

From Anglicisation to Loyalism?
New York, 1691-1783

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Sophie Heather Jones

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Abstract

Sophie H Jones, 'From Anglicisation to Loyalism? New York, 1691-1783'

This dissertation investigates the development of loyalism in the colony of New York during the American Revolution. It argues that the decision to remain loyal was largely determined by local, rather than ideological, factors. In contrast to interpretations that see loyalism as a fixed, ideological construct, this dissertation shows that the loyalist experience differed greatly between distinct geographic regions within a single colony: different counties entered the war at different stages, loyalist claimants described different motivations for remaining loyal, while the nature of the activities and services provided by loyalists to advance the British cause varied considerably. Crucially, the local factors which shaped the nature of New York loyalism had historic roots which extended back into the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

New York is deserving of a detailed study because of the unique role which it played during the conflict. Captured by the British during the summer of 1776, New York City formed their military headquarters for the duration of the war and became the centre of loyalism in British North America. Responding to the emergence of recent scholarship on upstate New York during the Revolutionary era, this dissertation shows that significant reserves of loyalist support could also be found within more rural and frontier regions. However, this allegiance to Britain was not necessarily guaranteed: New York had initially been established as a Dutch colony but, during the early eighteenth-century, underwent a significant process of Anglicisation.

This dissertation is divided into two parts. Beginning with Jacob Leisler's Rebellion of 1691, Part One considers New York's transformation from a Dutch colony to an English province. Tracing New York's social, cultural, political and material development, it questions the extent to which the process of Anglicisation was felt uniformly within the colony. It argues that the uneven impact of such changes produced distinctly different regions within New York, each with their own local character. Part Two forms a detailed and sustained analysis of the post-war compensation claims submitted by New York's loyalists to the British Loyalist Claims Commission. Comparing the claims of loyalists from three counties – the city and county of New York, Albany County and Tryon County – it demonstrates that the exact nature of loyalism in each of these regions was mainly influenced by local circumstance and the unique complexities of each region; the nature of which have been outlined in Part One.

This study is original in the way that it makes use of the loyalist claims. Despite their vast potential, limited scholarly attention has been paid to the claims and they remain an under-utilised resource. Furthermore, this study bridges a scholarly gap that has emerged between the histories of New York City and upstate New York: in contrast to studies that exclusively focus on the revolution within either region, this dissertation is the first to compare the loyalist experience between the colony's urban and rural areas. Finally, as scholars continue to comprehend the complexity of loyalist identities, this dissertation contributes to the growing field of loyalist studies by demonstrating that the nature of loyalism varied greatly, even within a single colony. This variance not only supports the conclusions of existing scholarship which argues that loyalist identities were neither static nor homogenous, but it also indicates that the exact nature of loyalism was ultimately a product of local circumstance.

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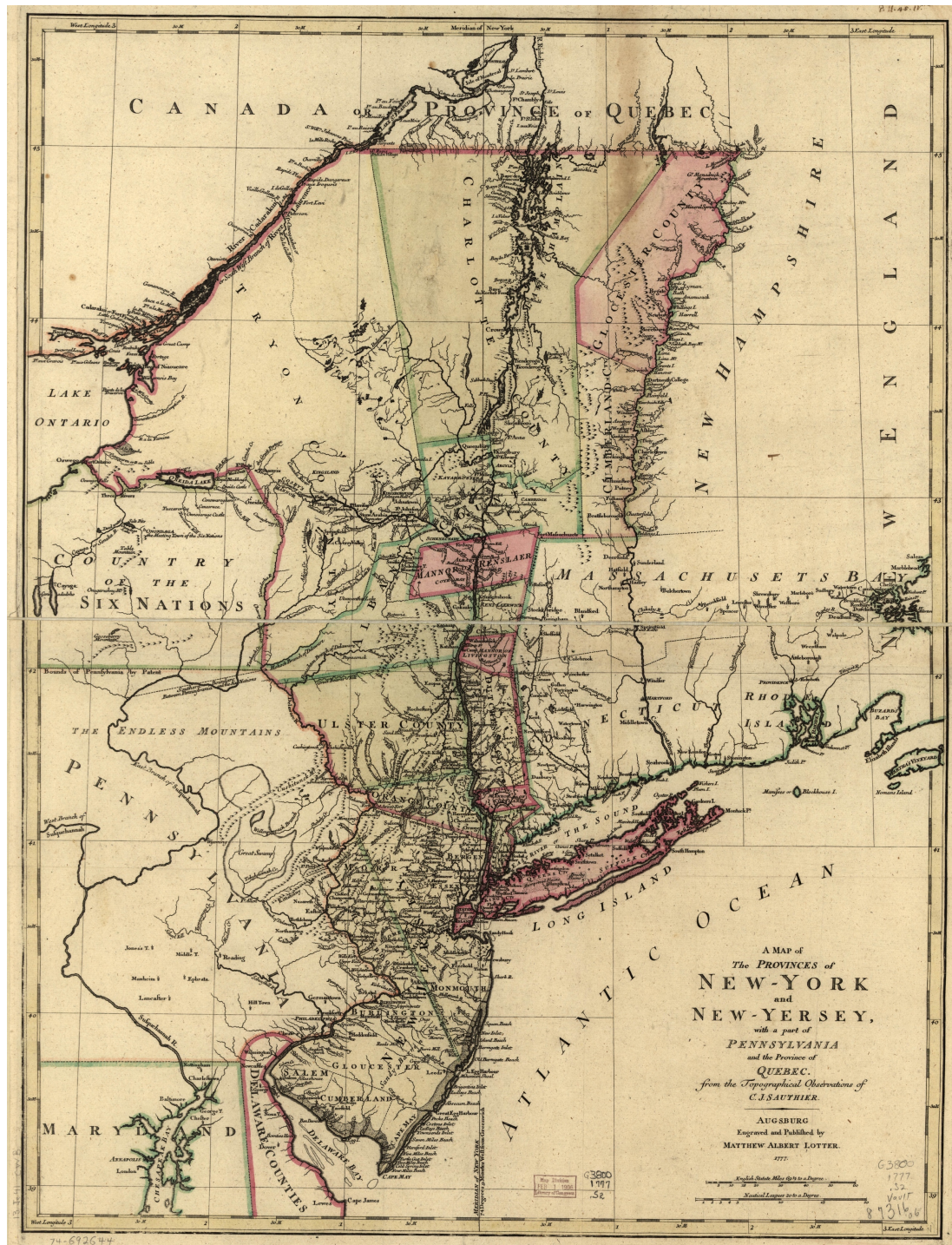
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List of Abbreviations

AAS	American Antiquarian Society.
AHR	<i>The American Historical Review.</i>
ANB	<i>American National Biography Online.</i>
CASHP	New York State Museum, <i>Colonial Albany Social History Project</i> , < https://exhibitions.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/ >
<i>Colonial America</i>	Adam Matthew Digital's <i>Colonial America</i> database, < http://www.colonialamerica.amdigital.co.uk/ >
DNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.</i>
Evans	<i>Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, 1639-1800</i> , < http://infoweb.newsbank.com >
ECCO	Eighteenth-Century Collections Online, < http://www.gale.com/c/eighteenth-century-collections-online-part-i >
EAN	<i>Early American Newspapers Database. Series 1, 1690-1876</i> , digitised for Readex's <i>America's Historical Newspapers</i> database < http://infoweb.newsbank.com >
FAA	Peter Force's American Archives, < http://amarch.lib.niu.edu >
HRVR	<i>Hudson River Valley Review.</i>
JBS	<i>Journal of British Studies.</i>
NML	National Museums Liverpool.
NYH	<i>New York History.</i>
N-YHS	New-York Historical Society.
NYPL	New York Public Library.
NYSA	New York State Archives.
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary Online</i> , < http://www.oed.com.liverpool.idm.oclc.org >
TNA	The National Archives.
TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society.</i>
WMQ	The William and Mary Quarterly.



Claude Joseph Sauthier and Matthäus Albrecht Lotter, *A map of the provinces of New-York and New-Yersey, with a part of Pennsylvania and the Province of Quebec*. Augsburg, 1777. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division. Reproduced at <<https://www.loc.gov/item/74692644/>> [accessed 25 September 2018].

Introduction

In 1815, John Eardley Wilmot – one of the Commissioners employed to lead the enquiry into the claims of the American loyalists – reflected upon the process of awarding financial compensation to those who had remained loyal to Britain during the American Revolution. Having presided over the claims of more than 3,000 loyalists, Wilmot noted the differing behaviours and varying motivations for remaining loyal that were exhibited by the claimants. According to Wilmot:

There were ... a considerable number in each Province who, from various motives, took part at first with the Mother Country in this contest; some from their native attachment, and what they thought their duty to their Sovereign; others from their official situations.¹

Although Wilmot and his fellow Commissioners generally considered “the Loyalty of the party [to be] uniform and unequivocal”, he was perplexed by what he saw as inconsistencies in their allegiance. Noting that “there were some who had not been early in the part they had taken, and others who had even at first taken part with the Americans”, Wilmot was confused as to how he should regard these individuals.²

Building upon Wilmot’s initial observations, this dissertation explores variations in loyalism within the colony of New York during the American Revolution. New York is deserving of a detailed study because of the unique role which it played during the conflict. Captured by the British during the summer of 1776, New York City formed their military headquarters for the duration of the war. British forces would not fully evacuate the city until November 1783. As such, New York City became the centre of loyalism in British North America: it became a safe-haven for loyalist refugees, providing protection for individuals and their families from across the thirteen colonies who had been driven away from their properties. Beyond the city of New York – as this dissertation will demonstrate – significant reserves of loyalist support could also be found within more rural upstate and frontier regions. According to Wallace Brown, the colony provided more soldiers for the British war effort than all the other colonies combined.³

¹ J. E. Wilmot, *Historical View of the Commission for Enquiring into the Losses, Services, and Claims of the American Loyalists, At the Close of the War Between Great Britain and her Colonies, in 1783*, New Edition (Boston, MA: Gregg Press, 1972), p. 4.

² Wilmot, *Historical View of the Commission*, p. 51.

³ W. Brown, *The King's Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1966), p. 78.

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Meanwhile, New York's neighbouring colonies recognised the severity of its loyalist threat and expressed their concern that the colony was "surged with so many infernal wretches."⁴

In contrast to interpretations – such as those of Philip Ranlet or Paul H. Smith – that see loyalism as a fixed, ideological construct, this dissertation argues that the loyalist experience differed greatly between distinct geographic regions within a single colony: different counties entered the war at different stages, while demonstrations of loyalism and the range of activities and services provided by loyalists varied greatly.⁵ Through a detailed comparison of three New York counties – the city and county of New York, Albany County and Tryon County – this dissertation argues that the decision to remain loyal was largely determined by local, rather than ideological, factors. These local contextual factors – which include the development of the public sphere and the nature of local politics, the success of local attempts to improve each region, parochial factors concerning pre-existing social tensions or historic family divisions and the impact of ethnicity upon allegiance – often had historic roots extending back into the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Historiography

Loyalist studies are a growing field, although this has not always been the case. With the exception of Alexander Flick's *Loyalism in New York during the American Revolution* and Claude Halstead Van Tyne's *The Loyalists in the American Revolution*, both published at the turn of the twentieth century, America's loyalists received limited scholarly attention until the last quarter of the twentieth century.⁶ This led George Athan Billias to conclude in 1972 that, "history is usually written by winners, not losers, and therefore we do not know as much about the Loyalists as we should."⁷

⁴ Worcester Committee of Correspondence to New York Committee of Convention, 2 November 1776, United States Revolution Collection, 1754-1928, AAS, Box 2, Folder 20.

⁵ For more on the historiography of the depiction of loyalists, see A. Gorman Condon, 'The Foundations of Loyalism', in R. S. Allen, B. Pothier, and V. Suthren (eds), *The Loyal Americans: The Military Role of the Loyalist Provincial Corps and their Settlement in British North America, 1775-1784* (Ottawa: National Museum of Man & National Museums of Canada, 1983), pp. 1-8; P. Ranlet, *The New York Loyalists*, 2nd ed. (Lanham: University Press of America, 2002); P. H. Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats: A Study in British Revolutionary Policy* (Williamsburg, VA: University of North Carolina Press, 1964).

⁶ A. C. Flick, *Loyalism in New York during the American Revolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1901); C. H. Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902).

⁷ G. A. Billias, 'Introduction: The Loyalist Library', in J. E. Wilmot, *Historical View of the Commission for Enquiring into the Losses, Services, and Claims of the American Loyalists, At the Close of the War Between Great Britain and her Colonies, in 1783*, New Edition (Boston, MA: Gregg Press, 1972), p. v.

