

PRESENTATION OF JUDY ROWE TO SLHS ON 1/10/95 - "GEORGE WASHINGTON'S SECRET

ARMY"
I guess I grew up in the best of two worlds because we had the old values andwe were coming into the modern world. In the back of my house was a brook called the Dayfoot Brook. And, of course, I was curious; I always had to know who? What? Where? When? And why? My grandfather proceeded to tell me the story of the Dafoe Brothers. How they had walked down the brook, which had been called the Dafoe Brook. After they left our area and became Loyalist Rangers during the Revolution and fought at the Battle of Bennington, it became the Dayfoot Brook. He proceeded to tell me their story. While I was in Canada researching, I always had to go into book shops. You are going to find a number of books by Mary Beacock Fryer, that are available through the Upper Hudson Federation. This one I happen to own, and you can borrow it. It is interesting because you are going to find Loyalists in here whose descendents are in the DAR, especially the Lansing brothers from Lansingburgh. I am going to give you a shortened version tonight, if you don't mind. I am going to tell you about Loyalists in Rensselaer County and some of the things they did. 017

This, referring to her map of New York, is a pie-shaped wedge between the New England States. The white was our settlement; everything else was either forest or belonged to the British. The British felt that if they could win New York they could win the Revolution. New York had the largest percentage of Loyalists of any state. The western valley was held by the Johnson Family and the people loyal to them. The upper part, the English held, and there is this little bitty part down here in the Hudson Valley - this was rather remote - that they felt they had to worry about. Then Benedict Arnold came along with the wonderful idea of capturing Fort Ticonderoga. That gave us a little more up here. 025

They decided one of the very best ways of dividing New York State was a very concentrated level of spying, which they did. Their spies came up and down the Hudson River. They went to a point here on Lake Champlain, Point Royale was one of them - there was a blockhouse up there - a replica of the one they had. I don't know if it is still there. This blockhouse sent all of the orders for the spies for the Vermont area, the Massachusetts area, and New York State. Most of them traveled through this area, and Rensselaer County had a lot of them. In fact, I just wonder how we won. The British Secret Service, the British spies, were the best spies in the world, from the time of Queen Elizabeth; this is what the Americans were up against. They had a spy service in place before the Revolution. If you stop to think about the Revolution - we were not winning it - we were losing it. Then Nathan Hale was hanged, and the uproar over his hanging through the ranks of George Washington's officers forced him to have a secret service - George Washington's Secret Army. He had spies, and he had counter spies. If you read The Spy by James Fennimore Cooper, this was actually the life of Cosby, who was one of George Washington's super spies. He was with the British - joined the British, who thought he was theirs, but he was actually Washington's spy. These agents went up and down the Hudson Valley. They agreed to throw away all the papers so that no one would ever know that these people were spies because that was a very low calling in those days. GW never burned his. In Albany there was a mayor, in whose home was a packet of papers from his uncle. He decided to burn them, but a maid pulled them out of the fire; they were Culpepper, Jr.'s papers, so that is how we know who 045 075

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Culpepper was, and you can read more about this in The Secret History of the American Revolution, by Carl Van Doren, George Washington's Spies on Long Island, by Morton Pennypacker, from Some Veterans of the American Revolution, by John Bowman, Muster and Pay Rolls of the Revolution, from the New York Historical Society. They have a lot down there. 095

CLINTON

Rensselaer County was right in the middle of this. One morning Governor opened his door, and he had hanged Robert Taylor from the Claverack and Kinderhook area because he had blundered into his camp, when he was having breakfast. The man sat down, and was talking to him about the meeting, when all of a sudden he realized he had blundered into the New York Governor's home. He was a British spy; Clinton had his second British spy. He was tried and was taken to Gallows Hill, which is near the old education building in Albany, and he was hanged. so we begin to find different men appearing and disappearing in Rensselaer County. For awhile, they would come in and be there, and then they would disappear. Slowly, the Committee of Safety began to realize that these people were coming in and out of Renss. County, and they were going north and they were going south, and they were British agents.

