

# British Policy Towards Loyalists in the Philadelphia Campaign, 1777-1778

A Monograph

by

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## Abstract

British Policy towards Loyalists during the Philadelphia Campaign, 1777-1778, by MAJ Jeremy O. Secrest, US Army, 51 pages.

This historical assessment of British policy during the Philadelphia Campaign evaluates British policy and the policy's implementation within both civil society and the British military effort. During the American Revolution, the British faced a shortage of troops, which caused both civil and military leaders of Britain to proclaim the need for provincial units supporting the suppression of rebellion. The British military leaders in the colonies failed to translate their consistently stated support for the policy into actions designed to stimulate support and create effective units. When the British forces occupied Philadelphia, they alienated the population through plunder and adverse economic policies. Though the ability of the Loyalists in combat was proven during the campaign by units like the Queen's Rangers, the British failed to maximize and encourage the growth of similarly capable units. The British operational leadership lacked an understanding of the many influences on the Loyalists within the complex environment of the revolution. This lack of nuanced understanding prevented the formation of a coherent policy at the operational level to ensure the support of the Loyalists.

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## Introduction

Major General Sir Henry Clinton, commander of British forces in America, faced criticism from soldiers, Loyalists, and British leaders for his lack of activity in 1779. This idleness resulted from his lack of sufficient forces to conduct a campaign. Clinton faced General George Washington whose forces consistently outnumbered Clinton's by over five thousand soldiers. General Clinton defended New York City and assisted commanders in Canada, the Caribbean, Georgia, and elsewhere with only fifteen thousand soldiers available. Reinforcements sent by Lord Germain, the Secretary of State for the American Colonies in the British Cabinet, failed to even replace the losses in casualties and sick. It was December 1779 before Clinton built up the necessary numbers required to mount an offensive campaign, while still maintaining security at the base of operations in New York City.<sup>1</sup> The shortage of troops pervades the narrative of the American Revolution. The British military faced challenges that stretched its strength to the breaking point. The continual shortage of regular British troops did much to create the aspiration of Loyalists in arms making up the shortage of regular army soldiers. The hope for Loyalist military support formed a continual theme in the British strategic discussion during the campaign of 1777 and beyond.<sup>2</sup>

## Background

The British leadership conducted a largely successful campaign over the course of 1776 with consecutive stunning defeats of the rebel army. Lieutenant General Sir William Howe, the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces, produced dramatic victories over the rebels at Long Island, Manhattan, and Fort Washington. After the capture of Fort Lee, the British pursued a

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America: British Leadership, the American Revolution, and the Fate of the Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 222-230.

<sup>2</sup> Ricardo A. Herrera, "The King's Friends: Loyalists in British Strategy," in *Strategy in the American War of Independence: A Global Approach*, ed. Donald Stoker, Kenneth J. Hagan, and Michael T. McMaster (New York: Routledge, 2010), 100.

demoralized rebel army across the New Jersey countryside. A British officer observed, “No nation ever saw such a set of tattered demalions.”<sup>3</sup> As the army straggled out of Newark, an astonished Lieutenant James Monroe witnessed an army reduced to three thousand soldiers from a height of nineteen thousand soldiers prior to the battle of Long Island.<sup>4</sup> The stunning success of the British Army over the rebels sent the colonial capital, Philadelphia, into a panic and left the rebels greatly demoralized.

After announcing a proclamation of amnesty in Trenton on 30 November 1776, General Howe received a quick response with about three thousand Jersey farmers responding to the offer with an oath of allegiance to the crown.<sup>5</sup> This drove General Howe to garrison the Jersey countryside with outposts of British and Hessian soldiers to provide security for the Loyalists and return another colony to the crown. The small garrison of Hessian at Trenton offered the opportunity needed by the rebels to reinvigorate their cause with a victory. After two battles at Trenton, a battle at Princeton, and many skirmishes in what would be known as the New Jersey Forage War, the confidence of the rebels found renewed hope. The rebel victories at the end of 1776 did much to change the narrative for both the British and the rebels the leaders for both sides developed the plans for the campaign of 1777.

On 30 November 1776, General Howe outlined his plans for the campaign on 1777 in a letter to Lord George Germain. The plans outlined an ambitious undertaking with three simultaneous operations. The first, involved an offensive with ten thousand British soldiers fighting north from Rhode Island to Boston. Howe planned for the second army of ten thousand soldiers to fight north from New York City to seize Albany. This effort nested with the campaign being planned from

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<sup>3</sup> David Hackett Fischer, *Washington's Crossing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 125.

<sup>4</sup> Fischer, *Washington's Crossing*, 128; Edward G. Lengel, *General George Washington: A Military Life* (New York: Random House, 2005), 132.

<sup>5</sup> Wilbur Henry Siebert, *Loyalists of Pennsylvania* (Boston: Gregg Press, 1972), 29.



Canada south through Fort Ticonderoga and on to Albany. This effort was to sever the southward communication from the rebellious colonies in New England. The third campaign was defensive, with eight thousand soldiers to secure New Jersey and threaten Philadelphia.<sup>6</sup> The viability of the plan hinged on Howe's request for reinforcements to the tune of fifteen thousand soldiers, ten ships of the line, and a battalion of artillery. Before Lord Germain replied, he received another letter from General Howe with modifications to the plan. Howe now believed the population in Philadelphia favorably disposed to the crown and as such, made the primary effort for British forces. General Howe planned to defer the offensive to Newport until reinforcements arrived and the offensive towards Albany became a defensive element around New York City.<sup>7</sup>

General Howe's request for reinforcements stunned Lord Germain. The British government remained contented with the success in 1776 and did not expect to send additional troops over the ocean to suppress the rebellion. The expense and transportation of the soldiers shipped to the colonies marked an unprecedented effort, taxing Britain's resources. Lord Germain "could not see the least chance of my being able to supply you with the Hanoverians or even with the Russians in time."<sup>8</sup> Lord Germain replied that he only believed General Howe needed 7,800 more soldiers to reach his required thirty-five thousand soldiers. General Howe later accused Germain of using devious math to justify the lack of reinforcements by including the sick and captured in his count.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> General William Howe to Lord George Germain, 30 November 1776, in *Documents of the American Revolution: Transcripts 1777*, vol. 13, ed. K. G. Davies (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1976), 265.

<sup>7</sup> Howe to Germain, *Transcripts 1777*, 268.

<sup>8</sup> Lord George Germain to General Sir William Howe, 14 January 1777, in *Documents of the American Revolution: Transcripts 1777*, vol. 14, ed. K. G. Davies (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1976), 31.

<sup>9</sup> William Howe, *The Narrative of Lieut. Gen. Sir William Howe, in a Committee of the House of Commons, on the 29th of April, 1779, Relative to His Conduct, During His Late Command of the King's Troops in North America: To Which are Added, Some Observations Upon a Pamphlet, Entitled, Letters to a Nobleman* (London: H. Baldwin. 1981), 10, accessed 27 August 2016, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=aeu.ark:/13960/t3kw60746;view=1up;seq=1>.

The British reluctance to provide reinforcements continued to be a central theme for the rest of the American Revolution. The foundation for the reluctance to send the reinforcements requested by General Howe originated in the size of the British empire in 1777. Britain had over thirty-six thousand regular infantry soldiers on the books, yet George III possessed only nine thousand uncommitted soldiers available to suppress the rebellion. If George III provided the troops, it would have resulted in an England stripped of all available troops for defense of the home island.<sup>10</sup> This availability status stood in sharp contrast to the estimates of General Howe, General Clinton, and Lord Jeffrey Amherst who estimated a minimum of thirty thousand troops necessary to subjugate the rebellious colonies.<sup>11</sup> Both Lord North and George III hesitated to increase the size the army, due to long-term effects on the tax burden required by the debts of the Seven Years War.<sup>12</sup> George III attempted to negotiate the use of Russian regiments as a replacement. However, the Empress Catherine II of Russia responded with a rigid refusal of assistance. This drove the British toward the more expensive Hessian regiments, whose numbers ultimately failed to meet the requirement.<sup>13</sup>

The British faced difficulty raising the numbers they needed as replacements for casualties, sick and deserters. Lord North found so much difficulty in raising additional troops that he attempted unsuccessfully to persuade the East India Company to suspend or limit recruitment in order to increase replacement availability. The failure increased the expected deficit by a thousand men.<sup>14</sup> At the same time General Howe asked for an additional fifteen thousand men, George III decided four

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<sup>10</sup> Piers Mackesy, *The War for America: 1775-1783* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 39.

<sup>11</sup> O'Shaughnessy, *Lost America*, 213.

<sup>12</sup> Herrera, "King's Friends," 105.

<sup>13</sup> George III to Lord North, 3 November, 1775, in *The Correspondence of King George the Third with Lord North: From 1768 to 1783*, vol. 1, ed. W. Bodham Donne (London: John Murray, 1867), 282.

<sup>14</sup> David Smith, *William Howe and the American War of Independence* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 111.

thousand men must be sent to Canada to reinforce Governor Guy Carleton and General John Burgoyne's campaign in the north.<sup>15</sup> This resulted in General Howe only receiving 2,900 reinforcements for the campaign in 1777.<sup>16</sup> These numbers failed to replace the losses due to casualties and sick much less provide the freedom desired by General Howe. The need for soldiers across the empire caused George III to consider reinforcing the army with militia due to the fear of an invasion by France or Spain.<sup>17</sup> The perennial shortage of troops caused the British leadership to place their hope of defeating the rebels with provincial Loyalists fighting for the crown.