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The bicentennial of the American Revolution, combined with changes in scholarly practice during the 1970s and 1980s, reshaped the study of early America. Borrowing from the emerging fields of social history and anthropology, colonial historians increasingly pursued more localised and regional studies, placing a new emphasis on race, ethnicity and gender to reconstruct the lives and activities of those colonists who J. Franklin Jameson described in 1925 as the “plain people.”⁸ Although such studies were extremely beneficial in refocusing the historical narrative and revealing the complexity, confusion and diversity of colonial American life and the Revolution, they largely failed to incorporate the loyalist experience fully into their accounts. There are, however, some notable exceptions to this, as a small number of scholars began to think more comprehensively about American loyalism: these include Mary Beth Norton’s *The British-Americans*, William H. Nelson’s *The American Tory* and Paul H. Smith’s *Loyalists and Redcoats*.⁹ Since their initial efforts, increased attention has been paid to reintegrating loyalists within the historiography of the American Revolution, but there is still more to be done. As recently as 2007 Edward Larkin claimed that “loyalism and loyalists remain among the most poorly understood aspects of the Revolution.”¹⁰ With a close focus on New York, this dissertation seeks to enhance our understanding of the loyalist experience by drawing upon three trends within the most recent historiography on American loyalism.

First, there has been a renewed focus upon the complexity and fluidity of loyalist identities. Debunking traditional – and now outdated – interpretations of loyalists as being a homogeneous group of little more than self-interested cowards, these works instead acknowledge that loyalism was neither a fixed set of behaviours nor were allegiances necessarily permanent.¹¹ In *Generous Enemies*, for instance, Judith Van Buskirk argues that political concerns formed only one aspect of loyalists’ identities in New York City. According to Van Buskirk, this is evidenced from the relatively uninterrupted continuation of trade,

⁸ R. R. Menard, ‘Reckoning with Williams: “Capitalism and Slavery” and the Reconstruction of Early American History’, *Callaloo*, 20.4 (1997), p. 791; M. Mulcahy and R. Menard, ‘Forum: “Why the West is Lost”: Comments and Response’, *WMQ*, 51.4 (1994) p. 741; G. S. Wood, ‘A Century of Writing Early American History: Then and Now Compared; Or How Henry Adams Got It Wrong’, *AHR*, 100.3 (1995), p. 693; J. F. Jameson, *The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement*, 3rd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 18.

⁹ M. B., Norton, *The British-Americans: The Loyalist Exiles in England, 1774-1789* (London: Constable, 1974); W. H. Nelson, *The American Tory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961); Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*.

¹⁰ E. Larkin, ‘What is a Loyalist? The American Revolution as Civil War’, *Common Place*, 8.1 (2007), reproduced at <<http://www.common-place.org/vol-08/no-01/larkin/>>[accessed 23 September 2017].

¹¹ E. Larkin, ‘The Cosmopolitan Revolution: Loyalism and the Fiction of an American Nation’, *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, 40.1/2 (2006), pp. 52-76; D. Wahrman, ‘The English Problem of Identity in the American Revolution’, *AHR*, 106.4 (2001), pp. 1236-1262.

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commerce and free movement, as loyalists refused to let their ideological affiliations override their pre-war familial, personal and mercantile allegiances.¹² Ruma Chopra makes a similar claim in *Choosing Sides*, arguing that loyalists were no different from their local rebel counterparts aside from their political allegiances, which – importantly – were apt to change depending upon the progress of the war.¹³

Secondly, studies have begun to address the complexity of loyalism, which occurred simultaneously as both a local and global phenomenon. Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan's *The Loyal Atlantic* locates loyalism as a political identity and ideology within the British Atlantic, while Allan Blackstock and Frank O'Gorman's *Loyalism and the Formation of the British World* explores loyalism within the wider context of Britain's global Empire.¹⁴ Through a series of individual case studies, both of these edited collections demonstrate the unique character of loyalism within local contexts, while attempting to draw parallels between them. Taking a slightly different approach, Maya Jasanoff's *Liberty's Exiles* explores the fate of loyalist refugees who were expelled from the United States and questions how their loyalist allegiances shaped the development of the post-war British Empire.¹⁵ Albeit with a narrower focus, Canadian historiography on loyalism has similarly focused upon the role of loyalists during the foundation of modern Canada.¹⁶

The third historiographical development is a renewed interest in how colonial contexts shaped the direction of the American Revolution and, as a consequence, the development of loyalism. Brendan McConville, for instance, views loyalism as a logical consequence of the emotional and cultural ties that developed between Britain and the American colonies.¹⁷ Picking up

¹² J. L. Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

¹³ R. Chopra, *Choosing Sides: Loyalists in Revolutionary America* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013).

¹⁴ J. Bannister and L. Riordan (eds), *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012); A. Blackstock and F. O'Gorman (eds), *Loyalism and the Formation of the British World, 1775-1914* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014).

¹⁵ M. Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011).

¹⁶ See for instance R. S. Allen, B. Pothier, and V. Suthren (eds) *The Loyal Americans: The Military Role of the Loyalist Provincial Corps and their Settlement in British North America, 1775-1784* (Ottawa: National Museum of Man & National Museums of Canada, 1983); J. J. Talman, *Loyalist narratives from Upper Canada* (New York: Greenwood, 1969); W. S. Wallace, *The United Empire Loyalists; A Chronicle of the Great Migration* (Toronto: Glasgow, Brook & Company, 1922). According to Wallace, in Canada "the United Empire Loyalists are still regarded with an uncritical veneration which has in it something of the spirit of primitive ancestor worship." (p. 3).

¹⁷ B. McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

where McConville left off chronologically, in *Tory Insurgents* – a revised and expanded edition of their 1989 work, *The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays* – Robert Calhoun *et al.* argue that the Revolution interacted with pre-existing social tensions which were a consequence of the colonial era.¹⁸ The past decade has also witnessed a renewed interest in studies of the American Revolution as it occurred within upstate New York.¹⁹ Taking inspiration from similar efforts which look at Pennsylvania and the southern backcountry,²⁰ these collections aim to draw the focus of revolutionary studies away from the urban centres and port cities which have dominated the historiography.²¹

Although great progress has been made in refocusing the historical narrative of the American Revolution, limitations remain which this study seeks to address. In particular, recent scholarship has failed to fully engage with the development of loyalist identities within New York, despite the colony's importance during the Revolution. At present, loyalist historiography largely remains confined to narrowly-focused case studies. Despite the best efforts of editors to bring these works together into coherent edited collections, it is difficult to achieve meaningful comparisons that are attainable from longer studies. Notably, there has yet to be a complete study of the revolution in upstate New York written by a sole author – a factor that this dissertation remedies. Considering studies of revolutionary New York in particular, although such collections make reference to loyalists – usually through the study of particular prominent characters – they fail to fully engage with the development of personal allegiances.²² Perhaps even more troubling, New York City is often excluded from the

¹⁸ R. M. Calhoun, T. M. Barnes, and R. S. Davis (eds), *Tory Insurgents: The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays*. Revised and Expanded Edition (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010).

¹⁹ J. S. Tiedemann and E. R. Fingerhut (eds), *The Other New York: The American Revolution Beyond New York City, 1763-1787* (Albany: SUNY University Press, 2005); J. M. Johnson, C. Pryslopski, and A. Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013). J. S. Tiedemann, E. R. Fingerhut and R. W. Venables (eds), *The Other Loyalists: Ordinary People, Royalism, and the Revolution in the Middle Colonies, 1763-1787* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009).

²⁰ J. B. Frantz and W. Pencak (eds), *Beyond Philadelphia: The American Revolution in the Pennsylvania Hinterland* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998); R. Hoffman, T. W. Tate, and P. J. Albert (eds), *An Uncivil War: The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia & United States Capitol Historical Society, 1985).

²¹ Such as R. Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion: Loyalists in New York City During the Revolution* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011); P. Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island: Staten Island And The American Revolution* (New York & London: New York University Press, 2007).

²² See for instance R. A. East and J. Judd (eds), *The Loyalist Americans: A Focus on Greater New York* (Tarrytown, NY: Sleepy Hollow Restorations, 1975). With the exception of John Shy's essay 'The Loyalist Problem in the Lower Hudson Valley' and Edmond Wright's 'The New York Loyalists: A Cross-Section of Colonial Society', all of the chapters within this collection are centred around prominent loyalists including James DeLancey, Peter Van Schaack and William Franklin.

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content of such works; instead, New York City is compared with urban centres located beyond the confines of the state, such as Philadelphia, Charlestown and Boston.²³

In response to the shortcomings of existing literature, therefore, this dissertation is a comparative study of the development of loyalism within the colony of New York. Expanding upon the emerging consensus that recognises loyalist identities as complex and unstable, this study uses the accounts of New York's loyalists to demonstrate that loyalism was ultimately a local construct, which differed according to geographic locations and was dependent upon specific contexts. By comparing three distinct regions within New York – New York City, Albany and Tryon Counties – this dissertation not only demonstrates the local element to loyalism, but also closes the scholarly divide that has emerged between New York City and the remainder of the state.

Methodology

The originality of this study is threefold. First, in contrast to other studies of the American Revolution – which typically begin with the Stamp Act Crisis of 1765 or later – this dissertation deliberately adopts a longer chronological approach, beginning in 1691 and extending beyond 1776.²⁴ In doing so, this allows us to see how the social, cultural, political and economic development of the colony created three distinct environments. These different local environments subsequently shaped the development and nature of loyalism within each region. However, viewing the American Revolution from a longer chronological perspective also emphasises the continuities between colonial society and the post-Revolutionary era, thus challenging what Alan Taylor terms as the American Revolution's presumed status as a "watershed" moment.²⁵ This approach, therefore, enables us to view the events of 1775 to 1783 as part of a longer history of early America.²⁶

Secondly, this study is original in its geographic focus. Recent scholarship on the American Revolution has typically isolated New York City from the remainder of the colony: this has

²³ B. L. Carp, *Rebels Rising: Cities and the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); G. B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: The Northern Seaports and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1986).

²⁴ This is in contrast to studies such as Brendan McConville's *The King's Three Faces*, which concludes with the outbreak of the American Revolution.

²⁵ A. Taylor, 'Expand or Die: The Revolution's New Empire', *WMQ*, 74.4 (2017), p. 619.

²⁶ For more on the call for a longer approach to the American Revolution, see *WMQ*, 74.4 (2017), a joint issue between *WMQ* and the *Journal of the Early Republic*, especially Taylor, 'Expand or Die', pp. 619-32.

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been achieved in part by studies which focus solely on events that occurred in and around Manhattan; however a recent scholarly backlash to New York City's dominance has prompted the publication of new works which focus exclusively and deliberately on the Revolution as it occurred in upstate New York.²⁷ In contrast to such approaches, this study examines the development of loyalist identities in both the colony's urban centre and in lesser-documented upstate and frontier regions by drawing direct comparisons between New York City, Albany County and Tryon County.

Thirdly, this study is unique in its approach to the source material used to analyse the self-identification of loyalists. It is primarily based upon the records of the Loyalist Claims Commission: a committee appointed in London in July 1783 to enquire into the losses incurred by the American loyalists and to arrange their reimbursement accordingly. Upon the conclusion of the war, many loyalists were unable to remain within the former colonies; it is estimated that by the close of 1783 as many as 75,000 loyalists had migrated from the United States to locations within the British Empire. Over 30,000 of these evacuees left New York to found new settlements in Canada, while others resettled in Britain, Asia and the British Caribbean.²⁸

As refugees, the loyalists had lost their personal property and real estate, either through the destruction of war or through confiscation by the various revolutionary committees. Under such circumstances loyalist refugees found themselves having to start their lives over, often at an advanced stage of life and separated from the social and familial networks upon which they had previously depended.²⁹ Their position was not helped by the British Government who, as part of the peace treaty with the Americans, announced that they would not play a role in recovering the loyalists' former property. Although the United States agreed in principle to provide restitution for the loyalists' confiscated property, in practice it was left to individual states to administer this undertaking; Congress did little more than to "earnestly

²⁷ See, for instance, Tiedemann and Fingerhut (eds), *The Other New York*, Johnson, Pryslopski, and Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country*, and Tiedemann, Fingerhut and Venables (eds), *The Other Loyalists*.

²⁸ Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, p. 6.

²⁹ See for example the testimony of New York City merchant and consignee for the East India Tea Company, Benjamin Booth, who informed British commissioners that he "finds himself cut off from the friendships formed in his youth and in his 47th year compelled to begin the world again with a wife and seven children to support who have been ... banished forever from their native country." American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/24.