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There was a Dr. Smythe, and he was called "Hudibras." He set up safe houses from Claverack to Fort Edward. One of the houses he set up was a house owned by Benjamin Grisham in Lansingburgh. The house still stands today; this was a safe house for the British agents. Lansingburgh was called New City at that time. Stone Arabia and New City. There is another Stone Arabia in the western part of the state. When New City was formed by the Lansings they took that name. Lansingburgh was a city of both Patriots and Loyalists. During the day, the Patriots held rein. At night, no one could get out of Lansingburgh. The Loyalists ringed Lansingburgh at night. You had to consider that the Town of Brunswick had a lot of Palatine Germans there. So did we here in Sand Lake. George Henry Cipperley made guns for the rebels, and every night the Loyalists tried to capture the guns. He actually had to hide his tools because the Loyalists were actually active in Sand Lake. Sand Lake was not very big; we had West Sand Lake. But they were German Lutherans, and they were loyal to the Crown, just as a lot of the Palatine Germans were because the King had brought them over here to the Colonies. You go to Brunswick, and you find Adam Beame, and there is still a discussion as to whether he was a Loyalist or whether he was just duped into taking the spies out of the area..You go into the area where I am from - Petersburg - and you had the Dafoes - five brothers and some of their sons that walked out of this area and joined the British. You had the Bonesteels, who were Tories. You had one man in this town, whose name I promised not to tell; one son was a Tory. He was killed at the Battle of Bennington. When asked if he wanted his son to be put on a cart and brought back to the valley to be buried, he looked at the three sons beside him, and said, "These are my sons. I have no other son." And in the family Bible there is a little slit in it where that child's birth is actually cut out. Feelings ran very, very high in the area. Going back to Dr. Smythe: he set all these houses up in the area. He went into Albany and Cohoes. He stayed for awhile in Fort Edward and in Lansingburgh. 140

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When you get into the genealogies of Rensselaer County, you find some very odd things. You find that all of a sudden Germans are popping up in 065

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families, and the German families went to Bennington, went to Saratoga, and actually picked out sons, and your're finding in Bibles twenty-three and twenty-four old sons. Hessian soldiers were marched from Bennington down Pownal Rd. to Boston, and not too many of them made it to the ships because they were taken to Rensselaer County, and many, many people gained family members. These people were very loyal, and there is not one proven instance of these people spying for the British. *Blasee at 170 360*