Financial challenges facing the British government exacerbated the challenges recruiting soldiers. George III's determined suppression of the rebellion cost the government over eight million pounds sterling by April 1777.<sup>18</sup> By November 1778, the opposition forces in Parliament increasingly argued against increasing the amount of debt to continue financing the war. The debt increased by six million pounds in 1776, seven million pounds in 1777, and by 1778 it increased over nine million pounds.<sup>19</sup> Financial struggles remained a major cause of Lord North's opposition to raising new regiments, as the increase in the size of the army imposed a larger long-term tax.<sup>20</sup>

England's need for a greater number of troops and their economic challenges during the American Revolution produced a logical expectation of an increase in the pursuit of Loyalist soldiers and provincial units. This monograph examines the British policy towards Loyalist military support

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<sup>15</sup> Gerald Saxon Brown, *The American Secretary: The Colonial Policy of Lord George Germain, 1775-1778* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1963), 92.

<sup>16</sup> Howe, *Narrative*, 12.

<sup>17</sup> *The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North: From 1768 to 1783* vol 2, ed. W. Bodham Donne (London: John Murray, 1867), 58.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>19</sup> *Parliamentary Register; or History of the Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons: Containing an Account of . . . During the Fifth Session of the Fourteenth Parliament of Great Britain*, vol. 9, (London: Wilson and Co., 1802), 247, accessed 20 November 2016. <https://books.google.com>.

<sup>20</sup> Herrera, "King's Friends," 105.

during the Philadelphia campaign of 1777 – 1778. The understanding of an urgent need for Loyalists viewed next to the actions taken by the British leaders to encourage Loyalist support for the crown illustrates the thought at the time. The activity of the British towards the Loyalists reveals the nuances of the British understanding of the various actors and relationships affecting Loyalist actions. Understanding the British approach and its results provides contemporary leaders with an amplified perspective on parallel problems today.

### British Policy towards Loyalists

The British leadership believed that the vast majority of Loyalists only needed to be stirred to action in order to secure their support. A hard count of the actual number of Loyalists cannot be unquestionably established for this period lacking surveys and hard statistics. Even so, William Smith, the Chief Justice of occupied New York, attested that “No Man knows his nearest Friends’ real Sentiments.”<sup>21</sup> Historians believe approximately 16 percent of the entire population or 20 percent of the white population were committed Loyalists, with five hundred and thirteen thousand out of an estimated 3.21 million.<sup>22</sup> Of these staunch Loyalists, over nineteen thousand served in British provincial units over the course of the war.<sup>23</sup> Contemporary estimates frequently rose to the level of fifty percent for colonies outside of New England.<sup>24</sup> The British frequently

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<sup>21</sup> William Smith, *Historical Memoirs From 16 March 1763 to 25 July 1778 of William Smith*, ed. W. H. W. Sabine (New York: New York Times & Arno Press, 1969), 380.

<sup>22</sup> Paul H. Smith, “The American Loyalists: Notes on Their Organization and Numerical Strength,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (April 1968): 270, accessed 30 November 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1919095>; Herrera, “King’s Friends,” 100.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 266.

<sup>24</sup> Moses Coit Tyler, “The Party of the Loyalists in the American Revolution.” *The American Historical Review* 1, no. 1 (October 1895): 28, accessed September 6 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1834014>.

assumed the majority of the colonists to be loyal to the crown and only a minority of despotic rebels prevented open support.<sup>25</sup>

In May 1776, Philadelphia possessed at least four different Tory clubs with a busy schedule of meetings. The clubs met openly at establishments throughout the city, which included a beer house on the docks and at well-known private houses. The rebels perceived the threat to be great enough that they established a Committee of Safety to “examine all inimical and suspected persons.”<sup>26</sup> Over the next year, the committee arrested many Loyalists and sent them to New Jersey and Virginia as prisoners if they did not take an oath of allegiance. John Penn, the Governor of Pennsylvania, along with many prominent Quakers composed those arrested and exiled.<sup>27</sup> The population demonstrated their natural inclination on a regular basis. This led Brigadier General John Lacy of the Pennsylvania militia to observe a “Hostility to the Revolution was too apparent not to noticed, and seemed only waiting a good opportunity to break forth openly in favour of England.”<sup>28</sup> Brigadier General William Smallwood of the Continental Army wrote to Governor Thomas Johnson, Governor of Maryland that “Here [in Pennsylvania] is more Toryism I suggest than in all the states besides and less fortitude than in any particular state in America.” A common thread of frustration with the dominance of loyalty to the crown and an antipathy to the principles of the revolution runs through the writings of the rebels in Pennsylvania from 1776 through 1778.

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<sup>25</sup> Stephen Conway, “To Subdue America: British Army Officers and the Conduct of the Revolutionary War,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (July 1986): 391, accessed 13 November 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1922482>.

<sup>26</sup> Christopher Marshall, *Extracts from the Diary of Christopher Marshall, Kept in Philadelphia and Lancaster During the American Revolution: 1774 – 1781*, ed. William Duane (Albany, NY: Joel Munsell, 1877), 81, accessed 10 November 2016, <https://book.google.com>.

<sup>27</sup> Thomas J. McGuire, *The Philadelphia Campaign: Germantown and the Roads to Valley Forge* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2007), 10.

<sup>28</sup> John Lacey, “Memoirs of Brigadier-General John Lacey, of Pennsylvania (continued),” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 26, No. 1 (1902): 101-111, accessed 2 December 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20086016>.

The rebels' impression of the overwhelming presence of Loyalists in Pennsylvania only increased after the invasion of General Howe in August 1777. The prevalence of both hard Loyalist sentiment and ambivalence to the rebel cause in Pennsylvania drove Colonel Timothy Pickering, a rebel officer from Massachusetts, to write to his father, "Here we are in fact in an enemy's country. I am told upwards of sixty five thousand men are enrolled in the militia of Pennsylvania; yet we have not two thousand in the field, and these are of little worth and constantly deserting."<sup>29</sup> Pickering went on to compare the lack of militia support to the large numbers that streamed to the rebel cause at Concord and Lexington in Massachusetts. Congressman Eliphalet Dyer from Connecticut concurred with Pickering's assessment, saying, "Howe seems to be among his friends favoured with every advantageous Intelligence & supplied with every Necessary & Convenience both of Provision and Carriage."<sup>30</sup> The pro-British sentiment mixed with ambivalence from the population impacted General Washington's ability to procure provisions during the occupation of Philadelphia.

The belief in large numbers of Loyalists waiting to join the British effort drove many British decisions throughout the war. With a constant shortage of troops throughout the British possessions, the mirage of Loyalists simply waiting to stand up and fight for the crown provided a ready defense for continuing the fight to retain the colonies. Lord Germain frequently cited the large numbers of Loyalists during debates in the Parliament and would eventually be mocked by the opposition.<sup>31</sup> King George III's concept for the subjugation of the colonies intrinsically depended on the use of provincial troops. He expected the regular army to conquer an area and with the accomplishment of the goal, "the troops may proceed to another, leaving the support and protection of that which has been so reduced to a corps formed out the well of affected provincials, who shall have taken up arms

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<sup>29</sup> McGuire, *Germantown*, 27.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> O'Shaughnessy, *Lost America*, 189.

in the King's cause."<sup>32</sup> The British government's dependence on the provincials for the campaign of 1777 is explicit in Lord Germain's letter after receiving General Howe's request for fifteen thousand reinforcements. Lord Germain expressed optimism at reports that the rebels suffered a great deal of difficulty in their recruiting efforts. His belief in the support for the crown in Pennsylvania caused him to instruct General Howe that "your success in Pennsylvania will enable you to raise from among them such a force as may be sufficient for the interior defense of the province."<sup>33</sup> The policy never developed beyond a stated expectation. The assumption underlying the statement allowed a default to the easy solution of provincial forces when regular forces were stretched thin across the empire.

The hope leaders of the British government placed in provincial forces was not simply blind faith. Rather it had its source in various reports and personal accounts delivered to the government. The first of these had come from Governor Josiah Martin of North Carolina who reported that he had received signed addresses from thousands of loyalists attesting to their loyalty and desire for continued rule by the home country. Their position in the backcountry of North Carolina required a British force to subdue the rebellious coastal areas to ensure the return of the colony to the crown.<sup>34</sup> The failure of the Loyalist uprising and its brutal suppression prior to the arrival of British forces provided yet more proof in the eyes of British leaders of Loyalists willing to die for the king. Added reports from the governors of Virginia and North Carolina suggested that only a small force was required to subdue a vocal and violent rebel minority.<sup>35</sup> William Cumberland, Lord Germain's

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<sup>32</sup> Letter from the Earl of Dartmouth to Major General Howe on 22 October, 1775 in *Parliamentary Register; or History of the Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons: Containing an Account of . . . During the Fifth Session of the Fourteenth Parliament of Great Britain, Vol.10* (London: Wilson and Co., 1802), 288, accessed 20 November 2016. <https://books.google.com>.

<sup>33</sup> Germain to Howe, *Transcripts 1777*, 85.

<sup>34</sup> Mackesy, *War for America*, 43.

<sup>35</sup> Paul H. Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats: A Study in British Revolutionary Policy* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), 18.

secretary, wrote, “Great numbers of American loyalists, who had taken refuge in England, were in the habit of resorting to him.”<sup>36</sup> These Loyalists continued to paint a picture of colonies full of oppressed loyal subjects who only needed to be freed from oppression.

The British government’s policy of incorporating Loyalists into the subjugation of the rebels found basis in these widespread reports of loyalty. These reports combined with the economic difficulties, inability to raise British troops, or difficulty in contracting additional troops from abroad caused the provincials to be a default solution. They remained the only viable option. The option did exist and in cases such as North Carolina in 1776, the British planned and resourced entire military campaigns in order to take advantage of Loyalist supporters. In spite of the need for provincial support, General Howe never fully understood the situation in America or received a full repertoire of tools to use in the implementation of the policy. The lack of a developed approach would provide compounding effects on the ability of the British to incorporate the Loyalists into their military efforts during the Philadelphia campaign.

