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# Birch Bark Express

The newsletter of Butler's Rangers

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Editor: *Private Michael Trout, UE*

January 2004

## Commander's notes

*Lieutenant Dave Solek*

The forecast of events for the 2004 season looks to be less hectic—**huzza!** This year represents the 225th Anniversary of 1779, and most military actions took place in the months of July and August. Stony Point and the Battle of Newtown (both in New York State) are going to be reenacted around their actual dates. Organizers of smaller 225th shows have moved their events either before or after these summer months. Add Quebec in the middle and you have a full summer. For those going to Quebec, make it a family vacation. Old Quebec is a charming place and it reminds me of some European cities. More details on Quebec should come out in the *BAR Courier*, and a comprehensive Web site for Quebec is promised.

During our time off in winter quarters, remember to repair equipment, patch clothing, replace worn-out items, and load up at least one pouch of blank ammunition. Unfortunately, this is also the time that we all get lethargic and put on extra pounds. Yeah, we all know that clothing shrinks over the winter. Put into practice a plan to eat wisely and exercise, and you'll be surprised how well that clothing fits come spring.

Speaking of practice, did you ever notice that you get a little rusty in performing the manual of arms and maneuvers after the winter? Who wants to drill on the parade ground for hours? Hmm....so would you like to participate in a short trek with tactical challenges included? I am going to try to organize an early Sunday morning program at this year's BAR School of the Soldier. As I am not in charge of this year's School, my plan is to start before the regular classes and limit it to us and a few others, otherwise all will want to join in and it will become a daylong tactical. (Some will remember that we did something like this at the School a couple years ago.) My goal is to clean out the "winter cobwebs," learn new skills, and of course have fun!

Plans are in the works to do the Battle of Minisink 225th in the middle of May, and on Sunday a free-flowing tactical trek is being planned. This little learning trek at the BAR School is going to act as a warm-up session.

I think you will all agree that rather than do more shows, let's do more **at** shows!

Like the BAR motto says: "Recreating the life and times of the common soldier of the War for Independence!"

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## **2004 membership dues and annual meeting**

2004 membership dues are due no later than 29 February 2004. BAR dues are still \$25 per head of household, plus \$5 for each second and third member 16 years of age or older, and free for each additional member thereafter. Our company dues are still \$10 per household. Please send your BAR form and a check for both amounts payable to Susquehanna Flintlocks. Mail to our treasurer Don Paukett, 2064 County Road 32, Greene NY 13778-2338. Rangers not making proper payments will not be allowed to play, and will be in the first wave sent out to test the accuracy of enemy cannon and rifle fire. Please sign up and pay dues for yourself and family members that may participate. The entry on our roster provides proper recognition and addresses some liability concerns. Those who pay their BAR membership with another unit, please send your check for our company dues (\$10) made out to the above and a photocopy of your other BAR unit form to Don's address above.

Our annual meeting is 28 February. The campaign plans for the upcoming year will be presented and debated. We will meet at the home of Donald and Diane Paukett in Greene, New York. Please try to arrive by 11:30 A.M. as we will have a brunch planned. Bring something to pass (if you wish) and we will have a cooked turkey or ham ready to go. The meeting will be in our new addition--the fireside room.

### Directions:

A. From the North, take Route 81 south to Whitney Point, then Route 206 to Greene. Go through Greene, over the river, past the railroad tracks, and then take the next left, marked "Juilien Hill." This turns into County Road 32 and we are approximately 4 miles.

B. From the West, take Route 17 to Route 81 north and exit at Route 12. Go north to Greene and turn right at the traffic light onto Route 206. Go through Greene, over the river, past the railroad tracks, and then take the next left, marked "Juilien Hill." This turns into County Road 32 and we are approximately 4 miles.

C. From the East take Route 88 to Bainbridge, then Route 206 to Greene. As you enter Greene, there is a large cemetery on the right. Make a right turn at the large colonial house at this corner onto Juilien Hill. We are approximately 4 miles.

We have a white house with black shutters, a red barn with white x's, a stone wall, and a wooden angel. Look for "2064" on the mail box.

All lost Rangers should beware of advice given by the local rebels. You may call us at (607) 656-4589.

