A **Loyalist** - Grace Gowden

These lines from a poem Grace wrote show that she was not exactly happy in her marriage. "Never get tyed to a man/for when once you are yoked/'Tis all a mere joke/of seeing your freedom again." Grace stayed behind in the hope that she could retain her inherited property. She was not successful. The day after the British departed Charles Willson Peale (yes, the painter) appeared at her door with an eviction notice. The contents of the Galloway house on Market Street were sold at auction (see illustration). Peale received a five percent commission. Embittered and impoverished, her diary entry in April 1779 showed Grace nevertheless still defiant.

Tuesday the 20th [While visiting a neighbor, I] got My spirits at command & Laughed at the whole wig party. I told them I was the happiest woman in twown for I had been striped & Turn'd out of Doors yet I was still the same & must be Joseph Galloways Wife & Lawrence Growdons daughter & that it was Not in their power to humble Me for I shou'd be Grace Growdon Galloway to the last & as I had now suffer'd all that they can inflict Upon Me I shou'd now act as on a rock to look on the wrack of others & see them tost by the Tempestuous billows while I was safe ashore; that if My little fortune wou'd be of service to them, they May keep it for I had exchanged it for content: that a Wooden waiter was as Useful tho not so sightly as a silver one; & that wou'd Never let these people pull Me down for, While I had the splendid shilling left, I wou'd be happy in spight of them; I cou'd Not do as Diogenes (Drink out of the first brook therefore threw his cup away as Useless) but I wou'd keep My Wooden cup if I cou'd get No other; & be happy to the last if I cou'd not get a silk gown I cou'd get a Linsay one & so it kept Me warm I owed Not. My borrowed bed I told them was down & I cou'd Lay Me down & sleep composely on it without feeling one thorn which was More than the Creatures cou'd Do who had rob'd Me: but all that vext Me was that I shou'd be so far humbled as to be ranked as a fellow creature with such brutes for I cou'd not think they cou'd be call'd Men, so I ran on & was happy. . . . am not sorry at anything I said for I now defye the Villans.

It was ruled that Grace's inheritance could not revert to her until her husband died. He outlived her, but their daughter Betsy claimed the property in 1802 after her father's death.

The diary entry appears on page 126 of *In the Words of Women*.

### **PATRIOT** viewpoint

Annis Boudinot Stockton was one of the best known and accomplished poets in eighteenth century America. The wife of Richard Stockton, a prominent lawyer, delegate to the Continental Congress, and signer of the Declaration of Independence, she presided over their home called "Morven," near

Princeton. During the Revolution the British ransacked Stockton's estate, destroyed his library, drove off his stock, and took him prisoner. The ill effects of captivity and the stress of financial impoverishment took their toll on Stockton's health, and he succumbed to cancer in 1781. "Confined to the chamber of a dear and dying husband," Annis gave voice to her grief in this poem:

I.  
Sleep, balmy sleep, has clos'd the eyes of all  
But me! ah me! no respite can I gain;  
Tho' darkness reigns o'er the terrestrial ball,  
Not one soft slumber cheats this vital pain.  
.....

III.  
While through the silence of this gloomy night,  
My aching heart reverb'rates every groan;  
And watching by that glimmering taper's light,  
I make each sigh, each mortal pang my own.

IV.  
But why should I implore sleep's friendly aid?  
O'er me her poppies shed no ease impart;  
But dreams of dear departing joys invade,  
And rack with fears my sad prophetick heart.

V.  
But vain is prophesy when death's approach,  
Thro' years of pain, has sap'd a dearer life,  
And makes me, coward like, myself reproach,  
That e'er I knew the tender name of wife.

VI.  
Oh! could I take the fate to him assign'd!  
And leave the helpless family their head!  
How pleas'd, how peaceful, to my lot resign'd,  
I'd quit the nurse's station for the bed.  
.....

This excerpt is from *In the Words of Women*, Chapter 7, page 201.