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recommend” its completion.³⁰ The result – unsurprisingly – was that this article of the peace treaty was not usually fulfilled. Loyalists encountered real barriers to recovering their property, including “insult and contempt”, imprisonment, and banishment “under the pain of death.”³¹

Campaigning against this “perfectly despotic” betrayal by the British government (in which they perceived their property as being ceded unlawfully to the United States), a pressure group of loyalists based in London repeatedly petitioned Parliament in the early months of 1783 to investigate the loyalists’ position.³² The five-member Loyalist Claims Commission was eventually appointed in July 1783 as a result of their campaigning. Led by John Eardley Wilmot and Daniel Parker Coke – British lawyers and politicians who were already hearing pension cases from loyalist soldiers – the claims commission was empowered with a two-year mandate to hear and investigate all loyalist claims for financial compensation. Owing to the unanticipated volume of claims, however, the commission was in operation for over six years (1783-1790). More than 3,200 claims were lodged and heard, before over £3,000,000 was eventually authorised in compensation payments; a figure far below the estimated true cost to the Loyalists of £8,216,126.³³ Claimants initially travelled to London to appear before the commissioners, however it became apparent that such action was costly and impractical for many. Thus, the commission was dispatched to Canada in 1785 to hear testimonies from loyalist refugees resident there.³⁴

Held at the British National Archives, the loyalist claims provide a rich, detailed and hitherto under-utilised collection of first-hand accounts of life in New York during the American Revolution and in its immediate aftermath. Essentially a collection of requests for

³⁰ The Paris Peace Treaty of September 30, 1783, reproduced at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/paris.asp [accessed 14th June 2017].

³¹ For an example of the threats made against Loyalists returning to the United States see the evidence relating to the claim of Benjamin Holt, American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/13. Holt was named in ‘An Act to prevent the Return to this State of certain Persons therein named, and others who have left this State, or either of the United States and joined the Enemies thereof.’ which decreed that returning Loyalists were to be “whipped on the naked Back, not more than Forty, nor less than Twenty stripes”. *Acts and laws of the state of Vermont, in America. Session Laws 1779 February* (Dresden, VT: Judah-Padock & Alden Spooner, 1779), pp. 71-72; J. Galloway, *The Claim of the American Loyalists Reviewed and Maintained Upon Incontrovertible Principles of Law and Justice*. New Edition (Boston: Gregg Press, 1972), p. 55.

³² Norton, *The British-Americans*, p. 186; Galloway, *The Claim of the American Loyalists*, p. 14.

³³ G. A. Billias, ‘Preface’, in Galloway, *The Claim of the American Loyalists*, p. ix; Norton, *The British-Americans*, p. 216.

³⁴ Norton, *The British-Americans*, pp. 190-192 and p. 211.

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compensation, the records of the Commission contain memorials submitted by loyalists accounting for their war-time activities, inventories detailing their financial losses and the minutes of their oral testimonies taken before the board, where they answered further questions relating to their claims.

Despite their immense historical value, historians have failed to engage fully with these claims. While a scholarly edition collection of the claims was published by the Roxburghe Club in 1915, aside from an introductory overview, the claims were not analysed in any particular depth.³⁵ Similarly, Mary Beth Norton considered the Loyalist Claims Commission in her aforementioned *British-Americans*, but her primary focus was upon the establishment of the commission itself, rather than the nature of the claims. The most thorough analysis of the claims, therefore, can be found in Wallace Brown's 1966 work, *The King's Friends*. Primarily forming an investigation into the socio-economic backgrounds of claimants and the financial value of their claims, the purpose of Brown's study was to consider the wealth and status of loyalist claimants in an attempt to challenge the contemporary misconception that loyalists were primarily drawn from the colonial elite.³⁶ Although it is an impressive work, providing an overview of the total body of the claims submitted from each of the thirteen colonies, Brown is not without his critics: in particular, his reliance on the claims alone to draw broad conclusions relating to the geographical concentration of loyalists. As we shall see, not all loyalists were eligible to apply for compensation; as such, Brown over-estimates (and potentially under-estimates) the strength of loyalist support in particular regions.

In contrast to earlier works, therefore, this dissertation is original in the manner in which it engages with the claims material, paying attention to a part of the claims process not considered in any of the previous scholarship. It provides a close textual analysis of the claims in order to identify the motivations for remaining loyal and to compare how these varied according to geographic region; specifically, between New York, Tryon and Albany Counties. It seeks to enhance our understanding of the development of loyalist allegiances within New York by asking a series of questions: at what stage did individuals decide to become loyalists; for what reasons; what actions (if any) they took to support the British cause; and their

³⁵ H. E. Egerton (ed.), *The Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of American Loyalists, 1783 to 1785, being the notes of Mr. Daniel Parker Coke, M. P., one of the commissioners during that period* (Oxford: Roxburghe Club, 1915).

³⁶ W. Brown, *The King's Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1966).

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understandings of what it meant to be loyal. Drawing upon recent identity theory, we shall see how New York's loyalists used their own concepts of self-identification to differentiate themselves from the rebels; or, as Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper describe, how they "make sense of themselves, of their activities, of what they share with, and how they differ from others."³⁷

This study analyses 424 claims (submitted by 29 women and 395 men) which were submitted to the Loyalist Claims Commission between 1783 and 1786 by loyalist claimants from New York. Chosen by simple random sampling, this selection forms a cross-section of claimants and represents approximately 40 per cent of the total number of 1,107 claims taken from the former colony of New York.³⁸ Significantly, the claims submitted by New York's loyalists account for more than one third of the total number of claims submitted to the Loyalist Claims Commission (3,225); as such, the 424 claims analysed within this study comprise almost 15 per cent of the total body of the claims material.³⁹ An ethnically diverse group, New York's claimants were of an assortment of nationalities including American, British (English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish) and German; as we shall explore in Part Two, others were likely to have been American-born but of Dutch descent. There were three black claimants and one Mohawk.

Despite the source's potential, the claims are not entirely unproblematic. A particular difficulty relates to their typicality: critically, not all loyalists left the United States at the end of the war and an even smaller proportion were eligible to lodge a claim before the Commissioners. Thus, loyalist claimants are a self-selecting group. Subsequently, to draw conclusions for the loyalist population in its entirety from the claims alone – as was the main criticism of Brown's study – becomes problematic. In addition, as their memorials were essentially requests for financial compensation, it is not unlikely that some claimants elaborated upon their personal circumstances in the hopes of securing a favourable settlement. Norton in particular highlights instances of collusion which occurred between loyalist claimants, as neighbours artificially raised the value of their estates and testified to this effect.⁴⁰

³⁷ R. Brubaker and F. Cooper, 'Beyond "Identity"', *Theory and Society*, 29.1 (2000), p. 4.

³⁸ Figures provided in Brown, *The King's Friends*.

³⁹ Norton, *The British-Americans*, p. 216.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

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In order to minimise such issues, the claims are used in conjunction with a wide range of supplementary primary sources, including personal papers – such as letters, diaries, account books and miscellaneous correspondence – alongside official records. Although not without their own biases and limitations, personal papers which were produced for a purpose other than to secure financial compensation provide a different perspective into colonial life. They contain information which can be used to contextualise details raised within the loyalist claims. Meanwhile, state and colonial records – including the minutes of revolutionary committees, courts and commissions – are similarly used to corroborate loyalists' accounts of the treatment that they received from their rebellious neighbours. In particular, cross-referencing the accounts of loyalist prisoners against the records of New York's Committees of Correspondence often confirms the truth of what initially appear to be sensationalist recollections. Thus, despite these caveats, the loyalist claims form a rich collection of personal accounts of how these individuals experienced the American Revolution. Taken from a heterogeneous cross-section of the colonial population, they provide a rare insight into the complex nature of public and political life in late eighteenth-century New York.

Initial conclusions from an analysis of the loyalist claims demonstrated that the activities, services and experiences of loyalists varied greatly. In addition, New York's loyalists often had competing notions of what it meant to be loyal and therefore deserving of compensation. This difficulty is linked to the fluid and, at times, intangible nature of loyalism which both historians and contemporaries alike have repeatedly struggled to define. While the American revolutionary movement had a clearly defined political aim that its supporters could readily espouse (independence from the tyranny of British rule), the parameters of loyalism are much more difficult to determine.

Beyond wanting to remain under the jurisdiction of the British Empire, loyalists rarely agreed on much else. As Keith Mason explains, "the 'King's Friends' were characterised by a degree of heterogeneity that is hard to exaggerate."⁴¹ Drawn from different classes, ethnicities, religions and socio-economic backgrounds, loyalists were a politically fractured group with competing motives for remaining loyal.⁴² They were not simply unquestioning adherents of

⁴¹ K. Mason, 'The American Loyalist Problem of Identity in the Revolutionary Atlantic World', in J. Bannister and L. Riordan (eds), *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), p. 42.

⁴² K. Mason, 'Loyalism in British North America in the Age of Revolution, c1776-1812', in A. Blackstock and F. O'Gorman (eds), *Loyalism and the Formation of the British World, 1775-1914* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014), pp. 165-66; K. Mason, 'The American Loyalist Diaspora and the Reconfiguration

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British imperial policy; many had disagreed with the intrusions of Parliament during the 1760s and 1770s, but favoured reform over rebellion. This was evident from the loyalist experience in Canada during the 1780s and 1790s, where exiles endured bitter political clashes as they attempted to reconfigure the post-war British Empire, moulding colonial rule in British North America in a direction that better suited them.⁴³

Defining Loyalism

Importantly, the word 'loyalist' has its own shortcomings as a marker of identity: those who historians now refer to as 'loyalists' (including Native Americans who supported the British forces) very rarely used the term to describe themselves, nor did their revolutionary counterparts.⁴⁴ The term had entered circulation during the English Civil War to describe those who remained loyal to the monarchy, but references to loyalism in the context of the American struggle for independence are few and far between before 1780.⁴⁵ One of the exceptionally few references to American loyalism comes from 'Britannicus' – an English visitor to New York – in a letter to John Holt, the editor of the *New-York Journal*, in 1775. Britannicus described "a new fangled New York Loyalist" as one who:

not only thinks, but insists "*that a King is above the law, that the King's commands are supreme and cannot be disobeyed without becoming guilty of impiety, disloyalty and rebellion,*" I asked my hair brained adversary, if this was really the political creed of the Loyalists in New York. "It is, Sir," replied he, "it is the sentiments of the men that will support the royal standard of George the Third, against the united combinations of all the rascally, rebellious, Republicans, Whigs, and Presbyterians on the face of the earth."⁴⁶

Beyond a handful of sporadic references to 'loyalists' before the 1780s, those who we consider to be loyalists were very rarely referred to as such.⁴⁷ American revolutionaries

of the British Atlantic World', in E. H. Gould and P. S. Onuf (eds), *Empire and Nation: The American Revolution in the Atlantic World* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press), pp. 242-43.

⁴³ See J. Bannister, 'The Loyal Atlantic', in J. G. Reid, H. V. Bowen and E. Mancke, 'Is There a "Canadian" Atlantic World?', *International Journal of Maritime History*, 21.1 (2009), pp. 290-95; Mason, 'The American Loyalist Diaspora', p. 258; Mason, 'Loyalism in British North America', p. 164; A. Taylor, 'The Late Loyalists: Northern Reflections of the Early American Republic', *Journal of the Early Republic*, 27.1 (2007), pp. 1-34; Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, p. 56.

⁴⁴ K. DuVal, *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution* (New York: Random House, 2015), p. 12; Larkin, 'What is a Loyalist?'

⁴⁵ 'Loyalist', *OED*.

⁴⁶ Letter from Britannicus to John Holt, *New-York Journal*, 2 March 1775. Italics included in original.

⁴⁷ See D. Leonard, *Massachusetts: Present Political State of the Province of Massachusetts Bay* (Boston: Mills and Hicks, 1775), p. 66, and J. Tucker, *A Series of Answers to Certain Popular Objections*,

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occasionally used the word 'Tory' in reference to the loyalists, but this was most often as an insult or an inflammatory remark and subsequently was very rarely used by loyalists to describe themselves.⁴⁸ 'Tory' also carries political connotations, suggesting affiliations with the English political party that were often inaccurate; many of those loyalists who were so-called 'Tories' actually held Whiggish beliefs.⁴⁹ More often, loyalists were generally described as being "inimical to the cause and rights of America", or simply "disaffected."⁵⁰ Even the legislation which underpinned New York's network of commissioners to uncover and prosecute those suspected of loyalist activity – the 'Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies' – made no mention of 'loyalists' in such terms.⁵¹

Lacking an appropriate and collective singular term to describe themselves, loyalists instead used an assortment of descriptions, ranging from unfaltering "faithful subject[s] to the King and British Constitution" to those "steadily adhered to [their] allegiance" towards the crown. What underlined these descriptions, however, was the assumption that the loyalists' political stance throughout "the late unhappy troubles" or "the unhappy dissensions in America", as they became known, remained constant; it was the behaviour of their revolutionary

Against Separating from the Rebellious Colonies, and Discarding them Entirely: Being the Concluding Tract of the Dean of Gloucester, on the subject of American affairs. (Gloucester, R. Raikes, 1776), p. 81. Both pamphlets make only a single reference to 'loyalists.'; See also the poem, 'The Pausing American Loyalist. A Parody on the Soliloquy of Hamlet,' *Middlesex Journal and Evening Advertiser*, 27 January 1776.

⁴⁸ M. Jasanoff, 'The Other Side of Revolution: Loyalists in the British Empire', *WMQ*, 65.2 (2008), p. 224.