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## **As ye sew...**

The BAR CCM (Civilian Class Membership) is planning a series of sewing workshops for the winter. The series starts with a fabric shopping trip in southwest Connecticut 17 January. We'll hit Banksville Fabrics, Davidsons, and The Barn, which have wonderful collections of linen, wools, and silks respectively. Then on 21 February we'll have a sewing day at the Old Barracks Museum, Trenton, N.J., and again on 6 March at Peebles Island Resource Center, Waterford, N.Y. The event is geared toward women, but all are invited for instruction and fellowship. So bring your winter sewing projects and join us for the fun. See the BAR *Courier* for more details.

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## After action reports

### **Battle of Rhode Island 225th      Portsmouth, R.I.      30-31 August**

Despite reports of possible bad weather, the only rain was late Saturday night for only about 15 minutes.

Arriving early Saturday morning, I found that I was the only Butler's Ranger there. This remained the case throughout. The King's Rangers allowed me to fall in with them, so Kristin and I set up our tent on their company street. The morning Trooping of Colors was much quicker than at Monmouth--no more than 20 minutes long. Saturday was still very humid and breathing was not that easy.

The turnout for the event was fairly impressive. Saturday's battle was fought through the woods where there was a terrible overgrowth of thorn bushes. We were fighting off of any real path. This was very uncomfortable since the going was difficult with the unsteady footing, with a big hill to climb. These conditions combined with the humidity were very tiring. Eventually, we ended up in a clearing where the spectators could see us all. A large cannon barrage (there was much more artillery than at Monmouth) went off. A standoff existed for about 15 minutes.

The Rangers and Provincials then moved around the enemy flank, going back into the woods (urgh), and took the redoubt from behind. The rest of the army crushed the Rebels. It was a glorious day for the King's troops. As I returned to my tent, Kristin greeted me and was happy to see that I was still alive.

That night it grew cool, but much more comfortable as the humidity dropped. Sleeping was a snap and we awoke to a beautiful Sunday. There was no morning ceremony, so we took in the musical demonstration and then the highlight of everything I saw: a flogging. A poor soldier of the 4th Regiment was flogged for stealing the watch of an officer in the 10th Regiment. I am sure the rascal will think twice before he does such activity again.

The Sunday battle was excellent. Fighting through several fields we finally pushed the Rebels past a stone wall and to the very end of the field. I was trying to ignore the purely pro-Rebel blather coming from the narrator as I fought on. But I met my end 10 minutes before the long battle came to an end--a Rebel bullet found my right leg. After a parley was beaten, my wound healed quickly. I rose to join the King's, who were still very nice to me, and I thanked them for allowing my presence. At least Butler's Rangers were represented at this large and amazing event.

Behind the troops, Kristin made the whole trek there and back barefoot. It was a couple of miles at least and she had many blisters. She was a true hard-core Ranger herself and I am proud of her. She showed that Butler's CCM corps is the toughest too. Huzzah! She also gave many "God Save the King" yells to the column along the way, lifting the spirits of the men.

We had a great time, although we wished there had been other Butler's Rangers around to eat, talk, and generally share camaraderie with.

-- *Pvt. Mickey Wind*

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**Cherry Valley Raid 225th Cherry Valley, N.Y. 20-21 September**

Threatening weather again kept attendance low. As Saturday wore on, however, the dark low clouds and spitting rain slowly dissipated, eventually giving way to brilliant sunshine. Our pleasant if small location within the town itself was somewhat disturbed by the sound of souped-up autos running up and down the main street, although the citizens of Cherry Valley turned out enthusiastically.

The organizers of this BVMA event obtained the use of the extensive grounds of the Cherry Valley Rod and Gun Club for a nonpublic afternoon tactical. Our pre-battle preparations disclosed what seemed to be the usual problem for 2003: not enough Rebels. The BVMA Butler's Rangers, as well as several other Crown groups, agreed to serve as Rebel militia (TenBroeck's Company has a dual role as the 4th Tryon County Militia anyway). Off came the regimentals and on went the hunting shirts and frocks yet again. At the site, our goal as Rebels was to move as many men as possible to a "safe zone" near a large pond, while the Crown forces were to try to stop us.

About 20 of us entered the woods and began our race to safety. The woods were thick with imperfect visibility, but a lack of underbrush allowed for rapid movement. We knew we were outnumbered two or three to one, and we quickly ran into trouble. Fast-moving natives and Royal Yorkers kept on our flanks and threatened to surround us. We kept moving as fast as we could, but they kept up with us--or so we were told by our flank scouts, as most of us found it impossible to see the enemy. More than once we found a defensible position and halted, to determine the situation by listening for enemy movement. This was an eerie situation, as I could see or hear nothing, yet our officers were getting very nervous as they discussed the fact that we were virtually surrounded and natives were silently crawling into our lines. Rather than risk losing the entire force, we broke into groups and tried to escape in different directions. A brief but brisk firelight broke out as the Yorkers rushed our lines and we ran for our lives.