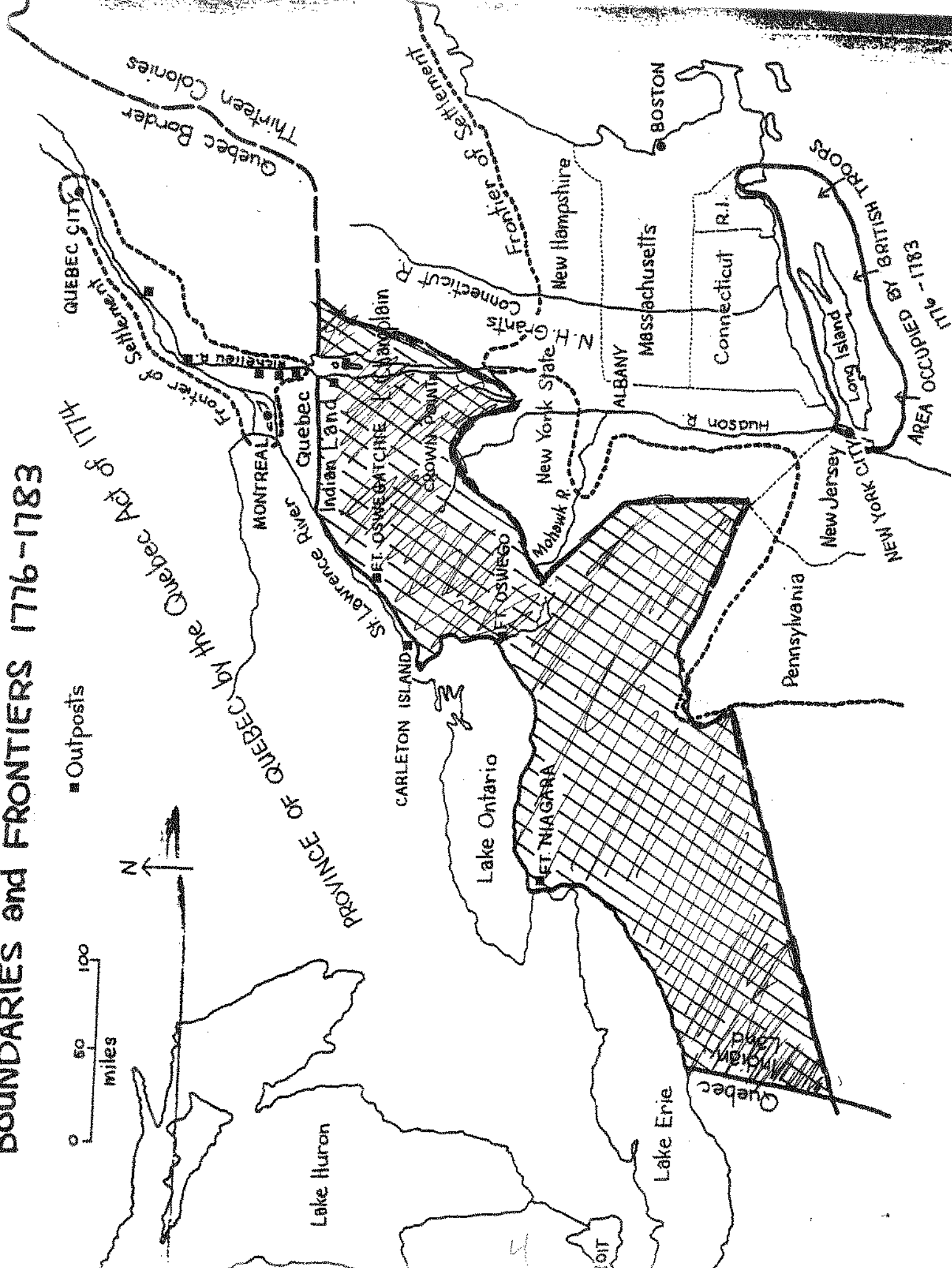
They had a peculiar way of identifying each other and signaling each other; there would be so many candles in the windows at a certain time; there would be so many black petticoats on the line; so many bars would be down on fences; so many cattle would be there; and Justice Sh..... sent out a directive to the blockhouse that they were to find a large flat stone or a hollow tree where they could leave messages. Many of the women - their husbands were rebels - their fathers, Loyalists. There were several families in Rensselaer County with those living under the same roof with divided loyalties. One of the Knickerbockers was a Loyalist, and the rest of the family was very loyal to the Patriotic cause. He wasn't that much a rebel, but he believed in the King. *3 20*

As the war progressed, Washington was getting better information. His spy service was formed. The British were going up and down the valley. Another route was 9 and 20. Another was the Old King's Highway through the Pine Bush. You can barely see it today. The main part of all of this was Troy, Cohoes, and Lansingburgh because we were at the mouth of the Mohawk River, the spies from down river would come here to get their orders. The spies would then take their information to the blockhouse in Canada. The spies from the Mohawk Valley would come into Albany or they would come into the Cohoes area. If they could get across the river, they would come to Lansingburgh. We had our own George Washington spy service. It didn't work very well in this area because people didn't work at it. The British were highly organized, and we weren't. The British spy service held rein in this area, and the Loyalists held rein in the county at night. They were here in Sand Lake. They were in Brunswick. They were in Lansingburgh, and they were all Loyalists. And you don't read about it in history books. When you get these papers from Canada, and you start reading the names, you begin to realize we had a very, very hard time of it, and it's a wonder we won the Revolution. But once they had won the Battle of Bennington, you had the Dafoe Brothers leading the British to Bennington the easiest way. It was neighbor against neighbor for one of the first times. If you went into Massachusetts, it was usually the British against the rebels, but here we were fighting neighbor against neighbor, because they had the Loyal Rangers, the Queen's Rangers. These were all Loyalists regiments. *329 340 350*

If you would like a list of the books, it is interesting reading. Mrs. Rowe terminated her presentation, and said that she would like to give her complete program on the subject at another time. *380*

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BOUNDARIES and FRONTIERS 1776-1783



This is part of the secret code used by General Washington, Benjamin Tallmadge, Robert Townsend, and Abraham Woodhull, during the Revolutionary War.