⁴⁹ A. F. Young, *The Shoemaker And The Tea Party : Memory And The American Revolution* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1999), pp. xii-xvii; A. F. Young, 'Afterword', in A. F. Young (ed.), *The American Revolution* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976), p. 450; see also the alleged declaration of Jacob Traux of Schenectady before Gerret Garrison, that 'he was no tory but he was a man for the King', in A. Flick (ed.), *Minutes of the Albany Committee of Correspondence 1775-1778, Volume Two. Minutes of the Schenectady Committee 1775-1779, and Index* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1925), pp. 1097-98, reproduced at <https://archive.org/details/minutes1775177802albauoft> [accessed 14 June 2017].

⁵⁰ Continental Congress, *Treasurers directed to collect, for Continental Bills, Silver and Gold, to the amount of twenty thousand Pounds, Pennsylvania Currency, for the Army in Canada, Provincial Assemblies or Conventions, and Councils or Committees of Safety, requested to arrest and secure persons whose going at large may endanger the safety of the Colony or the liberties of America...*, 6 October 1775, FAA [S4-V3-p1891]; New York Provincial Congress, *Resolutions relative to persons dangerous and disaffected...*; A study of the Committees of Correspondence minutes from Albany County, Tryon County and Schenectady indicate that these terms were commonly used at local administrative level to refer to loyalists.

⁵¹ 'An Act Appointing Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies, and Declaring their Powers', 5 February 1778, *Laws of the State of New-York, Commencing with the First Session of the Senate and Assembly, After the Declaration of Independency, and the Organization of the New Government of the State, Anno 1777. By order of the Legislature* (Poughkeepsie: John Holt, 1782), pp. 6-7.

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neighbours – the so-called ‘rebels’, ‘bandittes’ and ‘mobs’ – which was the exception to the norm. When ‘loyalist’ was used, it more often referred to the naming of militia regiments, such as the Pennsylvania Loyalists, the Maryland Loyalists, or New Jersey Governor (and Benjamin Franklin’s son) William Franklin’s Board of Associated Loyalists.⁵²

Instead, ‘loyalist’, was largely a post-war term, coined during the 1780s to describe the American refugees.⁵³ As exiles from their native country, loyalist refugees’ collective sense of identity hardened and they increasingly began to describe themselves explicitly as ‘loyalists’.⁵⁴ In Britain, the descriptor of ‘American loyalist’ took on an acute political significance, as exiles from the colonies sought compensation and financial support for losses incurred as a consequence of their loyal stance. However, the changing nature of the term meant that by the 1790s references to ‘loyalists’ within the British press largely referred to the impending Irish crisis.⁵⁵ In Canada, ‘loyalist’ also became an important distinguisher of identity between those who had left the United States as exiles in 1783 and the so-called ‘late loyalists’ – Americans who opted to purchase low-cost land in British North America during the 1790s.⁵⁶ The term ‘United Empire Loyalist’ would gain significance in Canadian historiography only in the late 1890s.⁵⁷

Meanwhile, officials on both sides of the Atlantic advanced their own definitions of what constituted loyalism; importantly, without actually using the term ‘loyalist’. In March 1776, New York’s Provincial Congress defined loyalists as those “who are notoriously disaffected to the cause of America, or who have not associated, and shall refuse to associate, to defend, by

⁵² M. C. New, ‘The Board of Associated Loyalists Fought Behind the Lines Against American Independence’, *Military History*, 20.6, pp. 18-23.

⁵³ See the explanatory note in S. Blakemore, *Literature, Intertextuality, and the American Revolution: From Common Sense to “Rip Van Winkle”* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2012), pp. 14-15; the *OED* dates the first instance of loyalist being used in America as 1781, while a search of the British press via Burney Collection of 18th Century Newspapers and the Times Digital Archives indicates that the term was mainly in use during the 1780s and 1790s. ‘Loyalist’, *OED* [accessed 19 April 2018]; *Burney Collection of Eighteenth Century Newspapers* <tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4vNkY5> [Accessed 8 June 2017]; *The Times Digital Archives* <galegroup.com.liverpool.idm.oclc.org/ttda> [Accessed 8 June 2017].

⁵⁴ Mason, ‘The American Loyalist Diaspora’, p. 242; R. M. Calhoun, ‘The Loyalist Perception,’ in R. M. Calhoun, T. M. Barnes and R. S. Davis (eds), *Tory Insurgents: The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays. Revised and Expanded Edition* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010), p. 10.

⁵⁵ See search results for ‘loyalist’ during the 1790s via *Burney Collection of Eighteenth Century Newspapers* Database, <tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4vNkY5> [Accessed 8 June 2017].

⁵⁶ Taylor, ‘The Late Loyalists’, pp. 1-34.

⁵⁷ The *OED* dates the first use of ‘United Empire Loyalist’ as 1897.

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arms, these United Colonies against the hostile attempts of the British Fleets and Armies.”⁵⁸ In June of the same year, Congress reconfirmed its stance, calling upon those who “neglected or refused to associate with their fellow-citizens ... [or] never manifested by their conduct a zeal for and attachment to the American cause ... to show cause, if any they have, why they should be considered as friends to the American cause.”⁵⁹ In New York, therefore, officials saw loyalism as an attitude rather than a physical act, demonstrated through inaction and the failure of individuals to visibly adhere to the American revolutionary movement. By 1779 with the war underway, the definition of loyalism had altered only slightly.

Away from New York City, the newly-established state of Vermont – annexed from Gloucester and Cumberland counties (formerly part of Albany County) in northeastern New York – described the loyalists as those who “have voluntarily left this state, or some of the United States of America, and joined the Enemies thereof” and those “manifesting an inimical disposition to said States, and a design to aid and abet the Enemies thereof in their wicked purposes.”⁶⁰ Under Vermont’s definition, loyalism embraced those who had left the state to provide military assistance to the British, but also those who had left the region to avoid the conflict, and even those who continued to oppose the patriot cause through inaction. Thus, those claimants who would later profess their loyalty through their attempts to simply “continue quiet” at home and “not tak[e] any part with the rebels” qualified as loyalists according to the revolutionary authorities.⁶¹

In Britain, the situation was more complex. Although contemporaries recognised that British forces received substantial military support from a loyal portion of the American colonial population throughout the war, loyalism was only formally defined in Britain after the war’s conclusion and in response to the various claims for compensation and pension payments.⁶²

⁵⁸ New York Provincial Congress, *Eight thousand men ordered for the defence of New-York, All persons disaffected to the cause of America, in the several Colonies, to be disarmed*, 14 March 1776, FAA [S4-V5-p1638].

⁵⁹ New York Provincial Congress, *Resolutions relative to persons dangerous and disaffected to the American cause, and to persons of equivocal character*, 5 June 1776, FAA [S4-V6-p1365].

⁶⁰ ‘An Act to prevent the Return to this State of certain Persons therein names, and others who have left this State, or either of the United States and joined the Enemies thereof.’ *Acts and laws of the state of Vermont, in America. Session Laws 1779 February* (Dresden, VT: Judah-Padock & Alden Spooner, 1779), pp. 71-72.

⁶¹ See the testimonies of Andrew Coulter, American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/27; Jacob Ball, *Ibid.*, and American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

⁶² The services of the American loyalists were commented on in the British press during wartime. See S. M. Lutnick, ‘The Defeat at Yorktown: A View from the British Press’, *Virginia Magazine of History &*

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The Loyalist Claims Commissioners took an exceptionally narrow view of loyalism: they only considered the cases of those who had lost property or had lost a professional income as a result of the war.⁶³ Under their definition, those who failed to meet these criteria were ineligible to apply for any financial support. As such, certain types of loyalists do not appear within this study as they were excluded from the claims process; this includes those without property, vagrants, the poor, labourers and slaves. However, as we have seen, the commissioners noticed the variation in the activities, services and enthusiasm of loyalist claimants, even going so far as to place them in hierarchical categories according to their wartime activities. The commissioners argued that a distinction should be made between the different categories of loyalists and their compensation adjusted accordingly.⁶⁴

Thus, loyalist is a fluid term, with different meanings and different characteristics attributed to it depending on the context in which it is used. Before the 1780s, loyalists did not have access to a fixed term by which to describe themselves. Instead, and as will be explored within this dissertation, New York's loyalists used their own concepts of self-identification and categorization to construct their identities and to locate themselves in relation to those within their communities with opposing political beliefs. Importantly for this study, in constructing their loyalist identities, New York's loyalists invoked a number of different models of behaviour to demonstrate their loyalty: some defined their loyalty through their military service; others emphasised their loyalty through their inaction, including their refusal to join the American forces; while further still some simply attempted to "remain quiet" at home.

Subsequently, in an attempt to navigate the competing expressions of loyalism which emerge from the claims material, this dissertation sorts claimants into different classifications – or 'types' – of loyalists. These categories have been determined based on the evidence provided by loyalists and reflect the broad general patterns in how they self-identify. Although these are ultimately historiographical constructs applied to the claims to allow for comparison, extensive care has been taken to apply appropriate terminology which would have been familiar to the loyalists considered and their contemporaries and to incorporate the competing notions of loyalism which were in circulation during the earliest years of the conflict.

Biography, 72.4 (1964), p. 477 and S. M. Lutnick, 'The American Victory at Saratoga: A View From the British Press', *NYH*, 44.2 (1963), pp. 103-27.

⁶³ Norton, *The British-Americans*, p. 201.

⁶⁴ Wilmot, *Historical View of the Commission*, pp. 51-52 and p. 57.

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Importantly, these categories apply solely to white males, who form the vast majority (93 per cent) of New York's loyalist claimants. Two further groups of claimants – black loyalists and female loyalists – have been placed within their own distinct categories. While black and female loyalists are often excluded from the main narrative of the American Revolution and confined to case studies or select histories, considering these groups in isolation suggests a distance that did not necessarily exist.⁶⁵ As we shall see in Part Two, the activities of these groups – black and white, male and female – were interconnected and intertwined. Responding to Sheryllynne Haggerty's criticism of the failure of recent historiography to integrate women fully into the mainstream of eighteenth-century British studies, this dissertation attempts to rectify a similar imbalance in loyalist studies.⁶⁶ Upon initial examination, black and female loyalists appeared to fall under the category of 'passive' loyalists as their services were comparatively limited. However, as the categories are predominantly established on the basis of patterns of behaviour amongst white males, they are inappropriate for assessing the activities of those who fell outside of this group. Owing to the social complexities of eighteenth-century New York, opportunities for black and female loyalists to demonstrate their loyalty were restricted. As such, their claims need to be analysed according to different criteria to enable a fair comparison.

The first type of loyalist identified from the claims can be described as 'active'. A term used by loyalists to describe themselves and also by witnesses attesting to their wartime conduct, 'active' loyalists conform most closely to the classic historiographical definition of loyalists as those who provided assistance to the British troops.⁶⁷ Forming the largest single group at 43 per cent (184) of the claims analysed, these claimants demonstrated visible and measurable manifestations of loyalism, aligning themselves with the British cause almost immediately

⁶⁵ For more on black loyalists, see A. Gilbert, *Black Patriots and Loyalists: Fighting for Emancipation in the War for Independence* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2012), G. B. Nash, *The Forgotten Fifth: African Americans in the Age of Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), J. W. Pulis (ed.), *Moving On: Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World* (New York & London: Routledge, 2013), G. B. Nash *Race and Revolution* (Madison, WI: Madison House, 1990) and S. Schama, *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves and the American Revolution* (London: BBC Books, 2005). For female loyalists, see K. Tillman, 'What is a Female Loyalist?', *Common Place*, 13.4 (2013), M. B. Norton, 'Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War: The Case of the Loyalists', *WMQ*, 33. 3 (1976), pp. 386-409, R. Hoffman and P. J. Albert (eds), *Women in the Age of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia & United States Capitol Historical Society, 1989).

⁶⁶ S. Haggerty, *The British-Atlantic Trading Community, 1760-1810: Men, Women, And The Distribution Of Goods* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), p. 5.

⁶⁷ See for example the particularly narrow definition advanced (and later defended) by Philip Ranlet in *The New York Loyalists*, who only considers those who openly fought alongside the British to be truly loyal.

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upon the outbreak of war.⁶⁸ These loyalists also appear to have joined the British voluntarily – i.e., without being coerced into loyalism by their revolutionary neighbours – in a range of roles and services. These were predominantly military positions such as soldiers or sailors, but also include non-military supporting roles such as blacksmiths, paymasters and commissaries.

However, further analysis of the claims quickly revealed that one single label is too simplistic to adequately describe the unique variation of activities and motivations for loyalism discussed within claims made by individuals categorised as ‘active’: different clusters within this broad category of claimants responded to the war in different ways and, crucially, at different moments. As the case studies within Part Two of this dissertation reveal, such variations in patterns of loyalist response were largely determined by geographic location and local circumstance. As such, ‘active’ loyalists in Tryon responded to the Revolution in different ways to their counterparts in Albany County or the City of New York.