The Rangers made it to a hillside where we took a breather. As we were assembling our scattered force and determining our next move, gunfire broke out on the hill above us, accompanied by encouraging shouts from British officers and bloodcurdling howls from the natives. The enemy descended upon us with frightening speed as we scrambled for safety. In the confusion some of us went one way and some another, and I found myself in a group of four Rangers led by Sgt. Roger Garrison. He quickly determined we might escape by heading partway down the hill and then cutting right in hopes of getting around the enemy. This we did with remarkable speed, yet the Indian war cries got closer and closer. Running through the woods, we looked back over our shoulders toward the terrifying sounds, expecting to lose our scalps at any moment. I completely lost track of where we were or where we were supposed to go. But somehow we kept up the pace, and the howls began to move in a different direction--probably seeking other prey.

But soon we were aware that others were still pursuing us. Before long we could see they were Yorkers. Following Roger's commands, we were able to keep moving off their right flank, forcing them to keep turning. But the Yorkers kept gaining on us and we saw there were at least a dozen of them. We decided to end the futile race and gave ourselves to the

Yorkers, who turned out to be a very friendly group of fourteen. Ironically, we later discovered that we had almost made it to the “safe zone.” We also later discovered that the Rebels had been outnumbered five to one. All in all, a very energetic and enjoyable tactical, even if the setup hadn’t really been impartial.

Back at camp later in the afternoon, we watched a Cherry Valley Committee of Safety meeting, with the participants mostly speaking the same words as in a 1778 meeting (obtained from the original meeting minutes). Some of us shouted out our displeasure, but they nevertheless found a poor man guilty of treason against the Continental Congress and ordered him hanged on the spot. Despite protestations, this was done (using a hidden harness and carabiner clip). I was unable to obtain revenge as I was not able to return to Cherry Valley on Sunday.

*-- Pvt. Michael Trout.*

I arrived about 6:30 P.M. Saturday and joined Don Cox at a dinner provided by Kristen Gitler. I had just missed Mike Trout, who left for the evening, and Ernie Coon, who was traveling around the valley to find lodging for the night. Don and I later joined Dale Dennis in the Ranger and Indian camp for evening activities before retiring. Don Paukett and family would join us on Sunday afternoon.

In the morning we found out the tactical was canceled, so Ernie, Don, and myself walked down to the firehouse-sponsored breakfast and wasted no time in eating like .... hungry Rangers. What a spread--eggs, pancakes, French toast, sausage, bacon, muffins, donuts, and just too much food, too little bellies! We returned to camp stuffed and went sutlering.

In the afternoon our Ranger contingent marched down to the battlefield--why drive? I opted to be just an NCO for this weekend and Jim Stevens was commanding the combined Butler’s Rangers--a contingent of 22 muskets. We were to form a division with the Select Corps of Marksmen but that never happened. We ended up on the left flank with the Indians, but acting only as line troops. The Crown forces outnumbered the Rebels but the reenactment was to last 40 minutes--40 long minutes. Oh well, it is a public show and we have to do for the host town on their weekend.

In proper soldier-like fashion we marched back to camp taking casualties, to visit the local antique merchants near the encampment. Our scrambled command said our hasty goodbyes with thoughts of our next “raid” in German Flatts.

*-- Lt. Dave Solek*

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**Fort Klock Interrupted Harvest    St. Johnsville, N.Y.    27-28 Sept.**

Surprisingly for the 2003 season, sunny and warm weather greeted participants at this small BVMA event. But the year's other persistent problem--not enough Rebels--continued.

On Saturday, a delicious hot luncheon was served participants inside the hulking Dutch barn, and hearty conversation developed over many a plate. The call to arms cut the camaraderie short, and Butler's Rangers was again asked to shed our regimentals and fight against the King.

Under the able command of Lt. Jim Stevens, about a half dozen of us planned a lengthy march around the Crown's left flank and back into their rear. We successfully avoided their view by dodging behind various outbuildings before heading eastward out into thick brush. As we climbed a stone wall, I heard a familiar click but thought nothing of it. But then Bob Smith directly behind me said, "Check your weapons, boys, somebody's lost a frizzen." I looked down at my Bess and sure enough, my frizzen was gone, snapped off right at the angle. I didn't even realize I'd tapped a stone with the frizzen. Bob spotted it sitting right on top of the wall.