Many of the British generals, who included Gage, Clinton, Burgoyne, and Howe referenced provincial forces and often made plans contingent on the support of provincials. General Howe relied on the loyal colonial forces in the development of his campaign plan for 1777. However, their use did not form his first or second option. When first writing to Lord Germain on his plan for the campaign of 1777, General Howe desired British troops but understanding the lack of forces, he asked for Russian or Hanoverian troops.<sup>37</sup> The first hint of provincial considerations entering his equation for the campaign was in his letter to Lord Germain several weeks later when he wrote that the sentiment in Pennsylvania was “disposed to peace, in which sentiment they would be confirmed

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<sup>36</sup> Richard Cumberland, *Memoirs of Richard Cumberland, Written by Himself . . . He Had Intercourse and Connection*, ed. Henry Flanders (Philadelphia, PA: Parry and McMillan, 1856), 291, accessed 3 December 2016, <https://books.google.com>.

<sup>37</sup> Howe to Germain, *Transcripts 1776*, 265.



by our getting possession of Philadelphia.”<sup>38</sup> Yet, the rationale was not yet focused on raising provincial units. Rather, Howe believed the capture of Philadelphia, the capital of the rebellion, would dampen rebel enthusiasm for the war and the lack of a strong rebel militia provided an advantage in the countryside that did not exist in New England.<sup>39</sup> General Howe only looked toward the provincial forces as a source of strength after he received word from Lord Germain that the reinforcements requested could not be sent and that he would have to look towards the provincial forces as a source of manpower.

Lord Germain was not able to fill General Howe’s need for an additional artillery battalion and later would write that only a single battalion remained for the defense of England itself. General Howe countered the lack of reinforcements by limiting his offensive plans for the campaign of 1777 and beginning to subscribe to the hope of provincial enlistments supplementing the regular army.<sup>40</sup> These comments drove Howe to a grudging acceptance of reaching out to the provincials to fill the three hundred artillerymen he lacked. In the same letter, he expanded the expected benefits of the Philadelphia campaign to include a movement within the populace that would encompass “a considerable part of the inhabitants who may be embodied as militia, and some as provincial troops for the interior defense of the providence.”<sup>41</sup>

The proximity of General Howe to the conflict did not alter the British core policy for the provincials, but an antipathy existed over the use of provincial troops. This aversion dissuaded the active pursuit of measures to facilitate the active recruitment and often the use of provincial troops. The roots for this attitude rested in a natural military bias against untrained troops from outside the regular army. In 1779, the commanders of British troops at Plymouth, England, Sir David Lindsay

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Howe, *Narrative*, 18-19.

<sup>40</sup> Germain to Howe, *Transcripts 1777*, 84.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

believed it far-fetched that untrained irregulars could oppose veteran and disciplined French soldiers.<sup>42</sup> The opinion was not an isolated one. In 1776, an English pamphleteer wrote, “surely, they, who have stood the attack of the hardiest European veterans, could not be subdued by effeminate, new raised soldiers, commanded by officers without knowledge or experience.”<sup>43</sup> General Howe evidenced his own muted version of this bias towards provincial troops. Though General Howe wrote of using provincial troops, they never became a reliable source for soldiers. Even after acknowledging his dependence on provincial troops in April 1777, he would continue to write letters to Lord Germain requesting trained reinforcements from England. Between April 1777 and May 1778, when he left for England, General Howe wrote over ten letters to Lord Germain protesting a lack of European troops to defeat the enemy. As late as December 1777 General Howe’s staff discussed a rumored reinforcement of twenty thousand Russian soldiers. The lack of any mention of developing provincial units or encouraging recruitment tells even more on the priority assigned to the Loyalist policy. General Howe’s described to Lord Germain a disappointing level of volunteers for provincial units.<sup>44</sup> The disappointment lacked a foundation in substantive effort to promote Loyalist sentiment, as discussed in more detail later. Howe never fully accepted the lack of available troops from England and thus never fully embraced a policy of pursuing provincial troops and the required action to encourage recruitment.

## Condition Setting with the Population

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<sup>42</sup> Stephen Conway, “The Politics of British Military and Naval Mobilization, 1775-83,” *The English Historical Review* 112, no. 449 (November 1997): 1184, accessed 29 November 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/577103>.

<sup>43</sup> Ralph Miller, “American Nationalism as a Theory of Nature,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (January 1955): 82, accessed 28 November 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1923096>.

<sup>44</sup> K. G. Davies, ed., *Documents of the American Revolution 1770-1783*, vol. 14 and 15, *Transcripts, 1777* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1976), 14:64, 102, 129, 181, 237, 241, 264; 15: 29, 103.

Any policy of incorporating Loyalist soldiers into the British military effort required an evaluation of how to encourage the support of the population. General Howe recognized the requirement when he decided to extend the presence of British troops in New Jersey. He recognized the risk he incurred but Howe believed that security of the large numbers of Loyalists required the security.<sup>45</sup> Likewise, General Clinton expresses apprehension when orders arrived for the evacuation of Philadelphia. He feared that alarm at British losses would result in Loyalists across the colonies making their peace with the Continental Congress and “among the provincial troops.”<sup>46</sup> The British leaders possessed an understanding of the need for support of the population. However, the actions taken by many of the British and Hessian leaders showed a lack of development of the policy towards Loyalists residing in the population.

As General Howe landed at the Head of Elk in Maryland, on 26 August 1777, he commanded over eighteen thousand soldiers transported on two hundred and sixty ships. After a voyage of forty-nine days, they arrived with weak soldiers and a cavalry without effective horses.<sup>47</sup> As the army rested and organized over the next week, General Howe received prominent Loyalists from Pennsylvania. Chief among those was Robert Alexander, a hidden Loyalist in Pennsylvania. Three days prior to Howe’s arrival he had hosted General Washington as his guest for dinner. Despite General Washington’s urging, he declined the opportunity to leave prior to arrival of the British. When the British landed, he offered his knowledge of the Washington’s army and provided his mansion as General Howe’s headquarters while the British consolidated their forces. Other prominent Loyalists such as William and Andrew Allen of Philadelphia joined Alexander in his

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<sup>45</sup> Howe to Germain, *Transcripts 1777*, 267.

<sup>46</sup> Henry Clinton, *The American Rebellion: Sir Henry Clinton’s Narrative of His Campaigns, 1775-1782, with an Appendix of Original Documents*, ed. by William B. Wilcox (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1954), 88.

<sup>47</sup> Thomas McGuire, *The Philadelphia Campaign: Brandywine and the Fall of Philadelphia* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole, 2006), 71.

welcome of the army. Joseph Galloway, a prominent Loyalist leader, and former member of the Continental Congress already performed duties as a civilian aide for General Howe.<sup>48</sup>

While the Loyalists warmly greeted the British, the leadership could not miss the deserted houses and fields. One soldier observed that the “people (Irish Presbyterians) are Chiefly [rebe]ls, who left their houses on the fleets appearance.”<sup>49</sup> General Howe wrote that the inhabitants largely opposed the British efforts and they drove off the livestock prior to the appearance of the British.<sup>50</sup> General Howe faced disappointment in the lack of a welcome from the immediate inhabitants in the area of the Head of Elk. He expected to be received with crowds of Loyalist eager to serve the crown but the deserted houses belied his expectations.<sup>51</sup>

General Howe’s decision to not ride into Philadelphia with Major General Charles Cornwallis on 26 September 1777, denied him different perspective. The occupying British army witnessed a jubilant reception from the local citizens of Philadelphia. Captain John Montrèsor, the Chief Engineer of the British Army, observed that the British soldiers entered the city to the “acclamation of some thousands of the inhabitants mostly women and children.”<sup>52</sup> The Queen’s Dragoons led the army into Philadelphia with two Loyalist guides in the front. Lord Cornwallis and his staff rode behind, accompanied by well-known Loyalists such as Joseph Galloway, and William and Andrew Allen. The British had prepared for the march as if for a parade and the remaining citizens of Philadelphia lined the streets to watch the spectacle.<sup>53</sup> Robert Morton, a young citizen of Philadelphia, recorded in his diary that the British received a joyful reception and the population of

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<sup>48</sup> Thomas B. Allen, *Tories: Fighting for the King in America’s First Civil War* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), 236.

<sup>49</sup> McGuire, *Brandywine*, 134.

<sup>50</sup> Howe to Germain, *Transcripts 1776*, 418.

<sup>51</sup> Howe, *Narrative*, 56.

<sup>52</sup> John Montresor, *The Montresor Journals*, ed. by G. D. Scull (New York: New York Historical Society, 1881), 458, accessed 2 December 2016, <https://books.google.com>.

<sup>53</sup> McGuire, *Germantown*, 11.

the city celebrated the loss of oppressive rule of the rebel government.<sup>54</sup> The population that remained within Philadelphia once the British arrived possessed high hopes for a future that would return once again to the normalcy known prior to independence.

Philadelphia was the central city in British North America, with Robert Morris comparing it to the heart of the colonies and George Washington expressing apprehension that the city's fall omened the end of the revolution.<sup>55</sup> General Howe held similar hopes after observing that the farmland along the Delaware River composed the greater part of the rebel supplies. The occupation of Philadelphia and control of the river denied much of the supplies to Washington's army.<sup>56</sup> After the British seized the city, the rebels immediately took steps to prevent provisions reaching the city. The Continental Congress and the Pennsylvania Assembly declared punishable by death bringing any fuel or provisions into Philadelphia.<sup>57</sup> General Washington tasked the Pennsylvania militia with preventing provisions from reaching the city of peace and had some success in cutting off traffic from the north and south. Washington's determination to restrict the provisions reaching Philadelphia drove him to order the mills in the Wilmington area disabled rather than they supply the enemy with flour.<sup>58</sup> The potential for an ambush by militia forced the British foraging parties to patrol in battalion strength or larger.<sup>59</sup> In order to allow the local farmers the freedom to travel to the

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<sup>54</sup> Robert Morton, "The Diary of Robert Morton," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 1, no. 1 (1877): 8, accessed 27 November 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20084252>.

<sup>55</sup> Russell F. Weigley, ed., *Philadelphia: A 300 Year History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1982), 134.

<sup>56</sup> Howe, *Narrative*, 21.