The second type of loyalist identified from the claims can be described as ‘reluctant’. Making reference to the title of Joseph Tiedemann’s 1997 study terming New Yorkers *Reluctant Revolutionaries*, this group of loyalists is comprised of those who appear to have been forced into loyalism by local circumstance rather than exhibiting the voluntary displays of loyalism demonstrated by ‘active’ loyalists.⁶⁹ A slightly smaller group at 32 per cent (135) of the claims analysed, these loyalists typically joined the British at a later stage than their ‘active’ counterparts. For those whose start dates are provided, almost 40 per cent (38 individuals) joined in 1777 while a further 48 per cent (48 individuals) joined between 1778 and 1780.⁷⁰ The most diverse group in terms of motivations for remaining loyal, the so-called ‘reluctant’ loyalists displayed three main patterns of behaviour.

First, there were those loyalists who were arguably equally energetic in their loyalism as their ‘active’ counterparts: they provided essential military support for the British and, furthermore, their decision to join appears to have been made voluntarily. However, what sets them apart is their attempt to stay home and remain neutral for as long as possible, before eventually being compelled to take an active stance. For 34 per cent of this group (13

⁶⁸ Of those loyalists for whom their start date is known, individuals within this group typically joined the British in 1776 (41%) or 1777 (47%) and continued to serve in an active capacity until the war’s conclusion.

⁶⁹ J. S. Tiedemann, *Reluctant Revolutionaries: New York City and the Road to Independence, 1773-1776* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

⁷⁰ 74% (99 claimants) gave their dates of enlistment with the British forces.

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individuals), they delayed their decision until as late as 1780. Secondly, there were those whose motivations for loyalism are especially complex to determine. For these loyalists, the content of their claims is finely balanced between the maltreatment that they received at the hands of their neighbours as suspected loyalists and their individual loyalty to the King as their prime motivation for joining the British forces. Although these individuals may have held genuinely loyal sentiments privately, their claims suggest that they did not necessarily act upon such sentiments publicly. It was only after they were persecuted for suspected loyalism that they took a decisive stance, suggesting that they may have been forced into loyalism by local circumstances. Finally, there were a small portion of 'reluctant' loyalists whose motivations for loyalism appear to have been fuelled by self-interest. These claimants were of questionable allegiance. They changed sides with a view to profiting from events during the war. The case studies included within Part Two of this dissertation will consider in more detail how location impacted this variation in demonstrations of loyalism.

The final type of loyalist identified from the claims can be described as 'passive'. A comparatively small group of just 35 claimants (8 per cent of the selection of claims), these individuals, in contrast to the other types of loyalists, did not provide any tangible or measurable services to advance the British cause. What is striking from their testimonies, however, is that despite any positive action to assist the crown, these claimants strongly considered themselves to be loyal subjects and deserving of compensation as a result. In contrast to the concise and factual claims of other types of loyalists, the claims of the 'passive' loyalists are typically descriptive, elaborate and persuasive, as their authors attempted to articulate their attitudes into concrete cases for financial support. While the initial temptation is to dismiss these 'passive' loyalists as little more than opportunists, it is important to consider such claims from the perspective of contemporary definitions of loyalism. As the Provincial Congress had identified, loyalism was an attitude or viewpoint, rather than any specific action. 'Passive' loyalists were therefore equally as eligible as their 'active' and 'reluctant' counterparts to submit a claim, at least according to the treatment meted out to them by the American Provincial Congresses. Notably, this group also includes those who claimed to be too elderly or infirm to bear arms in support of the King, but were adamant in their sentiments as true loyalists. Their inclusion is important, as if we only consider those

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who bore arms as being truly loyal then we deprive those who were over fifty years of age and those who were disabled from holding a political opinion.⁷¹

In 2013 – in response to Edward Larkin’s question, “what is a loyalist?” – Kacy Tillman asked, “what is a female loyalist?”. As Tillman rightly argues, while historians bemoan that little scholarly attention has been devoted to loyalists during the twentieth century, even less has been paid to the study of female loyalists. Although this dissertation is not a study of female loyalism *per se*, it aims to contribute to the ongoing discussion of what it meant to be a female loyalist – whether a wife, mother, daughter or as an individual – through an analysis of the available information for loyal women within revolutionary New York. The claims of 29 women are analysed, forming 7 per cent of the total body of claims. This is significantly lower than Mary Beth Norton’s findings that 15 per cent of all loyalist claimants were female.⁷²

New York’s female loyalist claimants include a combination of single women and widows, with little continuity between their claims. While male loyalists’ claims generally followed a set process – often as a result of advice that was received within social environments, or through published guides to submitting a claim – the structure and content of female claims varied significantly.⁷³ Most female claimants, especially those from rural areas, were widows of loyalist soldiers and their claims reflect the familial nature of loyalism. Widows without sons aged twenty-one or older took responsibility for their husband’s claims. Others, however, predominantly in New York City, were single women who chose to remain loyal for their own reasons. Because opportunities for women to assist the British were comparatively restricted, female claimants stressed the actions of their male relatives as indicators of their loyalty. Nevertheless, many women did find important and creative ways to support the cause and recounted these within their claims. As the case studies reveal, location overrode gender when it came to forming political opinions and the opportunities available to women; both were determined by their physical and cultural environments. What united their memorials, however, is that New York’s female loyalists used their claims as an opportunity to express their sentiments regarding the disruption of war in a way that their male counterparts could not.

⁷¹ See ‘An Act for Regulating the Militia of the State of New York’, *Laws of the state of New-York*, p. 30 which decreed that all able-bodied persons aged sixteen to fifty years must serve in the Militia.

⁷² Norton, ‘Eighteenth-Century American Women’, p. 388.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 400; Anonymous, *Directions to the American Loyalists, In Order to Enable them to State Their Cases, By Way of Memorial, to the Honourable Commissioners ...* (London: W. Flexney, 1783).

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The final group to be considered are New York's black loyalists. Although only a small group of 3 claimants, both free and enslaved, these loyalists were unique to the claimants from New York City. As outlined above, not all loyalists met the criteria to submit a claim; as such, particular groups, including slaves, were automatically excluded from the body of material. As property-owners, however, these loyalists were eligible to submit a claim. Thus, although few in number, their presence is rare and provides an important insight into the wartime activities of black loyalists.

New York's black loyalists received different treatment to their white counterparts. Although there is no surviving record of the questions asked by the Commissioners, white loyalists' oral testimonies largely follow a similar format (including those of female claimants), indicating a general style of questioning. In contrast, black loyalists were asked a series of different questions concerning their religion, how they obtained their freedom, their value in 1775 and whether or not they were literate. Such differences are important: at the same time as hearing compensation requests from black loyalists, the Commissioners were also processing claims from white loyalists which called for compensation for their lost and confiscated slaves. New York's black loyalists were typically employed in different positions to their white counterparts; largely performing non-military roles, these included servants to British officers, spies and a shoemaker. Once again, location was more important than ethnicity when it came to New York's black loyalists: the development of New York City created conditions which supported a free black population and urban (skilled) slaves, while the proximity to British forces created more opportunities to join the British forces than elsewhere within the state.

Structure

This study is divided into two parts. Part One – formed of two chapters – provides essential contextual information which is critical for interpreting the loyalist claims. It demonstrates that, between 1691 and 1776, the colony experienced uneven political, social and cultural development. By the outbreak of the American Revolution, this uneven development resulted in the formation of separate and distinct regions – including New York City, Albany County and Tryon County – each with a unique local character.

Taking Jacob Leisler's rebellion of 1691 as a starting point, Chapter One traces the process of legislative and political Anglicisation in New York. While all of England's royal colonies would gradually experience Anglicisation to differing extents, the process in New York was different:

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first, its effects were immediate and sudden, introduced in a comparatively short space of time; secondly, Anglicisation in New York also had an ethnic dimension, as Royal Officials sought to eradicate Dutch political influence – including excluding non-Anglicans from formal office – and prevent future disturbances. The chapter argues that the effects of legislative change were felt most strongly in New York City, compared to more rural upstate regions.

Chapter Two, meanwhile, explores the complementary processes of cultural and social Anglicisation that occurred in eighteenth-century New York. Using Peter Borsay's model of an urban renaissance to trace cultural and material changes, this chapter argues that the impacts of such developments were uneven. Building upon the foundations laid in Chapter One, Chapter Two concludes that urban improvement and social change created regional distinctions: New York, as the political centre of the colony, emerged as a recognisably Georgian provincial town, with an increasingly English (or, Anglicised Dutch) population; whereas Albany was comparatively unaffected by the changes, remaining Dutch in language, architectural appearance and culture.

Having established in Part One that different geographic regions – each with their own local character – had developed within New York, Part Two considers how these unique local contexts shaped the development of loyalism within each area. Part Two forms the main body of the dissertation and contains three case studies – focusing on New York City, Albany County and Tryon County – which each provide a close reading of the loyalist claims from that particular region. Employing the different categories of loyalist outlined above to analyse the varying responses to the revolution, the case studies are deliberately structured to facilitate comparison between regions; as we shall see, it meant something different to be 'active' in New York City than elsewhere.

In New York City, a politicised society with a vibrant and comparatively sophisticated public sphere, the decision to remain loyal was an individual political choice. Within such an environment, suspected loyalists were identified by their peers at an earlier stage of the conflict. Meanwhile, the establishment of the British military headquarters in New York City provided increased opportunities for loyalists – including black and female loyalists – to serve the royal cause. In the more rural regions of the colony, in contrast, loyalism was shaped by pre-existing social tensions rather than ideological concerns. In Albany, where the new revolutionary infrastructures of Committees of Correspondence and commissions for

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detecting loyalism played a dominant role, residents manipulated the proceedings of revolutionary committees to resolve historic community tensions, including landlord-tenant disputes and family grievances. Within these conditions, individuals were forced into making the decision to remain loyal. In Tryon County – which was created in the 1770s to better administer Albany’s rapidly increasing but geographically isolated population – the revolution formed a bitterly-contested civil war between the family of Sir William Johnson and Tryon’s older settler families.⁷⁴

Before we come to consider these local dimensions, we must first understand the political and social context of the colony over the longer term. Chapter One opens with New York City in 1691, where news of England’s ‘Glorious Revolution’ would have major implications for the future development of the colony.

⁷⁴ Legislators deemed Albany “more extensive than all the other Counties of this Colony taken together, and ... the Inhabitants thereof are already very numerous and continue to increase”. See ‘An Act to Divide the County of Albany into Three Counties’, 12 March 1772, *The colonial laws of New York from the year 1664 to the Revolution: including the charters to the Duke of York, the commissions and instructions to colonial governors, the Duke's laws, the laws of the Dongan and Leisler Assemblies, the charters of Albany and New York and the acts of the colonial legislatures from 1691 to 1775 inclusive, Volume V* (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1894), pp. 319-22, reproduced at <<https://archive.org/stream/coloniallawsnew01nygoog#page/n326/mode/2up>> [accessed 26 November 2017].

Part One

Chapter One: Anglicisation and Political Change, 1691-1763

In the decades following the Glorious Revolution, the English – later British, following the Act of Union with Scotland in 1707 – government embarked upon a period of reform, introducing a series of laws across their North American provinces. These laws were designed to standardise the various forms of government which had become established within individual colonies and are recognised by historians of early America as part of the process of Anglicisation.¹ In New York, which had originally been founded as a Dutch colony in 1609, Anglicisation would have profound political and social effects. As this chapter will explore, not only did New York need to become standardised according to English political, legislative and religious norms, but also it first had to be transformed from a Dutch province into an English colony.

This chapter forms an assessment of four main Anglicisation policies implemented by New York's colonial governors between 1691 and 1703, and considers their impact upon the colony's longer-term development. Although all of the English colonies in North America experienced a process of standardisation, this chapter argues that Anglicisation in New York was of a distinctive nature.² Similar reforms across New York's neighbouring colonies were gradual, typically occurring between 1688 and the 1730s. In New York, in contrast, the process was immediate, disruptive and was clearly directed towards anglicising the colony's Dutch population.³ As this chapter will consider in further detail, this approach was deliberately adopted by the colonial administration in direct response to the events of Leisler's Rebellion of 1691.

New York was still a developing colony in the 1690s and early 1700s and, by intensifying development within particular regions, Anglicisation created long-lasting political and structural changes. In particular, New York City and its immediate surrounding environs emerged as a distinct region compared to areas located further upstate. Such changes would

¹ For an introduction to Anglicisation see I. Gallup-Diaz, A. Shankman and D. J. Silverman (eds), *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); J. Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: An Archaeology of Early American Life*, Expanded and Revised Edition (New York: Anchor Books, 1996), pp. 60-61.