So now our little force had one less operating weapon. Still, we walked on, through some difficult brush, until coming out right where we wanted to be. The enemy didn't even see us directly behind them until we charged. Our attack, in conjunction with a charge from the rest of the Rebels, shattered the Crown forces. We quickly seized control of Fort Klock, taking several prisoners.

The small Fort Klock site is attractive, with well-maintained grounds as well as impressive structures such as the Fort (actually a very stoutly-built house) and the barn. Children play near a babbling brook while the flower and herb gardens lend their fragrance to the breezes. You can even easily stroll down to the shore of the Mohawk River. We regretted that other commitments prevented us from returning on Sunday.

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## **2nd Battle of German Flatts 225th Herkimer, N.Y. 4-5 October**

Arriving on Friday, Kristin and I found the beautiful Herkimer Home site to be well kept and the grounds very promising. Registration was in an unmarked open fly tent that took some questioning to find. However, the woman handling registration allowed us to breeze through, and her easy manner left no doubt that she was a friend of the King's government.

The Crown camp saw the Yorkers and Indians just east of the cemetery (which holds Rebel General Herkimer), with the rest of the force just south. We found Dale Dennis and helped set up each other's tents. We were expecting rain later that night so we wanted to make sure we were all organized to keep dry when this nasty event was to occur. After dinner, we engaged in pleasant conversation with Dale as well as with Dave Scott of the 84th Regiment. Turning in around midnight, we noticed the turnout was not looking good because of the weather forecast.

Saturday dawned cold and cloudy, and it would not be long until the rain fell. But more Butler's Rangers showed up, including Dave Solek; Mike, Luann, and Deborah ("howling chipmunk") Trout; and Ken Santilli (with the Indian Department). The Yorkers also turned out in force. However, other units did not show or sent very few men. The event was a few hundred short of what was expected because of the rain.

But this did not stop us from having a great time. After much talk, the battle began. Originally, we formed under a fly tent when someone stated we should just fight from under the fly tents in the form of a flying camp battle. This idea was much liked; however, we marched out to the field anyway and the rain stopped just then.

The battlefield was on flat land and the Rebels had one cannon. However, as they were nothing more than militia, they were in for a bad day. Along with the BVMA Rangers, we attacked on the right flank with the Yorkers, the 84th, and other units on the left. Ken was screaming like an animal and could have single-handedly scared off the Rebels and half of the Mohawk Valley's wildlife. The Rebels took many hits and the cannon was overrun. The reenactment suffered more "casualties" than did the actual raid of 1778—which had more men! Sunday would see similar results.

After the battle, the rain came down hard again. Dave and I spent time in the visitor center checking out the spectacular French and Indian art work on display. We also used the heat from the fireplace to dry our feet. Afterward we were treated to a perfectly hot dinner of beef stew from the Friends of the Herkimer Home. The night was cold and damp, but we fell asleep quickly as the rain had drained us of energy. Sunday dawned to a better day, but the weather was still cool. Ken Santilli had left us but we gained Don Cox. Kristin and I enjoyed some delicious fritters for the first time ever. She was also happy to be wearing a jacket loaned by Dave, aiding her comfort in the cool temperatures. She is excitedly waiting the cloak pattern from Luann so she can be warm and feminine and out of a soldier's jacket. Before the battle, Dave Scott allowed her to fire a carbine. It was the first time she ever fired any firearm. She was much excited by this.

We got the call to march off to fight. The Rebels brought a second cannon and the Crown forces had fewer men than the previous day. Again though we were pushing the Rebels back as we attacked in a similar formation. However, the Rebels made a better stand,

perhaps because of the absence of Ken's animalistic growls. The center of the Crown line took too many casualties to overrun the cannon, although the Rebel cannons took hits too. For a reenactment of a raid that was mostly bloodless, this event made it seem like Oriskany. At any rate, both sides retired from the field at the same time, ending this not-so-accurate account of the raid.

Another highlight of the event was purchasing Gavin Watt's *Battle of the Flockey* from the author himself. He signed it "To Kristin and Mickey--Butler's Nasty People." Of course, I do not think we are nasty and as a King's man himself we have become somewhat suspicious of his intentions.