<sup>57</sup> Samuel Emlen Jun, et al., "Letter of Friends in Philadelphia to Friends in Ireland, Soliciting Aid during the Occupation of Philadelphia by the British," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 20, no. 1 (1896): 126, accessed 6 December 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20085681>.

<sup>58</sup> Willard O. Mishoff, "Business in Philadelphia during the British Occupation, 1777-1778," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 61, no. 2 (April 1937): 168, accessed 6 November 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20087037>.

<sup>59</sup> John W. Jackson, *With the British Army in Philadelphia, 1777-1778* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1979), 90.

markets in the city, General Howe focused the provincial units on the task of securing the countryside and facilitating the inhabitants bringing their produce to market.<sup>60</sup> The local farmers preferred selling their produce to the British due to Loyalist inclinations of the area and the payment by the British in hard currency. As a result, as provincial units patrolled into the countryside farmers came out of the woods to be escorted back into Philadelphia without disturbance by the militia.<sup>61</sup>

Both the British and the local population in Philadelphia suffered a lack food from September until the end of November due to rebel control of the Delaware River. Once the wharves of Philadelphia opened to shipping, they quickly lined with ships. Merchants from many of the colonies and as far as Halifax and London quickly filled the stores deserted by the fleeing Whigs. These merchants quickly showed a preference for hard money. Some refused to sell for paper money while others offered discounts on goods for those paying with hard currency.<sup>62</sup> This rapidly made provisions hard to acquire for those who only possessed the paper currency previously in common use. By the end of December, Robert Morton recorded that paper money no longer had value.<sup>63</sup> The devaluation of paper currency, the basis of colonial trade for years, drove the citizens to petition General Howe for assistance.<sup>64</sup>

General Howe failed to be fully persuaded by the plight of the inhabitants of Philadelphia. Rather than authorizing price controls or the printing of new currency or the disbursement of specie, he issued a proclamation authorizing a collection for the “Relief and Employment of the Poor” by Joseph Galloway, raising over £904 in support of the poor. However, Howe only authorized the

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<sup>60</sup> John Graves Simcoe, *A Journal of the Operations of the Queen's Rangers* (New York: New York Times & Arno Press, 1968), 34.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>62</sup> Morton, “Diary,” 32.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>64</sup> Winthrop Sargent, ed, *The Loyal Verses of Joseph Stansbury and Doctor Jonathan Odell; Relating to the American Revolution* (Albany, NY: J. Munsell, 1860). 19, accessed 27 November 2016, <https://books.google.com>.

collection. The resourcing and effort came from Joseph Galloway and the regular supporters of the Almshouse.<sup>65</sup> General Howe's efforts to fix supply problems within his own army aggravated the condition and attitude of the regular population. As winter approached, expeditions to collect forage and cattle for the winter failed to produce the quantities desired by General Howe despite bringing in thousands of cattle and sheep.<sup>66</sup> The lack of provisions drove the issue of a number of regulations to control the consumption of goods such as rum, molasses, and salt. Salt, a necessity of life, was limited in sale to a bushel of salt without a permit. The British restricted the harvesting of the timber to the south and mandated the confiscation or return of oil.<sup>67</sup> The combined effect of the regulations and proclamations dealing with the economy created a black market for the sale of restricted items, which in turn drove up prices again. While the regulations and out of control, inflation drove many well to do Loyalists into poverty, the British officers continued to hold parties.<sup>68</sup> These actions by the occupying army rapidly created the perception of royal forces well supplied with all their desires while the everyday citizen of the city generally suffered a shortage of daily necessities.<sup>69</sup>

General Howe deliberately prevented responsibility for the control and administration of the city of Philadelphia from residing in the hands of the Loyalist or even dedicated military officers. While Howe did assign some administrative responsibilities to Joseph Galloway, he maintained veto power and kept the reins of power consistently short. Despite Howe's retention of control, he failed to pay attention to the economic effects of the British occupation on the daily lives of the population. The Loyalists had received the British with a great deal of hope for justice and an improvement in

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<sup>65</sup> Jackson, *Philadelphia*, 87.

<sup>66</sup> Friedrich Ernst von Muenchhausen, *At General Howe's Side: 1776-1778*, ed. by Samuel Smith. trans. by Ernst Kipping. (Monmouth Beach, NJ: Phillip Freneau Press, 1974), 44.

<sup>67</sup> Mishoff, "Business in Philadelphia," 169.

<sup>68</sup> James Allen, "Diary of James Allen, Esq., of Philadelphia, Counsellor-at-Law, 1770-1778 (Concluded)." *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 9, no. 4 (January 1886): 438, accessed 5 September 2016, <http://www.jstor.org.lumen.cgscarl.com/stable/pdf/20084727.pdf>.

<sup>69</sup> Mishoff, "Business in Philadelphia," 175.

their status. Instead, they observed British officers staging extravagant parties while they scrounged for food and the necessities of life. The general population degenerated to such an extent that when Robert Morris returned to Philadelphia after the British withdrew, the emaciated condition of the population shocked him.<sup>70</sup> Many Loyalists found themselves shifting away from their previous devotion to the British cause. The frustration with the ill effects of the British occupation led James Allen to hope for relief from the difficulties in daily life after the departure of the British.<sup>71</sup>

## British Plundering Activities

The economic difficulties suffered by the Loyalists paled in comparison to the loss of property suffered by all inhabitants of Philadelphia and its surrounding areas during the occupation. The loss of property occurred during activities that varied in their legitimacy and acceptance by the Loyalists. The most accepted loss of property began within hours of the occupation by the British. Joseph Galloway, a Loyalist native of the city, led the effort to catalogue the buildings. This allowed the determination of what housing was available to quarter the British soldiers.<sup>72</sup> After the occupation of Philadelphia, the British rapidly took possession of public buildings such as the Almshouse, nine of the city's churches, and some vacated commercial establishments. These buildings became the hospitals for the more than three thousand sick and wounded.<sup>73</sup> The inhabitants accepted the occupation of the public buildings as the price to be paid for the occupation. The one exception was the Alms House, which had been used as a location to employ the poor and provide

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<sup>70</sup> Weigley, *Philadelphia*, 141.

<sup>71</sup> Allen, "Diary," 436.

<sup>72</sup> Ernest H. Baldwin, "Joseph Galloway, the Loyalist Politician (Concluded)." *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 26, no. 4 (1902): 435, accessed 7 August 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20086051>.

<sup>73</sup> Jackson, *Philadelphia*, 300.



earned assistance for those in need. With this building ceasing to be available, General Howe authorized a public conscription for the “relief and employment of the poor.”<sup>74</sup>

The inhabitants of the occupied area suffered much more from the incessant need of the British for forage and supplies to provide for over twenty thousand troops and camp followers. The rebels confiscated much of what the inhabitants possessed before the British arrived and the unending needs of the British further reduced the quality of life of the local civilians.<sup>75</sup> The plunder of the inhabitants began before the British forces completely disembarked. Soldiers plundered many of the homes in the Head of Elk area immediately after landing.<sup>76</sup> General Howe attempted to mitigate the impact of the military necessity by directing that all inhabitants regardless of loyalties would be paid for items taken by the British army. The British and Hessian soldiers implemented the order to pay for all materials taken in the most haphazard way possible. Early on in Germantown, the British refused to pay for confiscated horses unless they had positive assurances of the owner’s Loyalist sympathies.<sup>77</sup> Even with the Loyalists, the defense of their personal property overrode other activities during the day. Robert Morton records seeking out a guard from the British forces to prevent the plundering of his family’s property and dismantling fences to keep the wood from the British.<sup>78</sup> When the inhabitants did suffer the loss of property, it often took a great deal of time to secure even a promissory note, much less the payment in hard currency. Robert Morton records a month’s delay in receiving his receipt and later receipts being provided for only a tenth of the

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>75</sup> Sarah Logan Fisher, “‘A Diary of Trifling Occurrences,’ Philadelphia, 1776-1778,” ed. by Nicholas B. Wainwright, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 82 no. 4 (October 1958): 449, accessed 6 November 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20089127>.

<sup>76</sup> John André, *André’s Journal*, ed. by Henry Cabot Lodge (Boston: Bibliophile Society, 1904), 71.

<sup>77</sup> Jackson, *Philadelphia*, 62.

<sup>78</sup> Morton, “Diary,” 12.

amount taken.<sup>79</sup> After the British return from Whitemarsh, Robert Morton recorded “great outrages” with the confiscation of over seven hundred head of cattle from John Shoemaker, a prominent Quaker and businessman in the area.<sup>80</sup> By the evacuation of Philadelphia, military necessity evaporated the differentiation in treatment previously accorded the Loyalists. Those previously protected in the Philadelphia area now suffered the confiscation of their horses by British Quartermaster General.<sup>81</sup>

General Howe recognized the dangers of unrestricted plundering and attempted to curtail it by issuing warrants authorizing the waiver of courts-martial. This sanctioned the execution on the spot by the provost marshal of any soldiers caught plundering a Loyalist home or farm.<sup>82</sup> The threat of death for those plundering lost its effectiveness with the lack of implementation. The most common punishment used being the lash with soldiers suffering punishments of up to 400 lashes for the offense of plunder. The coercive measures found supplementation during some of the large marches with guards placed along the route to prevent the burning and plundering of homes.<sup>83</sup> Bans on plundering continued to be issued at regular intervals, however, they did not have the desired effect and the occasional executions did not appear to deter plundering by either the British or Hessian Soldiers.

Plundering for the sake of the army’s provision did not form the only reason for loss of property and discontentment of the local civilians. After the occupation, Joseph Galloway accused General Howe of neglecting to stop the “cruelties of the British soldier.”<sup>84</sup> The cruelties referenced

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 11, 22.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>81</sup> Simcoe, *Journal*, 61.

<sup>82</sup> Allen, *Tories*, 238.

<sup>83</sup> Donald J. Gara, *The Queen’s American Rangers* (Yardley, PA: Westholme, 2015), 66.