² See especially J. P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

³ B. McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), pp. 146-52.

have important implications when it came to local responses to the American Revolution. As Part Two of this dissertation explores in further detail, the decision to remain loyal was often heavily influenced by local contexts rather than ideological factors. These local factors varied depending upon the part of the colony from which a loyalist hailed. By focusing on the structural and developmental changes introduced by the process of Anglicisation, this chapter questions how such distinct regions within New York began to emerge.

New York's earliest years as an English colony have been fully and rigorously documented elsewhere; as such, this dissertation does not attempt to replicate such efforts.⁴ It does, however, provide a brief but essential overview of the colony's history from its acquisition by the English in 1664 to Leisler's Rebellion of 1691. Such context is critical for understanding the factors which led to the outbreak of the rebellion. Building upon the conclusions of existing scholarship, this dissertation argues that Leisler's Rebellion represented a turning point in the administration of New York: it alerted officials to the potential for Dutch political unrest and therefore formed a motivating factor for extensive Anglicisation. In contrast to previous works, this dissertation's interest in Leisler's Rebellion is primarily concerned with the impact that the episode had upon English officials and the future management of the colony. Going beyond existing scholarship, this chapter draws upon rarely-used records from the Colonial Office, held at the British National Archives, to analyse how the rebellion was perceived and understood by English law-makers. By tracing contemporary concerns regarding Dutch political, social and religious influence through royal instructions to the colonial governors and within New York's post-1691 colonial laws, it concludes that such perceptions shaped the direction of English policies towards the administration of New York.

New York's Dutch Origins and Leisler's Rebellion

In order to understand fully the impetus for England's decisive stance in anglicising New York, we first need to consider the unique history of the colony. In contrast to England's other American colonies, New York was originally established under the jurisdiction of another European power and political rival: the Netherlands. In 1609 Henry Hudson, acting on behalf

⁴ M. Kammen, *Colonial New York: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); R. Shorto, *The Island at the Centre of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan & the Forgotten Colony that Shaped America* (London: Abacus, 2014); J. D. Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot: Society and Culture in Colonial New York City, 1664-1730* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); R. Balmer, 'Traitors and Papists: The Religious Dimensions of Leisler's Rebellion', *NYH*, 70.4 (1989), pp. 341-372; J. Reich, *Leisler's Rebellion: A Study of Democracy in New York, 1664-1720* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953).

of the Dutch East India Company, sought to discover a shorter route to Asia by attempting to locate the northwest passage.⁵ Instead, he successfully navigated New York's North River (now known as the Hudson River).⁶ This action essentially founded the colony of the New Netherlands.⁷ Fort Orange was constructed in modern-day Albany, encouraging Dutch migration to the colony during the 1620s. The New Netherlands contained two main settlements: the port at New Amsterdam (later New York City) and Beverwijck (later Albany), a highly profitable trading outpost in the Hudson Highlands where Dutch and Native-American traders exchanged European goods for highly sought after animal skins and furs.⁸

Compared with its neighbouring colonies, population growth and settlement of the New Netherlands was slow. When Adriaen van der Donck – the Dutch-born lawyer and administrator of Rensselaerswyck Manor – published his *Description of the New Netherlands* in Holland in 1656, he noted that the New Netherlands were “not yet well peopled.”⁹ Estimates suggest that by mid-century New Amsterdam only contained between 150 to 200 houses at most.¹⁰ Meanwhile, tensions existed between the New Netherlands and its neighbouring English-controlled territories. Upon establishing the colony, the Dutch had failed to establish a clear boundary line for the New Netherlands and by the 1650s these tensions had escalated into a territorial dispute with New England. New England claimed that the lands fell under English patents and subsequently under their control; meanwhile van der Donck noted that “there are differences on the subject of boundaries [with Virginia and New England] which we wish were well settled.”¹¹ Local attempts to form a treaty with New England were hindered by the English victory over the Dutch in the Anglo-Dutch naval war of 1652-54.¹²

Contemporaries recognised that the New Netherlands' small size increased its vulnerability. Van der Donck openly suggested that “considering that the Netherlanders are not numerous

⁵ Shorto, *Island at the Centre of the World*, pp. 31-35.

⁶ See David Grim, A Plan of the City and Environs of New York as they were in the Years 1742, 1743, & 1744, August 1813, N-YHS, Maps, M2.1.1. The Hudson River is identified as the ‘North River’.

⁷ A. Van der Donck, *A Description of the New Netherlands*, 2nd ed. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1968), p. 2.

⁸ For more on the history of the New Netherlands, see Shorto, *Island at the Centre of the World*.

⁹ Shorto, *Island at the Centre of the World*, pp. 94-110 and S. Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Van der Donck, *Description of the New Netherlands*, p. 8.

¹⁰ Kammen, *Colonial New York*, p. 46 and p. 180.

¹¹ Van der Donck, *Description of the New Netherlands*, p. 5.

¹² Kammen, *Colonial New York*, pp. 69-71.

in the country” this might “attract the attention and cupidity of powerful and jealous friends, who in time might easily oust us, and shut the door against us, and then occupy and rule in our possessions.”¹³ It did not take long for his prediction to be proved accurate: in 1664, King Charles II gifted the territory extending from New England to Delaware to his brother, the Duke of York (who would later become James II). Crucially – and entirely disregarding the agreements of previous local treaties between New England and the Dutch colonists – this expanse of land included the New Netherlands. The Duke despatched a fleet to Manhattan to conquer New Amsterdam, which – lacking munitions and unable to defend itself against English invasion – was eventually surrendered by director-general Peter Stuyvesant. The Duke promptly renamed the colony New York, after himself, and ruled it as a feudal principality until 1688.¹⁴

The Duke’s ‘conquest’ of the New Netherlands was not popular with the colony’s inhabitants who described themselves as “loyal, sorrowful and desolate subjects” of the Netherlands.¹⁵ That said, the majority of the original settlers remained in the colony following the English conquest and adopted a general stance of accommodation, meaning that by the close of the century the population remained overwhelmingly Dutch.¹⁶ Estimates from 1698 suggest that up to 93 per cent of white residents in Albany County were Dutch, in Orange County this figure was 75 per cent, while in Dutchess and Ulster Counties it was slightly lower at 66 per cent.¹⁷ As we shall see in Part Two, New York’s unusual ethnic composition would later shape the development of local loyalist allegiances.

Aside from introducing a new set of laws, known as the Duke’s Laws, the Duke of York did little with the colony.¹⁸ However, he remained particularly unpopular amongst its inhabitants. Randall Balmer attributes this unpopularity in part to the Duke’s instrumental role in England’s naval victory over the Netherlands in 1654. Meanwhile, public opinion deteriorated even further when he failed repeatedly to deliver on promises to establish a general assembly in New York similar to those enjoyed in neighbouring colonies; this action would have significant

¹³ Van der Donck, *Description of the New Netherlands*, p. 34; Shorto, *Island at the Centre of the World*, pp. 291-300.

¹⁴ Reich, *Leisler’s Rebellion*, p. 4.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁶ Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, p. 22.

¹⁷ P. U. Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York & London: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 22.

¹⁸ The Duke of York’s Laws, 1665-75, reproduced at <<https://www.nycourts.gov/history/legal-history-new-york/documents/charters-duke-transcript.pdf>> [accessed 24 July 2017].

consequences during the unrest of Leisler's Rebellion.¹⁹ Much as their revolutionary counterparts would complain during the 1760s of "taxation without representation," one hundred years earlier the New York Dutch complained of being taxed without "any share, vote, or interest, in the Government."²⁰ To make matters worse, the Duke's conversion to Catholicism in 1672 was particularly at odds with the views of the Protestant Dutch Reformed Church in New York.²¹ Consequently, when the Dutch briefly re-captured New York from English control between 1673 and 1674, many colonists welcomed the change in regime.²²

In 1686 the Duke of York, now King James II, delivered his final blow to New York by revoking its colonial charter entirely and incorporating the colony into the Dominion of New England. Described by Andrew Shankman as a "super-colony" containing all of New England and much of the middle-Atlantic region, the Dominion was led by the royal governor Edmund Andros and operated under a model of ducal absolutism.²³ This chapter in New York's history came to a dramatic conclusion in 1688 with England's Glorious Revolution and Leisler's Rebellion in New York.

Upon hearing the news of James II's deposition in England, colonists in New York and New England were quick to discard the final vestiges of the Catholic monarch's now-obsolete system of government. In Boston, Governor Andros was declared an enemy to William and Mary, and imprisoned.²⁴ Meanwhile, the New England colonies disbanded the Dominion and reverted to their respective former systems of government. As we have seen, however, because James II had refused repeatedly to grant New York a similar assembly to those seen in New England, there was no alternative system of government to which New York could return and the colony was left facing a power vacuum. To add to the confusion, a series of

¹⁹ Reich, *Leisler's Rebellion*, p. 29; Balmer, 'Traitors and Papists', p. 344; A. Shankman, 'A Synthesis Compelling: Anglicisation and the Achievement of John M Murrin', in I. Gallup-Diaz, A. Shankman and D. J. Silverman (eds), *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), pp. 23-25.

²⁰ Reich, *Leisler's Rebellion*, p. 27.

²¹ Balmer, 'Traitors and Papists', p. 344.

²² Reich, *Leisler's Rebellion*, p. 19; J. M. Murrin, 'English Rights as Ethnic Aggression: The English Conquest, the Charter of Liberties of 1683, and Leisler's Rebellion in New York', in W. Pencak and C. E. Wright (eds), *Authority and Resistance in Early New York* (New York: New-York Historical Society, 1988), p. 57.

²³ Kammen, *Colonial New York*, p. 99; Reich, *Leisler's Rebellion*, p. 29; Balmer, 'Traitors and Papists', p. 344; Shankman, 'A Synthesis Compelling', pp. 23-25.

²⁴ Reich, *Leisler's Rebellion*, pp. 54-55; Francis Nicholson, Letter Concerning Responses to the Glorious Revolution and Unrest in the Colonies, 15 May 1689. TNA: CO 5/1081, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

skirmishes on the northern border with New France (later Canada) gave New Yorkers reason to believe that a retaliatory invasion was imminent.²⁵ Andros's lieutenant-governor, Francis Nicholson, who held his seat at New York City, attempted to take control of the colony. However, as a representative of James II, Nicholson's claim to authority was even weaker than Andros's and he was eventually forced to flee New York in 1689.²⁶ To compound matters further, Nicholson was accused of deliberately allowing New York's military defences to fall into ruin, the implicit accusation being that – as a secret Catholic and adherent of James II – Nicholson had allowed the fort to become vulnerable to French (in other words, Catholic) invasion.²⁷

In May 1689 the fort at New York was captured by the militia under the command of Captain Jacob Leisler, the son of a clergyman and a justice of the peace who had come to New York as a soldier with the Dutch West India Company in 1660.²⁸ In an address to William and Mary dated June 1689, Leisler immediately pledged his allegiance to the crown and justified the militia's actions in seizing the fort. Leisler claimed that, just as England had suffered under the tyranny of James II, "we [in New York] hav[e] also long groaned under the same oppression; having been governed of late, most part, by papists."²⁹ For the Leislerians, Nicholson's failure to remove colonial officials appointed during the reign of James II served as further evidence of both his continued allegiance to the exiled monarch and of his own suspected Catholicism. Just as William and Mary would restore Protestantism in England, Leisler pledged the militia's similar commitment to "undertake so glorious a work towards the re-establishment and preservations of the true protestant religion, liberty and prosperity" in New York.³⁰ Thus began Leisler's two-year reign as Governor.

²⁵ Jacob Leisler to the Governor of Boston (Draft), 4 March 1689, William Smith Jr Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MsCol 2796, Box 1, Lot 176, Item 1; Balmer, 'Traitors and Papists', p. 341.

²⁶ Reich, *Leisler's Rebellion*, p. 55.

²⁷ Official records are contradictory. In June 1690 Nicholson is also alleged to have made provision to repair the fort and garrison in March 1690. See A Memorial of What has Occurred in their Majesties Province of New York since the news of their Majesties happy arrival in England and an answer to that Memorial, 1691. TNA: CO 5/1082, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016]. However, Nicholson is accused of "wholly neglecting" to repair the fort in June 1690. See Memorial from New York on the Replacement of Governor Nicholson with Governor Leisler, together with abstracts of other papers, June 1690, Correspondence, Original - Secretary of State, 1689-1690. TNA: CO 5/1081, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

²⁸ Reich, *Leisler's Rebellion*, p. vii; Murrin, 'English Rights as Ethnic Aggression,' p. 67.