USE OF MEANS		USE OF MEANS		USE OF MEANS	
e	a	711	General Washington	15	advice
f	b	712	Clinton	28	appointment
g	c			60	better
h	d	713	Tryon	121	day
i	e			156	deliver
j	f			151	disorder
a	g	721	Major Tallmadge	178	enemy
b	h		alias John Bolton	174	express
c	i	722	Abraham Woodhull	230	guineas
d	j		alias Samuel Culper	286	ink
o	k	723	Robert Townsend	309	infantry
m	l		alias Samuel Culper, Jr.	317	importance
n	m	724	Austin Roe	322	inquiry
p	n			345	knowledge
q	o	725	Caleb Brewster	347	land
r	p			349	low
k	q	726	Rivington	355	lady
l	r			356	letter
u	s	727	New York	371	man
v	t			476	parts
w	u	728	Long Island	585	refugees
x	v			592	ships
y	w	729	Setauket	660	vigilant
z	x			680	war
s	y	745	England	691	written
t	z			708	your
341	January	e	1	73	camp
215	February	f	2		
374	March	g	3		
22	April	i	4		
373	May	k	5		
336	June	m	6		
337	July	n	7		
29	August	o	8		
616	September	q	9		
462	October	u	0		
427	November				
154	December				

unfriendly	629	they	629	unfriendly	676	unfriendly	716
unfriendly	630	they	630	unfriendly	677	unfriendly	719
unfriendly	631	they	631	unfriendly	678	unfriendly	720
unfriendly	632	they	632	unfriendly	679	unfriendly	721
unfriendly	633	they	633	unfriendly	680	unfriendly	722
unfriendly	634	they	634	unfriendly	681	unfriendly	723
unfriendly	635	they	635	unfriendly	682	unfriendly	724
unfriendly	636	they	636	unfriendly	683	unfriendly	725
unfriendly	637	they	637	unfriendly	684	unfriendly	726
unfriendly	638	they	638	unfriendly	685	unfriendly	727
unfriendly	639	they	639	unfriendly	686	unfriendly	728
unfriendly	640	they	640	unfriendly	687	unfriendly	729
unfriendly	641	they	641	unfriendly	688	unfriendly	730
unfriendly	642	they	642	unfriendly	689	unfriendly	731
unfriendly	643	they	643	unfriendly	690	unfriendly	732
unfriendly	644	they	644	unfriendly	691	unfriendly	733
unfriendly	645	they	645	unfriendly	692	unfriendly	734
unfriendly	646	they	646	unfriendly	693	unfriendly	735
unfriendly	647	they	647	unfriendly	694	unfriendly	736
unfriendly	648	they	648	unfriendly	695	unfriendly	737
unfriendly	649	they	649	unfriendly	696	unfriendly	738
unfriendly	650	they	650	unfriendly	697	unfriendly	739
unfriendly	651	they	651	unfriendly	698	unfriendly	740
unfriendly	652	they	652	unfriendly	699	unfriendly	741
unfriendly	653	they	653	unfriendly	700	unfriendly	742
unfriendly	654	they	654	unfriendly	701	unfriendly	743
unfriendly	655	they	655	unfriendly	702	unfriendly	744
unfriendly	656	they	656	unfriendly	703	unfriendly	745
unfriendly	657	they	657	unfriendly	704	unfriendly	746
unfriendly	658	they	658	unfriendly	705	unfriendly	747
unfriendly	659	they	659	unfriendly	706	unfriendly	748
unfriendly	660	they	660	unfriendly	707	unfriendly	749
unfriendly	661	they	661	unfriendly	708	unfriendly	750
unfriendly	662	they	662	unfriendly	709	unfriendly	751
unfriendly	663	they	663	unfriendly	710	unfriendly	752
unfriendly	664	they	664	unfriendly	711	unfriendly	753
unfriendly	665	they	665	unfriendly	712	unfriendly	754

Notes from Judy Rowe:

Dafoe Family -- Abraham - Conrad - John Jr. and Senior - Petersburg

An Account of Losses sustained by
 ABRAHAM DAFOE late Corp^t in Major Dayfoot's
 Rogers Corps of Kings Rangers
 formerly from the Colony of New
 York & County of Albany--
 Viz:

A Farm consisting of 100 Acres of Land with a
 Dwelling House & Improvements thereon
 One yoke of oxen
 3 Cows 14 4 Swine 3.10
 130 Buss of Wheat @ 5 per Bushel
 20 Buss of Corn @ 2/6 per Busehl
 50 Buss of Oats @ 2/ per Bushel
 400 feet of Boards @ 6/ per hundd
 1 Gun valued at
 Household Furniture
 Farming Utensils

100	
12	
17	10
34	10
2	10
5	
1	4
1	10
5	
2	
<hr/>	
£ 184	4
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Fought at the battle of Bennington for the
 New York Currency
 British

27th Sept
 Evidence on the Claim of AB. DAFOE
 late of Albany County

Claimant sworn,

He resided at St. Johns in 1783.