<sup>84</sup> Joseph Galloway, *Letters to a Nobleman, On the Conduct of the War in the Middle Colonies* (London, J. Wilkie, 1779), 42, accessed 27 November 2016, <https://books.google.com>.

began during the first hours of occupation as the British destroyed fences and other impediments to the defense of the town.<sup>85</sup> By November 1777, the soldiers burned any houses suspected of having been used for concealment, even if the houses belonged to the Loyalists.<sup>86</sup> The destruction did not find itself solely limited to defensive measures along the boundaries of the occupation. Carelessness, petty theft, and looting provided an even larger measure of destruction. Robert Morton records the Hessians breaking into his family's plantation house and later the burning of the kitchen at a neighbor's house due to the carelessness of soldiers.<sup>87</sup> The occupying soldiers frequently committed petty larceny offenses.<sup>88</sup> Common household items consisting of jewelry, silverware, clothing, and other items, often disappeared from houses. The lack of law and order eventually forced the British regulars to patrol the streets at night with orders to "take up all Stragglers or Disorderly persons."<sup>89</sup> Though the patrols did not prevent petty larceny, they did lead to a daily rhythm of courts-martial for the British military. Many inhabitants found protection through providing room and board for the British officers. Mrs. Drinker, a local Quaker, eventually provided housing to a British officer. The officer argued his stay would provide "necessary protection."<sup>90</sup> This trend repeated itself across Philadelphia with many families giving up portions of their house to the British officers for their daily living and entertainment.

General Howe emphasized to the leaders of the army that they came as liberators, not as conquerors.<sup>91</sup> The action of the soldiers undermined the often-repeated messages contained in the

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<sup>85</sup> Morton, "Diary," 8.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 23-31.

<sup>88</sup> Mishoff, "Business in Philadelphia," 165.

<sup>89</sup> Jackson, *Philadelphia*, 97.

<sup>90</sup> Mrs. Henry Drinker, "Extracts from the Journal of Mrs. Henry Drinker, of Philadelphia, from September 25, 1777, to July 4, 1778," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 13, no. 3 (October 1889): 302, accessed 6 December 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20083329>.

<sup>91</sup> Conway, "To Subdue America," 385.

British proclamations. As the British left the city, damages due to vandalism and theft were estimated at over one hundred and eighty-seven thousand pounds sterling.<sup>92</sup> General Howe's denials of large amounts of looting and theft lost credibility in the face of the frequent necessity for issuing orders forbidding the same activities.<sup>93</sup> Sarah Logan, a Quaker Loyalist, recorded her disappointment at the "poor protection we meet with."<sup>94</sup> The disappointment expressed by Sarah Logan at the plundering of Loyalists echoes the disappointment of many of the local inhabitants after suffering the depredations of the British soldiers.

The Loyalists expected a certain level of confiscation of goods from the army; however, the British surpassed all expectations. In the process of the plunder of goods and the destruction of the local economy, General Howe alienated the same base of support he depended for soldiers. Within less than a year, General Howe converted a population that cheered the arrival of the British to a population severely disappointed and hopeful for a tangible improvement in their quality of life with the withdraw of the British.

### Loyalist Inclusion in the Military Effort

While the British military neglected to prioritize creation and integration of provincial units, this did not equate to a complete lack of effort. General Howe disseminated propaganda to persuade the local inhabitants to support the crown in the fight against the rebellion. While his efforts never reached the scale or effectiveness of the propaganda issued by the rebels, it achieved some of the desired effect. This allowed the recruitment of more than 300 men by November into new provincial

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<sup>92</sup> Weigley, *Philadelphia*, 144.

<sup>93</sup> Howe, *Narrative*, 59.

<sup>94</sup> Fisher, "Diary," 459.

units.<sup>95</sup> An additional 185 recruits were used as replacements for losses suffered at the Battle of Brandywine in the Queen's Rangers.<sup>96</sup> These numbers consistently increased as the British stay in Philadelphia continued. The enlistment numbers appear small until the recruitment numbers are viewed in the context of the methods used by both the British in England and the rebels in the colonies.

## British Propaganda

Neither the Loyalists nor the British ever equaled the effectiveness of the rebels at dissemination of propaganda or their ability to stir the passions of public opinion. The default for both the British and the Loyalists depended on the use of the existing institutions and historic allegiances. By 1774, the Loyalists observed the ineffectiveness of this course of action and a small coterie of defenders began to publish arguments against those favoring.<sup>97</sup> However, the strength of the Whigs allowed the suppression of the pamphlets supporting the British cause. By 1777, the only areas still able to receive pro-British literature existed within the small British cantonments.<sup>98</sup> After the British occupation of Philadelphia, Joseph Galloway did publish a defense of his "Candid Examination," however; he published it two years late as he waited on the British to provide a secure environment.<sup>99</sup> The only other Loyalist propaganda in Philadelphia was the existence of five newspapers, two in German, and three in English. All had a short life span and ended abruptly with the British exit from Philadelphia.<sup>100</sup> This left the primary propaganda to the British military

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<sup>95</sup> Murtie June Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War: Official Rolls of Loyalists Recruited from Maryland, Pennsylvania . . . and Queen's Rangers*, vol. 2 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1981), 7:12, 55, 83, 91, 101,117.

<sup>96</sup> Gara, *American Rangers*, 89.

<sup>97</sup> Philip Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution 1763-1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 249.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 313.

<sup>99</sup> Davidson, *Propaganda*, 259.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 334.

leadership. The British printed all the proclamations and handbills in the Loyalists newspapers and distributed solely within the range of British control. General Howe saw the potential for success in issuing proclamations early on his military campaigns. After, he reached Trenton at the end of 1776 he issued a proclamation, assuring amnesty to all who were willing to take an oath of loyalty to the British crown. The effort, as mentioned before, resulted in over three thousand Jersey farmers coming forward to take the oath.<sup>101</sup> The success of the offer for amnesty drove expectations for subsequent offers of amnesty.<sup>102</sup>

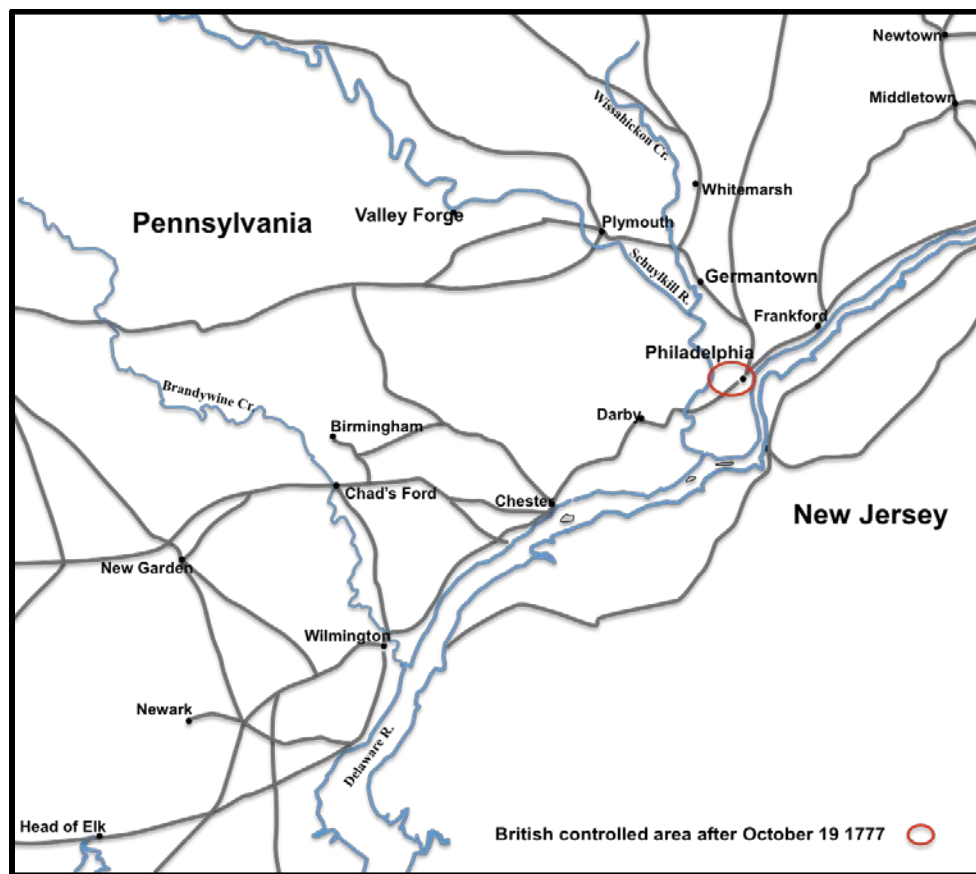


Figure 1. Area under direct British Control during Occupation and area where both armies competed for supplies.

<sup>101</sup> Siebert, *Pennsylvania*, 29.

<sup>102</sup> Howe to Germain, *Transcripts 1776*, 267.

Two days after landing at the Head of Elk, General Howe issued a declaration with three main points prior to beginning the pursuit of Washington's army and capturing Philadelphia. He assured all the loyal inhabitants of the country that he understood the suffering of the innocent during the war. In order to prevent the British enlarging their suffering, he assured all who read the declaration that the strictest orders had been issued to prevent plunder and the molestation of all loyal inhabitants. Howe asked for help in achieving this goal by soliciting all the inhabitants to return and remain in their dwellings. The declaration concluded with the offer of a free pardon to any who would come forward and return their allegiance to the crown.