## **PATRIOT**

### **“Warm Whigs”**

As with all memoirs, written as they are in later life, one cannot assume they represent an accurate picture of the events described. Bearing this in mind, Eliza Morton Quincy's recollections written in 1821 are nevertheless revealing. (See her [description](#) of George Washington's entry into New York City in 1789.) She was an infant at the beginning of the Revolution so her account of the actions of her father during that stressful time represents family lore. It does give some idea of what pressures he and others like him were subject to. Soon after the marriage of [my parents, my father] . . . entered into business as a merchant, and soon acquired a large property. He made two voyages to England, or "Home" as it was always termed by the colonists, to arrange correspondences with merchants and with manufacturing establishments. He owned a large brick house in Water Street, New York, in which he resided;

and also a wharf behind it, which extended below low water mark. His ships used to unlade into his spacious warehouse situated on the wharf. . . . At that period, the importations of merchants comprehended a great variety of articles. [My father's] large establishment was filled with every description of English manufactures, from the finest laces to broadcloth and blankets, and also those of other countries,—superb mirrors, engravings, china, glass, &c —often sent directly from the manufacturers, on the most advantageous terms; and his commercial relations were, therefore, very prosperous.

In 1774, the family of my parents consisted of four children,—two sons, and my sister Margaret and myself, then an infant. From the commencement of the Revolution, my father and all the connections of our family took the side of liberty and the Colonies, and became what were called warm Whigs. After the scenes attendant on the Stamp Act and the Tea Tax, when war seemed inevitable, and when the “Asia,” a British man-of-war, came into the East River, opposite [our] house, and threatened to fire upon the city, he determined to leave New York. He was promised protection and security if he would remain a loyal and quiet subject; but he did not hesitate to abandon his property, rather than submit to the unjust measures of a government which had become tyrannical and oppressive to his country. A vessel belonging to him had arrived from England, laden with valuable merchandise. All the goods in the warehouse were hastily packed and sent on board this ship, which, with its cargo, was ordered round to Philadelphia,—a place then considered out of reach of the British,—under the care of Mr. Gallaudet, the confidential clerk of [my father]; where they were sold at high prices, and the money deposited in the Loan Office. The amount thus devoted to the use of the American Army by [my father] caused him to be denominated by the British ” the Rebel Banker.” As he was not able, and his sons were not old enough, to fight the battles of his country, he said he would pay those who could, to the last farthing he possessed.

[My parents] sent over their furniture, and all their effects which could be removed, to Elizabethtown in New Jersey, and hastily followed with their family; abandoning their excellent house and all their real estate to their enemies, who soon took possession of their pleasant dwelling, and appropriated every thing to their own use during the seven succeeding years. My father's property was also diminished by the depreciation of the paper money issued by Congress, in which currency he was obliged to receive all debts due to him. The partial interest allowed by Congress for the money deposited in the Loan Office, after the French Loan was negotiated, was paid in specie; and this, together with merchandise taken out of New York and sold or exchanged for articles requisite for the family, furnished their means of support during the war.

The quoted passage is from the [Memoir](#) of the Life of Eliza Susan Morton Quincy, pages 17-18.

## **PATRIOT**

Watertown July 5, 1775

Dear Sir,—

I shall not attempt to give you a description of the ten fold difficulties that surround us. You have doubtless had it from better hands. Yet I cannot forbear to drop a tear over the inhabitants of our capital, most of them sent naked from the city to seek a retreat in villages, and to cast themselves on the charity of the first hospitable hand that will receive them. Those who are left behind are exposed to the daily insults of a foe lost to that sense of honour, freedom and valour, once the characteristic of Britons, and even of the generosity and humanity which has long been the boast of all civilized nations. And while the plagues of famine, pestilence and tyranny reign within the walls, the sword is lifted without, and the artillery of war continually thundering in our ears.

The seacoasts are kept in constant apprehensions of being made miserable by the depredations of the once formidable navy of Britain, now degraded to a level with the corsairs of Barbary.