This event was quite enjoyable despite the rain, the low turnout, and the higher than normal musket fouling. I would like to see the site invite everyone back on a better weekend. The hospitality and scenery were some of the best that I have encountered.

P.S.: Kristin wants to yell "three cheers for King George" and for us to respond sometime marching back from battle. She had much fun at Rhode Island cheering on the Crown forces in this manner and she was warmly cheered and greeted.

-- *Pvt. Mickey J. Wind*

My sincere compliments to all who attended German Flatts this weekend, and my complete understanding to those who didn't. It was a cold, rainy, raw Saturday all day. Just when we thought we would have a dry spell it would rain again, even as we tried to warm ourselves by the fire. By Sunday morning the temperature dropped to near freezing. These were similar conditions to the original Cherry Valley campaign in 1778, except we would have to add snow and take away the blankets and tents--then we would be on the same level as the original Rangers and Indians. Many weather-fatigued reenactors left. A few of us hardy (or is that stupid) souls remained to carry on Sunday, which ended up being sunny after all.

My shoes will take a week to dry and the soles are crumbling to pieces. I hope the shoe repair shop can resole them for a fifth time, or boys I won't be able to attend many shows 'till I get some new footgear. It's about that time anyway!

None the less, some good times were had and our mettle tested. Again, to those who braved the weather extremes, you deserve a good pat on the back and a hot cup of coffee.

-- *Lt. Dave Solek*

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## **Old Stone Fort Days                      Schoharie, New York 11-12 October**

Two bizarre phenomena took place at Schoharie that made the event utterly unlike the rest of the 2003 season. 1) There was no rain. In fact, brilliant blue skies dominated all weekend. Reenactors were seen wandering around in confusion, wondering why the heavens were not dumping water on them. 2) There was no shortage of Rebels. In fact, there was a severe shortage of Crown forces. Out of habit, some of us started to wander over to help out the Rebels before we realized our error.

The only Rangers on Saturday were Roger Garrison and Michael Trout. There were a few redcoat commanders, a small group of Royal Highland Emigrants, a handful of natives, and that was about it for the Crown. Roger and I helped out the natives in a morning scenario that saw us take a small group of “buildings” (actually just propped-up plywood and pallets), then withdraw before overwhelming numbers of Rebel militia.

A nice artillery demonstration (all Rebel, of course) rattled the countryside around lunchtime, and then we geared up for the afternoon scenario. To add to our meager numbers we received a large force of Albany

County Militia who graciously agreed to switch sides. These were parceled out so that Roger had about half a dozen “Rangers” under his command. Crown commander Paul Supley informed us that our task was to serve as a flying anti-cavalry platoon, quickly moving anywhere the Crown lines were threatened by the formidable Rebel cavalry.

As battle was joined, the Crown forces moved aggressively, more or less dominating the battlefield as the Rebel commanders seemed reluctant to engage us. Their cavalry rode from flank to flank, looking for an opportunity, and we matched their every move. They actually seemed afraid of us, and more than once we advanced against the horses, watching them retire back to safety. The battle ended after clearly being dominated by the Crown, which had not been the intended result.

The next morning saw spirited games played by the children, including rounders and other ball-throwing and -catching contests. This was most enjoyable to watch, as the children, ranging in age from 8 to 18, organized the games on their own and were obviously having great fun. More than a dozen children in period-correct clothing (including a couple dressed as natives) chattered and laughed as they ran and tumbled across the grass in the sunshine. More than one smiling adult noted that there was not a single video game, computer, or cellphone to be seen, yet these children were having the time of their lives.

Around lunchtime Scott Palmeri and John Ward of Walter Butler’s company showed up, reporting that they had just left the disappointing New Bridge Landing event in New Jersey. We were most pleased to see them, as some of our already-meager Crown forces had already left for home.

Early afternoon saw yet another despicable Committee of Safety meeting. This time the unfortunate victim of a “death” sentence was Paul Supley himself, although there was little we could do as he seemed guilty of the charges.

Before the Sunday battle, there was much talk about the Rebel timidity on Saturday. Today’s battle was to be a major Rebel victory, and many, including Paul, were concerned the

Rebels might not be aggressive enough to give a convincing performance. He said he had forcefully urged them to push us, hard, and that we would contest but give way. He also told us that if the Rebels didn't push us, we would push them--and show them how it should be done. This was Paul's last battle as BVMA Commander, and he wanted it to go well.