Is a Native of America, lived in Albany County--joined
 Genl. Burgoyne was taken in Bennington fight, got into Canada
 in 1780--Served Major Rogers Rangers till they were discharged.
 Had a Farm in Little Hoosick it was a lease of 100 Acres granted
 by Abraham Tenbrook 14 years ago to Claimant's Father who gave
 to his son immediately--he was in possession--had cleared 15
 Acres--built a House was to have it 10 years free and then pay
 10 p. produce--Vals the Improvs at 400 Dollars--Lost 1 Yoke of
 Oxen--3 Cows 2 Hogs--Grain of various kinds most of it in the
 Ground, furniture utensils--
 Left these Things when he went to Burgoyne--the rebels
 had them--

Peter Young, Sworn--

Knew Claimt he joined Burgoyne was afterwards in Rogers
 Rangers.
 Knew his place--14 or 15 Acres clear, 3 Cows, 1 Yoke
 of Oxen--they were taken away when he joined Burgoyne all his
 other things were taken--

Corp. Abraham Dafoe.
 He walked under the cover of darkness following the
 Dayfoot--to the Little Hoosick--the Hoosick walking north
 to the home of a known Tories. Fought at Bennington, taken
 prisoner. Escaped flew to Canada.
 joined Major Rogers Rangers. raiding
 homes and capturing - Col. Smith. 7

New York State if you check a map, note the shape of our state, a rough triangle separating the New England States from the rest of the Thirteen Colonies.

Geo. of the New York Col.

Our ~~topography~~ made it easy for Spies to travel to and from New York State. The water route using Lakes Champlain and George, then the Hudson river rising in the Adirondack mountains, flowed South ~~thru~~ through the Eastern part of the state to New York City and the sea.

The Mohawk River flowed east, ~~empting~~ emptying into the Hudson at ~~the~~ Cohoes, across from Troy.

Traveling from the great Lakes, through water ways, the Finger Lakes, using the Mohawk Valley and its many Tories families. Relying on the many Tory families for food and shelter. Gathering information and reporting the plans to willing Tories, for a network of safe houses (the spies needed rest and food). Also the routes to be used for Tory families ~~in~~ fleeing New York State.

A Block house still stands on Valcour Island, Spies from all over New England were paid and given new orders. Allowed to rest for awhile, ~~and~~ thus stay in out of ~~the~~ sight in case some one was searching for them.

~~Many~~ Army and militia men were kidnapped for information and ransom, were forced to make the hazardous trip to Island.

George Washington's Secret Road

George Washington ordered a secret Service formed to pass information on British movements in and around New York. Untill then gathering information was done by people loyal to the American cause. They some times were wrong about strengh and armament .They needed facts not guess work.

In New York CULPPER SR. Abraham Woodhull -Culpper Jr. Robert Townsend headed the network of Spies. One a woman known only by the code number was sentenced to the hulks in New York Harbor(prison ships)even though Pregnant. She gave birth to a son, who was named Robert Townsent. Townsed took care of the boy. Agent died on the Prison ship, and was buried on the Battery.

Austin Roe was the agent who made trips to Long Island disguised as peddler.

John Jay's brother is credited with inventing the secret ink used. Roe was the courier, sometimes meeting Calb Brewster's whale boats. Agents and Messages were rowed across Long Island Sound.

Books to read;

Secret History of the American Revolution; Carl Van Doran

General Washington's Spies on Long Island; Morton Pennypacker

Some Veterns of the American Revolution; John E. Bowman

Muster and Pay Rolls of the Revolution;; New Historical Society 2-Vol.
(Spie payroll in Vol. #2)

Fiction

The Secret Road; by Landcaster(exallent)

The old POST ROAD TO BOSTON was used by both Americans and British depending on who held Boston. THE OLD KINGS HIGHWAY from Albany to Schneckady, through the Mohawk Valley.

THE POWELL- HULL- MEMORIAL-notes 11,000 person's Perished in Prison Hulks such as the Notorius Prison Ship -JERSEY==