At the same time they are piratically plundering the Isles, and pilfering the borders to feed the swarms of veteran slaves shut up in the town. They will not suffer a poor fisherman to cast his hook in the ocean to bring a little relief to the hungry inhabitants without the pitiful bribe of a dollar each. . . .

The venal system of administration appears to the astonishment of every good man in the corruption, duplicity and meanness, which run through every department, and while the faithless Gage will be marked with infamy for breach of promise, by the impartial historian, will not the unhappy Bostonians be reproached with a want of spirit in putting out of their own power to resent repeated injuries by giving these arms into the hand, which would have been better placed in the heart of a tyrant.

And now they are forbidden even to look out from their own house tops when he sends out his ruffians to butcher their brethren, and wrap in flames the neighbouring towns. But I think this advertisement was as great a mark of timidity as the transaction was of a savage ferocity. . . .

But nothing that has taken place is more regretted than the death of your friend, the brave, the humane, the good Dr. Warren. And though he fell covered with laurels and the wing of fame is spread over his monument, we are almost led to enquire why the useful, the virtuous patriot is cut off ere he reaches the meridian of his days. . . .

The letter can be found in the Warren-Adams Letters Vol. I (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1917), pages 71-72.

## **PATRIOT**

Having fled Philadelphia when the British occupied the city Alice Lee Shippen took refuge at the Lee family home in Virginia. She felt out of touch there and was frantic with worry about her husband and Tommy their son. She wrote:

Stratford 17 Janry. 1778 My dear Mr. Shippen,  
What is become of you & my dear Tommy—it is almost 3 months since I left my dear Mr. Shippen & I have received but one short letter with my gown & apron but you are harried with business, your good for nothing Doctors & commisarys give you all the Trouble. O! when shall I have you all to myself? & it is now two months since I parted with our dear our only son, the pledge of our love & have not heard once from him—surely if he was well he wou'd contrive a letter to me, he is certainly ill or dead of that vile feaver Crags son had, my fears render me so miserable it is impossible for me to stay here where I find I cannot hear from those I love most. I shall return to Frederick-Town where you must my dear Mr. Shippen get a lodging for me. . . . If I cou'd correspond with you . . . at this distance it would be some thing, but when I set down to write I feel myself tied up [with] the uncertainty of what I write getting to you only, I cou'd now fill a volume but no matter you shall know all when we meet. Perhaps it will be in the world of spirits & then we can convey our Ideas with delightful ease & certainty.

Are you sorry for the Ladies of Philadelphia? Had they taken my advice they wou'd now have breathed in free air as I do. O! how good it is to do right, My dear Mr Shippen tho' we are loosing thousands having loved [our] country and its interests invariably more than supports me under every difficulty. I feel I love in my very heart the true liberty of America the liberty of saying & doing every thing that is beautiful & proper. Adieu my dear faithful husband, direct for me at the Post Office at Leedstown & believe for it is really true that I am intirely & unalterably Yours

Alice Shippen's letter appears on page 119 of *In the Words of Women*.

## **PATRIOT**

Benjamin Franklin's favorite sibling (and one of my favorite women of this period), Jane Mecom, writing from Rhode Island in 1775, urges her brother to enjoy his old age and let younger men do their bit. Little did she know that he would spend many more years serving his country both in America and in France.

Warwick July 14—1775 I could have wishd you had been left to yr own Option to have assisted in Publick Affairs so as not to fatigue you two much but as yr Talents are superour to most other men I cant help desiering yr country should Injoy the benifit of them while you live, but cant bare the thought of yr going to England again. ... you Positively must not go, you have served the Publick in that way beyond what any other man can Boast till you are now come to a good old Age & some younger man must now take that Painfull service upon them. Dont go, pray Dont go. you certainly may do as much good hear as surcumstances are at present. ...

The excerpt is from *The Letters of Benjamin Franklin & Jane Mecom* edited by Carl Van Doren (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), pages 161-62.