A small group of Rebels was to start the battle by seizing the "buildings" and setting them afire (they had been soaked with kerosene). We were to chase them away, then get hit by the main Rebel force and retreat off the field. Again our numbers were beefed up with Albany County Militia, who admitted they were getting a kick out of beating up on their comrades. Still, the Crown force was even smaller than Saturday's, and as the battle was joined we gave the Rebels plenty of opportunity to clobber us.

They wouldn't take it. The Rebel timidity was embarrassing, and we could see Paul fuming. They couldn't even get the "buildings" to burn. Finally he'd had enough and said, "all right, they were warned--let 'em have it." It was off to the races as we charged through the huge gaps the Rebels had allowed to form in their lines. If it had been a real battle we would have wiped them out, but as the public was watching we allowed the Rebels to backpedal to reform their lines. The battle ended in a "draw" but we all knew who the real victors were.

In a moving ceremony afterward, Paul's tenure as BVMA Commander was praised as he gave his farewell. Then he received a surprise: a new award given to him and several others, for BVMA members who have beaten cancer.

The public turnout was not as great as at previous years at Schoharie. Some felt that the weather was actually too good and that folks were probably getting in a last weekend of yard work. But there was talk that public attendance had been down all year and that it was not an encouraging trend. It's something we all need to think about, as public support is what keeps our hobby alive.

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**Fort Lee Historic Park Fort Lee, New Jersey 15-16 November**

Phil Malvagno (who had to leave at 1:00 P.M.), Ken Santilli, and myself were the only Rangers there (Sunday there were none). We did the Ft. Lee parade, ate lunch, and prepared for battle. Since I was the only Butler's Ranger there and Ken was dressed in his red Indian Department uniform, we became "the Lone Ranger and Tonto." I was to lead the Crown forces, but as I was still recovering from a cold and would have lost my voice, Todd Braisted took the command but left me as division commander for the troop (first formation) and dismissal after the battle. "The Lone Ranger and Tonto" were to chase off the pickets after they fired upon us--except the pickets were slow to fire. We got off the first shots and chased them off the field. Unfortunately we did our job too well, and when the Jägers in our skirmish command got on the field they complained they had nothing to do (next time try moving faster). The Continentals came back in numbers--two to three times our size--and the Crown forces gave ground and the field. With final formation and inspection, we all parted company and a group of us went off to a local restaurant to enjoy libations and light fare. A nice end to a beautiful day and a relaxed event.

-- *Lt. Dave Solek*

Dave, I think you are remiss in not mentioning that the good folks at Ft. Lee offered coffee and donuts after the parade. However, when one offers donuts they should not be in halves. I of course am skilled at slight of hand, and was able to grab a full donut. Luckily the BAR provided knockwurst for lunch which made it all better.

-- *Pvt. Phil Malvagno, Walter Butler's Company*

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**Battles of Trenton and Princeton Trenton, N.J. 27-28 December**

We were graced with nice weather for this time of year and it made the event enjoyable. The Congressional contingent consisted of about 65 muskets, three artillery pieces, and a few horse. The Crown totaled 40 muskets made up of the Guards, 17th Regiment, 1st NJVs, Von Donop's, Von Kniphausen's, Jägers, and a "composite company" of Provincial Rangers (Peter's Corps, 4th NJVs, and me leading "The Wild Bunch"). The Rangers acted as skirmishers in both spirited battles and we did a lot of running around--one NJV asked if we were going to do any more running as in the first battle. I replied "not too much." Just then we were given orders to chase after the Rebels, so outta the barracks we ran.... Oh well, isn't that what Rangers are supposed to do--lead the way? The riflemen and I also took on the task of chasing the viewing public off the battlefields. Who were we fighting with-- participants or public? It seemed to me both at times.

For lunch we were provided with potato soup, fresh baked bread, and apples. Hmm...a possible meal that we could make at future reenactments rather than raiding the roach wagons! That evening many of us enjoyed a sumptuous dinner, then gathered at the Masonic Lodge for music and dancing. Though this small building was crowded, all shared in a perfect ending to a memorable day and to the 2003 campaign season.

-- *Lt. Dave Solek*

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## Upcoming events (see [www.brigade.org](http://www.brigade.org) and [www.bvma.org](http://www.bvma.org) for details)

**Butler's Rangers (Frey's Coy.) Annual Meeting**      **Greene, N.Y.**      **28 February**

**BAR School of the Soldier**      **New Windsor, New York 24-25 April**

See *Commander's notes* for important information.