²⁹ Address of the Militia of New York to their Majesties, June 1689. TNA: CO 5/1081, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

³⁰ *Ibid.*

'Leisler's Rebellion', as it would be remembered, reflected the bitter and violent divisions that had emerged between New York's colonists.³¹ Leislerianism was closely linked to class and ethnicity: as Balmer identifies, Leisler's supporters tended to be artisans and small merchants, while the anti-Leislerians were typically elites and more wealthy merchants, including Dutch clergy who had allied themselves with the English during the 1660s.³² In a petition to the Board of Trade, the anti-Leislerians – who described themselves as "your majesties' most oppressed and abused subjects in this remote part of the world" – emphasised the inferior background of Leisler and his supporters in an attempt to undermine their legitimacy. They despaired that New York was being ruled "by the sword at the sole will of an insolent alien (the being none of your majesties' natural born subject)." If Leisler's "alien" status was not enough to discredit him, the petitioners claimed that he was "assisted by some few whom we can give no better name than a Reable."³³ Leislerians recognised the ethnic component to this rhetoric and complained to England that "our enemies [the anti-Leislerians] have endeavoured all they can to misrepresent us ... by tarring our aforesaid proceedings as a Dutch plot."³⁴

Meanwhile, petitions and memorials sent from Leisler's opponents to ministers in England described scenes of chaos in New York, where Leisler was accused of imprisoning his opponents arbitrarily while allowing the general prosperity and security of the colony to suffer as a consequence. Supported by "men of mean birth, sordid education and desperate fortunes", Leisler was accused of deliberately inflaming the public with stories of papists and adherents to James II living amongst them.³⁵ The anti-Leislerian accounts clearly had an

³¹ Shankman, 'A Synthesis Compelling', p. 25.

³² Balmer, 'Traitors and Papists', pp. 371-72; R. H. Balmer, 'Schism on Long Island: The Dutch Reformed Church, Lord Cornbury, and the Politics of Anglicisation', in W. Pencak and C. E. Wright (eds), *Authority and Resistance in Early New York* (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1988), p. 96; For a more detailed definition of the different types of colonial 'traders', see S. Haggerty, *The British-Atlantic Trading Community, 1760-1810: Men, Women, And The Distribution Of Goods* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

³³ The Humble Address of the Merchants, Traders and Others, 19 May 1690. TNA: CO 5/1113, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016]. N.B. All sources quoted within this dissertation will be cited using their original spellings and punctuation.

³⁴ Memorial from New York on the Replacement of Governor Nicholson with Governor Leisler, together with abstracts of other papers, June 1690. TNA: CO 5/1081, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016]; Contemporary accounts from New York also dismiss the idea of Leisler's Rebellion being a Dutch plot, claiming that Albany, "which wholly consists of Dutch people" was anti-Leislerian. See A Memorial of What has Occurred in their Majesties Province of New York since the news of their Majesties happy arrival in England and an answer to that Memorial, 1691. TNA: CO 5/1082, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016]. An undated draft of this document can also be found in Council Papers, 1664-1781, NYSA, A-1894, Roll 10.

³⁵ A Memorial of What has Occurred in their Majesties Province of New York since the news of their Majesties happy arrival in England and an answer to that Memorial, 1691. TNA: CO 5/1082, *Colonial*

impact upon law-makers at Whitehall, who repeated them almost verbatim: court minutes from 1690 noted that New York “is at present under no legal or settled government being in the hands of one Leisler a *Walloon*, who has set himself at the head of the Rable.”³⁶

Thus, in April 1690 Colonel Henry Sloughter was appointed as the new governor of New York and dispatched from England, along with two companies of foot soldiers intended to restore order.³⁷ In an unfortunate turn of events, Sloughter’s arrival in New York was delayed; in correspondence to the Secretary of State for the Northern Department Sloughter complained of enduring “sixteen weeks of hard passage” from the Isle of Wight.³⁸ Meanwhile, the ship carrying his deputy, Major Richard Ingoldesby, and the troops had already landed at New York two months earlier.³⁹ In Sloughter’s absence, Ingoldesby attempted an early transfer of power. Confusion ensued. Leisler wrote to England to seek clarification: he was waiting to receive instruction from William and Mary – of which he claimed he was “ignorant still” on account of his messengers being captured by his political opponents – and was confused to find the fort “besieged” by Ingoldesby, “so far that not a boat could depart”.⁴⁰ Allegedly unaware that Ingoldesby’s claim to the fort was legitimate, Leisler refused to surrender. Sloughter, meanwhile, had also reported back to London, confirming that Ingoldesby and his men had suffered “against the outrages of Captain Leisler”, who had refused to allow them entry to the fort. According to Sloughter, Leisler initially refused to surrender to him too, until Sloughter took him prisoner.⁴¹

Whether Leisler’s rebellion was truly a rebellion at all is a matter for investigation beyond the confines of this study. However, Leisler consistently defended his actions as those of a loyal subject. After being sentenced for treason, Leisler used his gallows speech – noted by J. C. D.

America [accessed August 2016]; Chief Occurrences in New York, 27 April – 30 December 1689. TNA: CO 5/1183, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

³⁶ Documents Relating to Preparations for the Journey of Colonel Sloughter and two companies to New York, Court at Whitehall, 8 April 1690. TNA: CO 5/1113, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016]. Emphasis my own.

³⁷ Recommendation to make Henry Sloughter Governor of New York, 25 September 1689. TNA: CO 5/1081, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016]; Documents Relating to Preparations for the Journey of Colonel Sloughter and two companies to New York, Court at Whitehall, 8 April 1690. TNA: CO 5/1113, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

³⁸ Letter from Colonel Sloughter to the Earl of Nottingham, 27 March 1691. TNA: CO 5/1113, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Letter from Jacob Leisler, 20 March 1691. TNA: CO 5/1082, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

⁴¹ Letter from Colonel Sloughter to the Earl of Nottingham, 27 March 1691. TNA: CO 5/1113, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

Clarke as an opportunity for the convicted man to advocate the cause for which he suffered – to claim that “what I have done was for King William & Queen Mary, for the defence of the protestant religion & the Good of the Country.”⁴² Notably in 1695, following repeated petitions from the descendants of Jacob Leisler and his closest allies, he received a full pardon posthumously from the House of Lords who officially recognised him as a legal governor of New York. However, for anti-Leislerian contemporaries, the episode constituted another Dutch plot and served as a reminder of earlier attempts within living memory to bring New York back under Dutch control.

The importance of Leisler’s Rebellion for this dissertation lies in its effect upon English law-makers. In the immediate aftermath of – and in direct response to – the events of the rebellion, Governor Henry Sloughter introduced a series of laws designed to bring New York under English control and to eradicate Dutch political influence once and for all. This so-called process of ‘Anglicisation’ in New York occurred in a comparatively short space of time, between 1691 and approximately 1710. During these years, and especially during the 1690s, New York was ruled by a series of intensely anti-Leislerian governors: Henry Sloughter and Major Richard Ingoldesby – who had both witnessed the Leisler affair first-hand – and later by Benjamin Fletcher. This inhospitable regime was interrupted only briefly under the administration of Richard Coote, Lord Bellomont, between 1698 and 1702. Although Bellomont had openly supported Leisler whilst still in England, he did little to reverse the momentum towards Anglicisation in New York.⁴³ As the following section of this chapter will consider, the Anglicisation laws introduced four major changes which would have lasting implications for the future development and social composition of the colony.

Anglicisation in New York

Before considering the laws in more detail, it is important to note that Anglicisation was not a term used or recognised by contemporaries. Sloughter, for instance, was never ordered to ‘Anglicise’ New York. The term is a more recent invention, coined by John Murrin in the 1960s to describe a series of changes that occurred across the British North American colonies. As Murrin rightly identifies, each of the thirteen colonies had its own distinctive origins and

⁴² Jacob Leisler quoted in Balmer, ‘Traitors and Papists’, p. 362; J. C. D. Clarke ‘Religious Affiliation and Dynastic Allegiance in Eighteenth-Century England: Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine and Samuel Johnson’, *ELH*, 64.4 (1997), p. 1047.

⁴³ Kammen, *Colonial New York*, pp. 140-41; Reich, *Leisler’s Rebellion*, p. 127-130; Balmer, ‘Traitors and Papists’, pp. 369-71; M. L. Lustig, *Privilege and Prerogative: New York’s Provincial Elite, 1710-1776* (Cranberry, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1995), p. 11.

unique challenges to settlement which resulted in the formation of several different American societies. However, during the period between the Glorious Revolution (1688) and the Stamp Act crisis (1765), the colonies underwent a period of transformation. According to Murrin, the colonies increasingly adopted English – later British – institutions and ideas, which he argues made them appear more English in their nature. Thus, upon the eve of the American Revolution, Murrin concludes that the American colonies were more English than they had ever been before.⁴⁴

Of course, Murrin's initial theory is now over fifty years old and not without its critics.⁴⁵ For instance, his research focused primarily upon the experiences of white colonists in New England and the Chesapeake, thus limiting its relevance to other regions and ethnicities. This was a limitation that Ignacio Gallup-Diaz, Andrew Shankman and David J. Silverman attempted to remedy in their 2015 work, *Anglicizing America*, in which they re-evaluated the utility of Anglicisation as a concept by expanding Murrin's initial theory to consider the impact of Anglicisation within the British Caribbean and amongst black and Native American societies.⁴⁶ That said, the term 'Anglicisation' continues to be used and accepted by prominent scholars of early America, including Richard Bushman, Brendan McConville and Timothy H. Breen.⁴⁷

A more useful – and more recent – framework for understanding the social and cultural development of early America was proposed by Jack P. Greene in 1988.⁴⁸ Challenging the dominant notion that the New England colonies were normative in the formation of early American culture and questioning the relevance of the New England's experience to understanding other colonies' development, Greene proposes a new framework through which to compare the distinctive developmental patterns of the different cultural regions

⁴⁴ J. M. Murrin, 'Anglicizing an American Colony: The Transformation of Provincial Massachusetts' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1966); J. M. Murrin, 'England & Colonial America: A Novel Theory of the American Revolution (1974)', in I. Gallup-Diaz, A. Shankman and D. J. Silverman (eds), *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), pp. 9-19.

⁴⁵ See for instance, J. Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution Before 1776* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000). Butler argues for a gradual Americanisation – rather than Anglicisation – of the North American colonies between 1680 and 1776.

⁴⁶ See I. Gallup-Diaz, A. Shankman and D. J. Silverman (eds), *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), especially I. Gallup-Diaz, 'Anglicization Reconsidered', pp. 239-48.

⁴⁷ R. Bushman, *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985); T. H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); McConville, *The King's Three Faces*.

⁴⁸ Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness*.

across British North America. According to Greene, between the mid-seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries, the Chesapeake exhibited a pattern of “development”: during this period, Chesapeake society became increasingly stable and its social structures more complex, until it eventually “more closely resembled that of the metropolitan society of Great Britain.”⁴⁹ New England, in contrast, followed a pattern of “declension”, as the dominant social and religious constraints of the mid-seventeenth century gradually loosened and gave way to an increase in materialism and individualism. Greene argues that it was only through this so-called process of decline that, by the mid-eighteenth century, New England became “far more demonstrably English than it had been during the decades immediately after its establishment.”⁵⁰

Greene’s “developmental model” (as demonstrated by the Chesapeake) followed three main stages: the first was simplification, as disoriented settlers sought to establish simple colonial societies in new territories; the second stage saw the introduction of highly-creolised variants of British social structures and cultural institutions; while the final stage witnessed the deliberate imitation of British society, as the colonial elite actively sought to improve the reputation of their respective colonies.⁵¹ Greene concludes that this “developmental model” – in contrast to New England’s “declension model” – was normative in the British-American experience, as it also characterised social and cultural development in Britain and Ireland, the Atlantic and Caribbean Islands, and the Middle Colonies and Lower South.

Thus, this study explores New York’s colonial development with Greene’s framework in mind, but uses Murrin’s phrase ‘Anglicisation’ to indicate the ways in which elements of New York society became increasingly English (later, British) in character. The following section of this chapter considers four laws introduced in New York between 1691 and 1703 which produced major political and structural changes. As this chapter will demonstrate, not only did Anglicisation have the regularising effect that Gallup-Diaz describes, but it specifically established English practices – relating to the judiciary, laws, language and religion – as the new norm.⁵² In New York, owing to the colony’s Dutch origins, Anglicisation had an additional

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 166-69.

⁵² I. Gallup-Diaz, ‘Anglicization Reconsidered’, in I. Gallup-Diaz, A. Shankman and D. J. Silverman (eds), *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), p. 248.

ethnic dimension: the recent political upheaval created a perceived need for the Dutch influence to be neutralised.