The proclamation at the Head of Elk provided hope for many of the Loyalists in Maryland and Philadelphia. General Howe quickly found his army hosting a number of Loyalists who streamed towards what many believed to be the last campaign of the rebellion. Many of the Loyalists came from Chester County in between General Howe's location and the assumed destination of Philadelphia. Captain Alexander McDonald, a former member of the North Carolina Highlander Regiment, escaped from Philadelphia and immediately began to raise recruits as he moved to meet the British. As news traveled of the British landing and subsequent advance, the rebel authorities began to receive news of public stores being destroyed and men being recruited to provincial units as far as Cumberland County.<sup>103</sup>

## Recruiting for Provincial Units

Shortly after issuing the proclamation at the Head of Elk, General Howe issued another proclamation. This promised land to all of "his Majesty's faithful and well-disposed subjects" if they agreed to serve for two years or the length of the war. Every non-commissioned officer would

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<sup>103</sup> Siebert, *Pennsylvania*, 38; Lorenzo Sabine, *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution with an Historical Essay*, vol. 2 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1979), 57.

receive two hundred acres and privates fifty acres.<sup>104</sup> This would quickly become the first of many efforts to recruit Loyalists to the royal banner. By October 1777, the presses began publishing and the British printed advertisements in the *Pennsylvania Ledger* for recruits to join the First Battalion of Pennsylvania Loyalists commanded by William Allen.<sup>105</sup> Impressively, the battalion assembled the beginnings of three companies for their first muster on 25 November.<sup>106</sup>

The British military leadership approached the provincial units with expectations of similar standards for leaders as found in the British army. In 1776, Alexander Innes found himself appointed as the Inspector General of the provincial forces. In that role, he inspected the Queen's American Rangers and found many inappropriate commissions and enlistments from Major Robert Rogers, a celebrated leader during the Seven Years War in America. These included "among many others, negroes, mulattos, Indians, sailors and rebel prisoners . . . enlisted to the disgrace and ruin of the provincial service."<sup>107</sup> This resulted in the dismissal of the well-known Major Rogers along with many who had enlisted, eager to fight for the British. The effort to enlist provincial troops into the king's service met further resistance when the Continental Congress pronounced that enlisting for the enemy would earn the death penalty. William Lounsbury found this to be true when the rebels killed him after they caught him with papers authorizing him to enlist soldiers in the Queen's Rangers.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Allen, *Tories*, 238.

<sup>105</sup> Mishoff, "Business in Philadelphia," 174.

<sup>106</sup> Clark, *Southern Campaign*, 12.

<sup>107</sup> E. Alfred Jones, "A Letter Regarding the Queen's Rangers," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 30, no. 4 (October 1922): 369, accessed 28 August, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4243895>.

<sup>108</sup> John R. Cuneo, "The Early Days of the Queen's Rangers August 1776 – February 1777," *Military Affairs* 22, no. 2 (Summer, 1958): 67, accessed 28 November 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1984633>.



The lack of a deliberate policy and understanding of the necessary incentives to encourage enlistment created dissension among the colonists. Edward Winslow, the Muster Master General of Provincial Forces, possessed a firsthand view of the handling of the provincial units and complained of the abuses suffered by the provincial soldiers<sup>109</sup> Alexander Innes confirmed the reports of false promises of benefits and pay for those enlisting, referring to “many well founded complaints.”<sup>110</sup> The variance in policy became so obvious that Lieutenant Colonel Allen MacLean, commander of the North Carolina Highlanders, aroused the indignation of George III for negotiating the promise of double the compensation of a full colonel in the regular army for his widow in the event of his death.<sup>111</sup>

The normal process for raising a unit in the provincial forces occurred when an aspiring commander received permission to raise a unit of specified size. The officers in the unit earned their rank by the specific number of recruits they personally persuaded to enlist, such that a captain required thirty men, a lieutenant fifteen men, and an ensign twelve men.<sup>112</sup> Once recorded in the rolls of the provincial corps the soldiers received the same pay as the regular British soldiers but the similarities of the provincial and regular British units ended there. Officers in the provincial corps remained forever junior to any British officer of the same rank. The British did not authorize half-pay and did not generally provide the same benefits when wounded. Furthermore, the British did not provide the necessary funds for surgeons and hospitals.<sup>113</sup> Provincial units found further frustration in the lack of proper equipment and uniforms for those who enlisted. The soldiers often made do with the second-hand discarded weapons and equipment from the regular British units. Additionally,

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<sup>109</sup> William Odber Raymond, ed. *Winslow Papers A.D. 1776-1826* (Boston: Gregg Press, 1972), 41.

<sup>110</sup> Jones, “Letter,” 370.

<sup>111</sup> *King George III with Lord North*, vol 1, 240.

<sup>112</sup> Clark, *Southern Campaign*, xi.

<sup>113</sup> Paul Hubert Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*, 64.

the provincials often waited over six months for uniforms. The First Battalion of Maryland Loyalists still possessed many soldiers who still lacked uniforms as they prepared to leave Philadelphia.<sup>114</sup> However, the Queen's American Rangers found themselves well equipped with uniforms owed largely to Major John Graves Simcoe who paid for new uniforms out of his own pocket.<sup>115</sup> The varied and unequal treatment of the provincial corps caused resentment among Loyalists, yet the regular British army remained opposed to the integration of Loyalist regiments into the regular army due to concerns of jealousy and desertion among the regulars.<sup>116</sup>

The British began earnest recruitment for provincial units on 8 October 1777, when the Pennsylvania Ledger printed an advertisement from General Howe requesting volunteers to come forward in support of the British cause.<sup>117</sup> Six days later General Howe signed the commissions for three provincial units: the Roman Catholic Volunteers, First Battalion of Pennsylvania Loyalists, and the First Battalion of Maryland Loyalists.<sup>118</sup> The recruiting efforts started immediately and by the end of November, Edward Winslow mustered in 317 troops across the three battalions. The numbers continued to increase though never at the rate or in the numbers, which numerous Loyalist leaders had promised to General Howe.

Attempts to recruit became more difficult with the threat of physical harm or the possibility of the death penalty being a very real possibility due to the decree of Congress.<sup>119</sup> The First Battalion of Maryland Loyalists eventually grew to about 360 men, though the numbers differed greatly from the thousand troops promised to General Howe by Lieutenant Colonel James Chalmers.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Christopher M. New, *Maryland Loyalists in the American Revolution* (Centreville, MD: Tidewater, 1996), 49.

<sup>115</sup> Simcoe, *Journal*, 38.

<sup>116</sup> O'Shaughnessy, *Lost America*, 221.

<sup>117</sup> New, *Maryland Loyalists*, 44.

<sup>118</sup> New, *Maryland Loyalists*, 45.

<sup>119</sup> Cuneo, "Early Days," 67.

<sup>120</sup> New, *Maryland Loyalists*, 46.

Nevertheless, those who did successfully recruit and enlist soldiers did so at some peril. Isaac Costen raised over sixty recruits for Chalmers, though it took over four months of covertly traversing Maryland under threat of discovery by the rebels. Similarly, Lieutenant Sterling brought back about one hundred men “at great risqué of life, at very heavy expense, and after undergoing many dangerous difficulties.”<sup>121</sup> Recruiters found their job perilous as efforts largely occurred in areas controlled or influenced by the rebel forces.

Overall approximately 1,800 enlistments occurred after the occupation of Philadelphia, which includes about 400 troops recruited into the West Jersey Volunteers.<sup>122</sup> Recruits were not limited to simply the three new battalions authorized by General Howe. Competition for recruits also sprang from three troops of light dragoons, the Queen’s Rangers attempting to replace losses and other Loyalist units. This still fails to account for the Bucks County Volunteers, which formed with over eighty troops and operated like a Loyalist militia independent from the British Army. Overall, ten provincial units participated in the Philadelphia campaign, contributed to the protection of the city, and competed for recruits.<sup>123</sup>

The numbers of troops recruited from the local population did not stop at the eighteen hundred troops enlisted into the provincial regiments. Both the British army and navy pulled from the local population around Philadelphia in order to supplement the lack of replacements received from Britain. In fact, as General Howe set sail for the Head of Elk he appropriated the Second Battalion of New Jersey Volunteers to fill a shortage of three hundred men he possessed in the

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>122</sup> Siebert, *Pennsylvania*, 42.

<sup>123</sup> Includes the following units: 1) First Battalion Pennsylvania Loyalists; 2) Philadelphia Light Dragoons (two independent troops); 3) First Battalion of Maryland Loyalists; 4) Roman Catholic Volunteers; 5) Bucks County Light Dragoons; 6) West Jersey Volunteers; 7) Second Battalion of New Jersey Volunteers; 8) Guides and Pioneers; 9) Caledonian Volunteers; and 10) Bucks County Volunteers.

artillery corps.<sup>124</sup> This appropriation proved to be only the beginning with deserters arriving in Philadelphia every day. The British military recruited the deserters from Washington's army into the service of the crown for a gain of over 2,300 men.<sup>125</sup> The navy specifically sought out deserters from Washington's army who had previously lived on the continent and offered passage to Europe as an incentive.<sup>126</sup>

The low level of the recruitment numbers appears at first glance to be paltry considering the promises of several thousand troops offered by Joseph Galloway and other Loyalist leaders. In fact, when understood in the light of the efforts for recruiting taken by the rebels and the British in Britain the numbers raised by the Loyalists appear much more successful. Indeed, in Britain, the authorities experienced a great deal of difficulty raising troops. Early in the conflict, the British Cabinet discarded the requirement for lifetime service and replaced it with only three years or the end of the conflict. Further efforts included increasing the bounties for enlistments and offering incentives to tradesmen that would allow them to break into guilds closed to them after their service. By 1778, Parliament authorized the impressment of men into the army against their will in order to meet the demand for replacements. Most British military units did not particularly appreciate the quality of men they received through impressments. This dislike forced the war ministry to ask the regiments not to immediately discharge the men that they had received.<sup>127</sup> The practice of impressment continued and became a source of a large percentage of the recruits for each regiment. In 1776, the Twenty-Fifth Foot received one hundred recruits through the leverage of the local magistrate.

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<sup>124</sup> Thomas B. Allen and Todd W. Braisted, *The Loyalist Corps: Americans in the Service of the King* (Takoma Park, MD: Fox Acre Press, 2011), 67.