**Battle of Minisink 225th**      **Montgomery, New York**      **14-16 May**

A great victory for Butler's Rangers in 1779.

**NWTA Grand Encampment 30th Anniv.**      **Vincennes, Indiana**      **29-30 May**

The location is a state park, and the staff is working hard to make the site more memorable than ever. The amenities are good and the battlefield is being expanded upon like never before. There are many sutlers and much food available. Bradt's Company of Butlers Rangers have greatly enjoyed coming out to Ticonderoga, White Plains, and Saratoga to play with our fellow Rangers, and we would like to return the hospitality to any who would like to come to our best event of the year! This would be the event to come to in the Midwest. As this is our 30th Grand Encampment, which only happens every five years, our numbers will be greater than at many of the smaller events.      *-- Sgt. Dave Parsons, Bradt's Company*

**Battle of Stony Point 225th**      **Stony Point, New York**      **17-18 July**

Includes the BAR Grand Encampment.

**Plains of Abraham**      **Quebec City, Quebec**      **31 July-1 August**

An "all up" event for us. This should be the biggest event of the year. Heavy attendance expected from Canadian Butler's Rangers, Yorkers, and natives.

**Battle of Newtown 225th**      **Elmira, New York**      **28-29 August**

An "all up" event. An important battle in Butler's Rangers history, even though we got beat. Heavy attendance expected from Yorkers, natives, and probably Canadian Butler's Rangers.

**BAR Market Days/Banquet**      **Katonah, New York**      **2-3 October**

At John Jay Homestead. Possible reenactment of the raid on Pound Ridge.

## From the archives

The United Empire Loyalists Association of Canada has much information on the Revolutionary War, and on Butler's Rangers. Check out their Web site at: [www.uelac.org](http://www.uelac.org) Click on "Branches." Many UELAC branches have their own Web sites, and several sell books and other items. The Col. John Butler branch has its own newsletter you can click on (a recent issue had a photo of Lt. Solek), and also sells Butler's Rangers glassware, among many other things. This is one place you can get the new 4th edition of Ernest Cruikshank's book *Butler's Rangers*.

When the fatal error at Saratoga had made room for diplomatists of Old and New England, and removed the arbitrament of rebellion from the campaign to the council, those who drew on the part of Great Britain the boundary-lines of her transatlantic empire, bungled even more conspicuously in the treaty-chamber than her generals had failed in the field. Geographical knowledge appears to have been deemed superfluous to those whose business it was to shape the destinies of our colonial dominions. . . . When in 1783 the great quarrel between Britain and her Colonies was finally adjusted, the northern boundary of the United States was to follow the 49th parallel of latitude from the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods to the river Mississippi, and thence down that river, &c., &c.

Nothing could possibly have been more simple, a child might comprehend it; but unfortunately it fell out in course of time that the 49th parallel was one of very considerable latitude indeed, not at all a parallel of diplomatic respectability, or one that could be depended on, for neither at one end nor the other could it be induced to approach the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods or the river Mississippi. Do all that sextant, or quadrant, or zenith telescope could, the 49th parallel would not come to terms.

Doggedly and determinedly it kept its own course; and, utterly regardless of big-wig or diplomatic fogie, it formed an offensive and defensive alliance with the Sun and the Pole Star (two equally obstinate and big-wig disrespectful bodies), and struck out for itself an independent line. . . .

Long before a citizen of the United States had crossed the Missouri, Canadian explorers had reached the Rocky Mountains and penetrated through their fastnesses to the Pacific; and British and Canadian fur traders had grown old in their forts across the continent before Lewis and Clark, the pioneers of American exploration, had passed the Missouri. Discovered by a British sailor, explored by British subjects, it might well have been supposed that the great region along the Pacific slope, known to us as Oregon, belonged indisputably to England; but at some new treaty "rectification," the old story was once more repeated, and the unlucky 49th parallel again selected to carry across the Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, the same record of British bungling and American astuteness which the Atlantic had witnessed sixty years earlier on the rugged estuary of the St. Croix.

*From The Wild Northland: Being the Story of a Winter Journey, with Dog, Across Northern North America, by Gen. Sir William Francis Butler, K.C.B. (no relation): 1873; from The Trail Makers of Canada series; The Courier Press, Limited, Toronto; pages 36-40.*