<sup>125</sup> Joseph Galloway, *The Examination of Joseph Galloway, Esq. By a Committee of the House of Commons*, ed. by Thomas Balch (Philadelphia: T. K. and P. G. Collins, 1855), 19, accessed 5 September 2016, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.49015000061375;view=1up;seq=7>.

<sup>126</sup> Galloway, *Examination*, 20; Muenchhausen, *At General Howe's Side*, 49.

<sup>127</sup> Conway, "Politics," 1184.

The choices made by the rebels to fill their ranks rise as an even more pertinent comparison than the recruiting challenges of the British in England. By December 1777, James Allen recorded that neither side could to raise soldiers. He wrote, “A Substitute is now not less than £50 pounds, which to many is certain ruin.”<sup>128</sup> The difficulty experienced in raising soldiers becomes even more obvious when examining the number of Pennsylvania militia raised during the height of the occupation of Philadelphia. General Washington requested one thousand militiamen from the President of Pennsylvania, Thomas Wharton.<sup>129</sup> By February 1778, the militia under General Lacey only mustered sixty soldiers.<sup>130</sup> Even when the replacements arrived, the numbers only amounted to 432.<sup>131</sup> By May 1778, Major Carl Baurmeister recorded that the rebels regularly resorted to cruelty to raise the needed recruits. This included the threat and sometime actual burning and destruction of the inhabitant’s house and property.<sup>132</sup> The militia and General Washington’s army struggled to maintain the numbers needed and only maintained an advantage through the more consistent control of territory and thus the ability to persuade and intimidate recruits with greater openness.

General Howe expressed dissatisfaction with the Loyalist support he received during both the New York and Philadelphia campaigns following his relinquishment of command.<sup>133</sup> In truth, the Loyalist leaders made improbable promises of thousands of supporters flocking to the British banner. Those promises never found fulfillment in the numbers of troops enlisted during the

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<sup>128</sup> Allen, “Diary,” 429.

<sup>129</sup> From George Washington to Thomas Wharton, Jr., 11 April 1778, in George Washington, *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, 1 March 1778–30 April 1778, ed. David R. Hoth. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004), 482–483.

<sup>130</sup>Louis J. Zanine, “Brigadier General John Lacey and the Pennsylvania Militia in 1778,” *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 48 no. 2 (April 1981): 134, accessed 28 December 2016, <https://journals.psu.edu/phj/issue/view/1532>.Lacey and Penn Militia.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

<sup>132</sup> Carl Leopold Baurmeister, *Revolution in America: Confidential Letters and Journals 1776 – 1784 of Adjutant General Major Baurmeister of the Hessian Forces* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1957), 165.

<sup>133</sup> Howe, *Narrative*, 32.

campaign. Notwithstanding, the amount of recruits successfully acquired on both sides increases in import when understood through the territory then controlled by the British, as well as the methods to which both the rebels and the British resorted to in recruiting troops. These factors, combined with the disillusionment of many Loyalists with the plundering activities and inconsistent dealings of the British cast the Loyalist response in a better light.

### Loyalist Effectiveness at Arms

General Howe's continued desire for European troops expressed the continued belief in the supremacy of European troops over hastily assembled provincial units. An understanding of the practical application of policy must take into account the possible effectiveness of the Loyalists when fighting with the British forces. If Howe failed to expect a return on any investment made in building provincial units, it would explain the lack of effort. On the other hand, if Howe possessed evidence of Loyalist effectiveness as soldiers it paints a much different story.

During the campaign of 1777, the provincial units contributed to the British cause during the planning and actively supported the British regular army after landing at the Head of Elk. This support included intelligence leading to British victories at the Battle of Brandywine, and the Battle of Paoli.<sup>134</sup> The Loyalists provided such a regular flow of information that General Washington wrote the president of Congress complaining of the Loyalists in the area.<sup>135</sup> During the Philadelphia campaign, provincial units successfully engaged the Pennsylvania militia and allowed the continued flow of provisions from the countryside into the city. The freedom for local farmers to sell in

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<sup>134</sup> Allen, *Tories*, 238; Siebert, *Pennsylvania*, 40.

<sup>135</sup> Siebert, *Pennsylvania*, 38.

Philadelphia provided one of the few instances where Daniel Wier, the British commissary general, hoped for “some dependence on America for the support of His Majesty’s troops.”<sup>136</sup>

Contemporary accounts of provincial units during the Philadelphia campaign provide limited indicators of the effectiveness of provincial forces. Thus, any evaluation of Loyalist effectiveness during the Philadelphia campaign must be based on the specific comments recorded for a minority of the units. Few records document the activities of the ten loyalist units that participated in the campaign. Only the Queen’s Rangers left to posterity a substantial account of their activities and achievements. The actions of the Queen’s Rangers in the campaign provide an understanding of the potential residing within the Loyalist population across Pennsylvania.

Prior to the Philadelphia campaign, the Queen’s Rangers suffered from mismanagement that resulted in the dismissal of all but five of the officers in the regiment. Howe gave the command of the regiment to Major Christopher French, a British officer. He accepted with the stipulation that he could remodel the regiment as desired. By the time the Philadelphia campaign began, the regiment looked and behaved like a regular British light infantry unit.<sup>137</sup> The Battle of Brandywine, the first major battle of the Philadelphia campaign provides a window into the capability of the Loyalists in a conventional fight of the time.

The Battle of Brandywine began with General Washington’s army arrayed along the Brandywine hills on the east side of the Brandywine River. General William Maxwell positioned over one thousand light infantry with militia on the west side of the river as the advance guard for the army.<sup>138</sup> Loyalists from the area provided the positions of General Washington’s army and an unguarded fording site. General Howe’s plan divided the British army into two forces. Lieutenant

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<sup>136</sup> R. Arthur Bowler, *Logistics and the Failure of the British Army in America 1775-1783* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 48.

<sup>137</sup> Gara, *American Rangers*, 48-52.

<sup>138</sup> McGuire, *Brandywine*, 170-171.

General Baron Wilhelm Knyphausen took the first force and attacked the center of the rebel army. General Howe and General Cornwallis moved with the remainder of the force across the unguarded ford in order to attack the rebel army's right flank.<sup>139</sup> The plan succeeded and Washington's army fled in retreat. Piers Mackesy asserts the battle might have been decisive if the British had aggressively pursued Washington's forces.<sup>140</sup>

The performance of the Queen's Rangers during the Battle of Brandywine provides tangible proof that the training and reorganization of the unit showed success. General Knyphausen assigned the advance guard to the Queen's Rangers and Ferguson's Riflemen. The Rangers first engaged the advance guard at Welch's Tavern. Colonel William Maxwell's forces quickly withdrew toward their primary defensive lines at the Kennet Meetinghouse where they attempted to stop the advance. The Rangers drove them back and over the course of two hours they forced Colonel Maxwell's soldiers back over three miles towards the army's main defensive lines on the Brandywine River. The rebel forces stopped the British advance at the Brandywine River and General Knyphausen waited until four in the afternoon when General Cornwallis' force began engaging the right flank to attack again. This time the Queen's Rangers attacked the defensive lines as part of a deliberate assault with the British forces. The British forces broke the defensive line and captured a battery of rebel artillery, which promptly turned on its former owners. The Queen's Rangers and the rest of the British continued the pursuit of the rebel army until stopped by darkness. Overall, the Queen's Rangers successfully fought the regular rebel force for more than five miles over the course of the battle and only stopped when darkness precluded further pursuit.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Stuart Salmon, "The Loyalist Regiments of the American Revolutionary War 1775-1783," (PhD diss., University of Stirling, 2009), 178.

<sup>140</sup> Mackesy, *War for America*, 128-129.

<sup>141</sup> Gara, *American Rangers*, 70-75.



The Queen's Rangers established the first contact for the entire British army during the Battle of Brandywine and continued to press the advantage until the battle concluded. Captain Johann Ewald, a Hessian officer who fought next to the Queen's Rangers, approvingly observed that despite the ambush of the rebels the Loyalists "attacked the enemy with bayonets so courageously, without firing that he lost ground." Ewald continued to comment on the ferocity of the attack that forced the enemy across the creek.<sup>142</sup> Major John André, an aide for General Howe, commented in his diary on "the superior fir of the Troops" which contributed to the victory.<sup>143</sup>

The Queen's Rangers reported two officers and thirteen soldiers killed, nine officers and forty-seven wounded, and one soldiers missing. The Rangers suffered a total of seventy-two casualties, the second highest of any British unit during the battle.<sup>144</sup> The ability of the Loyalists to take casualties and continue the fight amply illustrated the effectiveness of the training received after their reorganization under Major French. General Knyphausen expressed his veneration for the performance in a dispatch to General Howe saying he did not have "words to express my own astonishment."<sup>145</sup> In writing of the engagement to Lord Germain, General Howe singled out the Queen's Rangers from all other units engaged in the battle as having "distinguished themselves in a particular manner."<sup>146</sup> The battle proved that the Loyalist soldiers could fight next to the British regular soldiers and match their capability while engaging regular soldiers from George Washington's army in regular engagement.

After the battle of Brandywine, the British Army found itself in possession of Philadelphia without control of the surrounding countryside. With over twenty thousand soldiers and camp

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<sup>142</sup> Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal*, ed and trans. Joseph P. Tustin (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), 81.

<sup>143</sup> André, *Journal*, 85.

<sup>144</sup> Gara, *American Rangers*, 76.

<sup>145</sup> Salmon, "Loyalist Regiments," 181.

<sup>146</sup> Howe to Germain, *Transcripts 1777*, 203.

followers, the military lacked the ability to bring in the ships of provisions due to rebel control of the Delaware River. Even after the British controlled the river, they continued to struggle to ship sufficient supplies from Europe for the military and its dependents. General Howe issued handbills declaring the need for food and forage and the army's ability to pay hard currency in an effort to establish enable the army to live off the land. The offer provided much more incentive than the rapidly inflating currency paid by Washington's army.<sup>147</sup>

The local farmers responded to the British solicitation with an eagerness resulting from loyalist sentiment and a desire to achieve a profit.<sup>148</sup> Washington attempted to prevent the provisions from reaching the markets of Philadelphia and the British found that unless they patrolled in battalion or larger units the provision would not reach the city.<sup>149</sup> The Pennsylvania militia received the task of enforcing the cordon.<sup>150</sup> This resulted in harassment of the farmers to the level of confiscating goods, branding captured farmers and eventually execution by court martial.<sup>151</sup> The British responded with regular patrols going out the night prior to market day in order to escort the "country people who venture everything to bring fresh food to the city."<sup>152</sup>

With the focus on gathering in the available food and forage, the Queen's Rangers received the task to "secure the country, and facilitate the inhabitants in bringing their produce to market."<sup>153</sup> Major John Graves Simcoe had assumed command of the Rangers and he approached the assigned task with an understanding of the importance of maintaining the support of the local population

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<sup>147</sup> Bowler, *Logistics*, 72.

<sup>148</sup> Allen, *Tories*, 243.

<sup>149</sup> Jackson, *Philadelphia*, 90.

<sup>150</sup> George Washington to John Lacey, 23 January 1778, in *George Washington, The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series*, vol. 13, ed. Edward G. Lengel (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), 323-324.

<sup>151</sup> Montresor, *Journals*, 497; Zanine, "John Lacey," 137.

<sup>152</sup> Baurmeister, *Revolution in America*, 157.

<sup>153</sup> Simcoe, *Journal*, 34.

outside of Philadelphia. Simcoe believed and taught his soldiers that protecting the inhabitants of the country would maintain their good will and result in the gathering of effective intelligence on the movement and ambushes of the rebels.<sup>154</sup> He implemented his concepts by forbidding looting, always stopping away from houses, and guarding nearby houses.<sup>155</sup> This created a sharp contrast for the Queen's Rangers from other British units, which engendered a reputation for looting. Eventually, the local population began to see the militia as marauders while the Queen's Rangers became perceived as a source of safety. The farmers taking their goods to market hid in the woods until the Rangers appeared and enjoyed the safety of an escort into Philadelphia.<sup>156</sup> These efforts worked to the point that George Washington expressed concern over the free flow of provisions into Philadelphia in a letter to the commander of the Pennsylvania militia.<sup>157</sup>

Major Simcoe's methods provided him with an easy flow of intelligence that allowed him to know the movements of the enemy militia as they occurred. Shortly before the British withdrew from Philadelphia, an event occurred that provides a clear example of the ability of the Loyalists to manage operations with minimum oversight. Pressure from Congress and General Washington drove the militia to attempt to create a closer stranglehold on Philadelphia and the provisions that continued to make it to the weekly market day. As this occurred, Simcoe received intelligence from the local population of the gathering of five hundred Pennsylvania militia under Brigadier General John Lacey in the area of Crooked Billet, about twenty-five miles from Philadelphia. Major Simcoe provided the intelligence to Lieutenant Colonel Nesbit Balfour, one of General Howe's staff officers,

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>157</sup> George Washington to John Lacey, 2 March 1778, in George Washington, *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 14, ed. David R. Hoth. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004), 32-33.

and requested permission to attack the militia as they intruded in force in the area previously dominated by the Queen's Rangers.<sup>158</sup>

After Major Simcoe developed an approved plan, four hundred British soldiers from the 1st Light Infantry Battalion, a hundred and twenty dragoons, and the three hundred Rangers departed for Crooked Billet on the evening of 30 April 1778. The British successfully surrounded the militia force with no warning to the militia due to neglect by the pickets. The raid resulted in a complete rout of the militia force under General Lacey. The count of killed and wounded varied from forty-seven to almost a hundred. Both sides agreed on the fifty-eight militia captured by the British. This came at a cost of only seven to nine wounded. In addition, to the significant number of casualties inflicted the British also captured all the logistical and camp supplies used by the militia. The Rangers took the confiscated supplies in eleven to thirteen wagons and appropriated them for their own use and profit.<sup>159</sup>

The Queen's Rangers held the distinction of being the most active of the Loyalist units in the British Army during the Philadelphia Campaign. The soldiers contributed prominently to the Battle of Brandywine and demonstrated the Loyalists capability to play a major role during significant battles with the Washington's regular army. The activities after Brandywine provide an even more convincing portrayal of the potential for Loyalists serving under the banner of the crown. Under the leadership of Major Simcoe, the Queen's Rangers proved adept at patrolling and maintaining the security of the countryside. Major Simcoe took advantage of the Loyalist connections and developed an intelligence network that supported their assigned mission. The Battle of Crooked Billet showed the capability for the Loyalists to develop operational concepts independently and execute decisively. While the Queen's Rangers benefited from the experience and leadership of Major Simcoe, the unit never had the benefit of more than one professionally trained British Officer.

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<sup>158</sup> Simcoe, *Journal*, 56-57.

<sup>159</sup> Gara, *American Rangers*, 124-126.

## Conclusion

At various moments during the American Revolution, all the major British leaders acknowledged the need for active Loyalist participation in the British military's effort to suppress the rebellion. Lord Germain never considered anything other than replacements after the height of British troop levels in August 1776. Competing operations demanded any additional units and at times depleted the British army of soldiers fighting in the colonies. Instead, Germain suggested to the Commanders in Chief of British forces in the colonies that they make use of the Loyalists. Past the suggestions, Lord Germain failed to consider or provide the means for General Howe effectively make up the fifteen thousand soldiers needed in 1777.

General Howe gave lip service to Germain's suggestions to use provincial units unit, however, he never embraced the effort. General Howe appointed the basic administrative agents necessary to maintain the provincial units, but the efforts immediately prior to and during the Philadelphia campaign only permitted the Loyalist seeking to help the British who sought to do so on their own initiative. General Howe failed to develop a comprehensive strategy to proceed with the policy suggestions made by Lord Germain.

David Galula, a French military writer on counterinsurgency theory, argued that the first law of any counterinsurgency is the support of the population.<sup>160</sup> Without that support, the British had no hope of defeating the rebels. The need for recruits depended on the population's willingness to defy the coercive measures of the rebels. Lord Germain recognized this by at least 1779, when he wrote to General Clinton and said, "out utmost efforts will fail . . . if we cannot find means to engage the people of America in support of a cause which is equally their own and ours."<sup>161</sup> General Howe also showed indications of his appreciation for the need for Loyalist support. However, this appreciation

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<sup>160</sup> David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 52.

<sup>161</sup> O'Shaughnessy, *Lost America*, 187.

never developed into a comprehensive strategy to encourage the integration of the Loyalists into the struggle with the rebels. This resulted in many residents of the Philadelphia area losing faith in the belief of British advocacy. General Howe delivered a lukewarm restraint on the plundering activities of both British and mercenaries in his army. The lack of restraint embittered many of the Loyalists in the Philadelphia area. These same individuals, who hailed the coming of the British as a release from tyranny, now expressed disillusionment. In Philadelphia, Loyalists took less than three months for their respect for the British to wane. Robert Morton recorded in November 1777 a lack of restraint from the British and his expectation that the Loyalists would “soon be converted and become their [British] professed enemies.”<sup>162</sup> The dismay from the Loyalists appears repeatedly throughout their letters and diaries.

In addition to the plunder General Howe’s inability to address to the economic hardships introduced to the local population by the presence of the British caused another series of disappointments for the loyalists. Prior to the opening of Philadelphia to commercial shipping, the Loyalists understood the privations. However, the arrival of merchants who openly took advantage of the local inhabitants and devalued the common currency embittered many British supporters. Loyalists expected the British to prevent the abuses of merchants. The lack of British control resulted in many of the families in Philadelphia finding themselves destitute as the only money they had known, no longer held value. High prices from the merchants did not help. By the May 1778, James Allen, an ardent Loyalist, “hoped the departure of the army will reduce the prices.”<sup>163</sup> The British lack of ability to ensure a stable life for the residents of Philadelphia ostracized many Loyalists.

The Queens Rangers provide clear evidence of the potential that resided within the Loyalist volunteers. The British publicly acknowledged the capable contributions of the Queen’s Rangers. The competence of the Queen’s Rangers increased due to the leadership of three British officers, yet

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<sup>162</sup> Morton, “Diary,” 30.

<sup>163</sup> Allen, “Diary,” 436.

this failed to negate the competence of the many Loyalists who served in the twelve companies underneath his command. They served and fought well. General Howe recognized the capability of the unit but never organized and pushed an attempt to duplicate the success of the Queen's Ranger with a selection of the best of the British army to lead the Loyalists. Those Howe selected earned the opprobrium of Edward Winslow. He described the normal British officer assigned to the provincial units as "Coxcombs – Fools - & Blackguards."<sup>164</sup>

The indifferent pursuit of Loyalist military support belies the importance for successful suppression of the rebels. General How acknowledged the need for a Loyalist support in letters to Lord Germain, yet he continued to request additional British units or mercenaries for use in the campaign. As late as December 1777, Howe's staff discussed optimistic rumors of a reinforcement of twenty thousand Russian mercenaries.<sup>165</sup> The presence of this rumor reinforces an understanding of the British lack of dedicated pursuit of able Loyalist units.

The British expectation of Loyalists flocking to the British banner illustrates a pernicious absence of understanding the various pressures and influences operating within the colonies. The Loyalists in Pennsylvania lived under an "arbitrary power."<sup>166</sup> The arrival of the British army brought with it hope for a life lived consistent justice and safety from the capricious harassment and confiscations suffered under rebel rule. General Howe failed to understand the complex layers of influences that drove the support of Loyalists. This lack of nuanced understanding prevented the formation of a coherent policy at the operational level to ensure the support of the Loyalists.

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<sup>164</sup> Raymond, *Winslow Papers*, 41.

<sup>165</sup> Muenchhausen, *At General Howe's Side*, 45.

<sup>166</sup> Morton, "Diary," 7.

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