Upon receiving his commission as the governor of New York, Sloughter was charged with restoring order and ensuring the future “advantage and security” of the colony. With the caveat that his actions were to be “(as near as may be) agreeable unto the laws and statutes of this our kingdome of England”, Sloughter was given *carte blanche* to pursue whatever measures he felt necessary.⁵³ The very first act to be passed by his new administration in April 1691, therefore, was entitled “An Act for the quieting and settling the Disorders that have lately happened within this Province, and for the establishing and securing their Majesties present Government against the like Disorders for the future.”⁵⁴

Responding directly to the events of Leisler’s Rebellion – condemned as a “late hasty and inconsiderate Violation of the same [the crown], by the setting up a Power over Their Majesties Subjects, without Authority from the Crown of England” – the act established that England’s monarchs were the only persons “invested with the right” to rule New York. In practice, the colony would be governed by their chosen representatives, whose power “must be derived from their Majesties, their Heirs and Successors.” Having established the crown and their colonial representatives as the sole basis of authority, the act outlined that:

whatsoever Person or Persons shall by any manner of way, or upon any pretence whatsoever, endeavour by Force of Arms or otherways, to disturb the Peace, Good and Quiet of this Their Majesties Government, as it is now Established, shall be deemed and esteemed as Rebels and Traytors unto Their Majesties, and incur the Pains, Penalties and Forfeitures, as the Laws of England have, for such Offences.⁵⁵

Under late seventeenth-century English law, as Leisler had discovered, such acts of treason were punishable by death.

This act was of crucial significance. Although New York had fallen under English jurisdiction since 1664, this was the first time in almost thirty years of English rule that it had been explicitly stated in a codified set of laws that the English crown had full and sole authority for

⁵³ Commission and Instructions for Colonel Sloughter, Governor of New York, 14 November 1689 - 31 January 1690. TNA: CO 5/1113, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

⁵⁴ New York Legislature, *The Laws & Acts of the General Assembly for Their Majesties province of New-York, as they were enacted in divers sessions, the first of which began April, the 9th, anno Domini, 1691* (New York: William Bradford, 1694), p. 1.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

governing the colony. The Duke of York had briefly referred to his own right to pass legislation in New York in the 1660s.⁵⁶ However, following Leisler's Rebellion it was felt necessary to confirm that William and Mary were "as of Right they ought to be" the sole persons authorised to rule "This their Dominion and province"; anyone who opposed their authority would be punished accordingly. The deliberate choice of words left New Yorkers in no doubt regarding who was in charge. The colony would no longer be under the lax administration experienced under the feudal principality of the Duke of York, nor would there be the threat of a future transfer of power to the Dutch, as had occurred fewer than twenty years previously. Notably, the law stressed that it was the English monarch who had sole authority concerning the governance of the province, rather than Parliament. This choice of words would have long-term implications in shaping the colonists' understanding of the role of monarchy, which would have important consequences during the prelude to revolution.⁵⁷

The second major change to New York's administration came in May 1691. Having established the governor and his administration as the legal and political representatives of the crown, a network of courts was to be established across the colony to enforce its legislation.⁵⁸ Under the new structure, county-level courts were to be established within the main towns for the purpose of serving their respective counties.⁵⁹ The law also established the new roles of clerks, marshals and sheriffs, along with other structures associated with the judicial model; this included the establishment of a "Supream Court of Judicature" at New York City, which was to have the same powers of the "courts of Kings Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer" found in England. To ensure allegiance to the crown, judges and justices within the court were only permitted to serve after they had taken an oath of allegiance to England. Importantly, the requirements of the new oath contrasted significantly with the oaths administered to those

⁵⁶ The Duke of York's Laws, 1665-75, reproduced at < <https://www.nycourts.gov/history/legal-history-new-york/documents/charters-duke-transcript.pdf>> [accessed 24 July 2017].

⁵⁷ During the 1760s, some patriot writers invoked the rights of Stuart royal prerogative in defending their stance against Parliament's illegality to tax the American colonies. See Eric Nelson's 'Patriot Royalism: The Stuart Monarchy in American Political Thought, 1769-75', *WMQ*, 68.4 (2011), pp. 533-572, and 'Taking Them Seriously: Patriots, Prerogative, and the English Seventeenth Century', *WMQ*, 68.4 (2011), pp. 588-596; McConville argues that the colonists' misunderstanding of the role of the monarch eventually led to the collapse of royal legitimacy in 1773. *The King's Three Faces*, p. 247.

⁵⁸ 'An Act for Establishing Courts of Judicature for the Ease and Benefit of each respective City, Town and County within this Province,' New York Legislature, *The Laws & Acts of the General Assembly*, pp. 2-6.

⁵⁹ Courts were to be established as follows: New York, for the City and County of New York; Albany for the City and County of Albany; Westchester for Westchester County; Kingston for Ulster County; Richmond for Richmond County; Flatbush for Kings County; Jamaica for Queens County; Southold and Southampton for Suffolk County. Orange County was to be annexed to New York County and Dutchess County was annexed to Ulster County for administrative purposes.

in civic office under the Duke of York's Laws: while the Duke's oaths made no reference of swearing allegiance to the King, by 1688 oath-takers were required to "sincerely Promise and Swear" to be "Faithfull and bear true Allegiance to Their Majesties King William and Queen Mary So help me God."⁶⁰

The court model was heavily based on the institutional framework of the English legal system, which would be gradually introduced across the other American colonies during the eighteenth century. Notably, this was only the fourth act to be passed by Slougher's administration, emphasising the importance of establishing a formal judicial structure in New York which operated in line with contemporary English practices.⁶¹ As both Greene and Murrin identify, the establishment of English-style courts in the Chesapeake and Massachusetts, respectively, was an instrumental factor in not only the development of each region but also their increasingly anglicised nature. However, in both instances this process was gradual, taking place over generations.⁶² In New York, in contrast, such institutions and associated roles had not existed previously; not even the highly-creolized versions that Greene notes existing elsewhere. As such, in New York this change was abrupt and immediate.

Because of New York's demographic composition, the introduction of an English court model had significant social implications. Although migration from England to New York had increased since the Duke of York's acquisition of the colony, the population was still predominantly – although not solely – Dutch. During the latter years of the seventeenth century New York had provided refuge for large numbers of Protestant French Huguenots who were fleeing from persecution and forced conversion to Catholicism under the reign of

⁶⁰ For Oaths taken under the Duke of York's Laws, see State of New York, *The Colonial Laws of New York from the Year 1664 to the Revolution: Including the Charters to the Duke of York, the Commissions and Instructions to Colonial Governors, the Duke's Laws, the Laws of the Dongan and Leisler Assemblies, the Charters of Albany and New York and the Acts of the Colonial Legislatures from 1691 to 1775 inclusive, Volume I* (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1894), pp. 66-70, reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/coloniallawsnew01johnngoog>> [accessed 17 January 2018]; 'William and Mary, 1688: An Act for the Abrogating of the Oathes of Supremacy and Allegiance and Appointing other Oathes', in J. Raithby (ed.), *Statutes of the Realm: Volume VI, 1685-94* (London: Great Britain Record Commission, 1819), pp. 57-60, reproduced at *British History Online*, <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/statutes-realm/vol6/pp57-60>> [accessed 17 January 2018].

⁶¹ While Bradford's 1694 print suggests that this was the second act passed by the legislature, the Commissioners of Statutory Revision found that it was actually the fourth. See State of New York, *The Colonial Laws of New York from the Year 1664 to the Revolution: Including the Charters to the Duke of York, the Commissions and Instructions to Colonial Governors, the Duke's Laws, the Laws of the Dongan and Leisler Assemblies, the Charters of Albany and New York and the Acts of the Colonial Legislatures from 1691 to 1775 inclusive, Volume I* (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1894), reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/coloniallawsnew01johnngoog>> [accessed 24 July 2017], p. 226-29.

⁶² Murrin, 'Anglicizing an American Colony', p. 195; Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness*, pp. 8-18.

Louis XIV. Meanwhile, a smaller but still sizeable Jewish community also called New York their home.⁶³ English-born contemporaries expressed their concerns about New York's social composition: New York City mayor Charles Lodwick, for instance, would complain in 1692 that the city contained "too great a mixture of nations and English the least part."⁶⁴

The impact of an imposed English legal system upon this unusually heterogeneous demographic was that it created a social hierarchy which elevated the status of English residents. Those who wanted to play an active role in the new legal regime – as lawyers, judges, clerks or even within more menial roles associated with the system – needed to be able to speak English and have an understanding of English legal tradition, thus putting recent English immigrants at an advantage.⁶⁵ Those who were associated with the new court model emerged as New York's social elite. Murrin notes a similar trend occurring within the New England colonies; however, in New York, these changes had an ethnic dimension which was not felt in New England or the Chesapeake, as those who were associated with the new legal system were either English migrants or individuals who had chosen to become anglicised.⁶⁶ Consequently, although individual circumstances varied, the introduction of an English legal structure created economic and social divisions: New York's English residents came to dominate administrative positions, the civil service and the legal profession, while the Dutch dominated skilled trades.⁶⁷

The third Anglicisation law followed a similar approach. Passed during May 1691 – the same month as the act which established extensive judicial reform – this act outlined the "Rights and Priviledges" of New York's residents.⁶⁸ Analysis of the act demonstrates that while it initially appears to grant major concessions to New Yorkers in terms of self-governance and legal freedoms, acceptance of these rights and privileges came at a cost.

One of the first items established by the act was the role that New Yorkers would play in the administration of the colony. As we have already seen, the Governor, as the crown's representative, had been established as the sole person authorised to pass legislation in New

⁶³ Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, pp. 61-63; Kammen, *Colonial New York*, p. 86.

⁶⁴ Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, p. 3.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 68-74; Kammen, *Colonial New York*, pp. 128-32.

⁶⁶ Murrin, 'Anglicizing an American Colony', p. 264.

⁶⁷ Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, pp. 68-74.

⁶⁸ 'An Act declaring what are the Rights and Priviledges of Their Majesties Subjects inhabiting within Their Province of New York,' New York Legislature, *The Laws & Acts of the General Assembly*, pp. 15-19.

York. This act elaborated upon the roles and responsibilities of the Governor and his Council, including details of who would hold power in the event of the Governor's death or absence. Thus, the act sought to prevent any future usurpations of power as witnessed during Leisler's rebellion. The act also created a General Assembly, to be based in New York City, and outlined the process for the selection of its members: representatives were to be elected on an annual basis according to a popular vote. In line with contemporary franchise practices in England, male freeholders were eligible to vote as long as they owned 40s-worth of property, equivalent to England's county franchise.⁶⁹ The franchise was not extended to women.⁷⁰ According to Mary Lou Lustig, this translated to approximately 40-70 per cent of white adult males being eligible to vote in New York, including those from the lower classes.⁷¹ Keith Mason quotes a similar figure (50-80 per cent) for the whole of the American colonies, concluding that eligibility for the vote was actually much higher in the colonies than in England.⁷² All bills required the governor's approval, while the monarch maintained the power of the veto over any laws.⁷³ As the act repeatedly emphasised, all of this was in accordance with the laws of England.

The establishment of the General Assembly was momentous. For the first time, the colony was able to determine its own laws, including those concerning taxes: no taxation was to be levied upon New Yorkers except for those raised by the consent of the General Assembly, Governor and Council. This was a right and privilege which had been denied repeatedly by James II, first as Duke of York and later as King.⁷⁴ However, by accepting the right to self-govern through engagement with these new structures, New Yorkers accepted this under the confines of English law. Implicit in the act was the repeated assertion that New York was an English colony and its residents were English subjects. As Englishmen, New Yorkers were entitled to the same rights as their fellow subjects living across the Atlantic. Even the title of the act confirmed this: the rights and privileges outlined were those of "*Their Majesties Subjects* inhabiting within *Their Province* of New York."⁷⁵ Thus, through the act's deliberate

⁶⁹ New York Legislature, *The Laws & Acts of the General Assembly*, pp. 15-19.

⁷⁰ S. Haggerty, "'Miss Fan can turn her han!': Female Traders in Eighteenth-Century British-American Atlantic Port Cities", *Atlantic Studies*, 6.1 (2009), p. 31.

⁷¹ Lustig, *Privilege and Prerogative*, p. 13.

⁷² K. Mason, 'Britain and the Administration of the American Colonies', in H. T. Dickinson, *Britain and the American Revolution* (London and New York: Longman, 1998), p. 30.

⁷³ Lustig, *Privilege and Prerogative*, pp. 15-17.

⁷⁴ A short-lived Assembly had been introduced briefly under the Charter of Liberties in 1683, but was disbanded by James II in 1686. See Murrin, 'English Rights as Ethnic Aggression', pp. 71-73.

⁷⁵ Emphasis my own.

use of language, a marked distinction emerged between those who were simultaneously both New Yorkers and English subjects, in contrast to those who were outsiders.

One main indicator of ethnicity and identity was religion. For instance, office-holders – whether standing for civil office or military positions – were unable to serve without having first taken an oath of allegiance to England. Crucially, oath-taking was not simply a political act but had important religious dimensions.⁷⁶ Included within the oath was a clause which stated that:

I do Declare That no Foreign Prince, Person, Prelate, State or Potentate hath or ought to have any Jurisdiction, Power, Superiority, Preeminence or Authority Ecclesiastical or Spiritual within this Realm So help me God.⁷⁷

Thus, it established the monarch's authority in both temporal and spiritual matters, as the supreme governor of England's dominions but also as head of the Church of England.⁷⁸ This made the oath especially problematic for Dutch residents who, as members of the Dutch Reformed Church, recognised the ecclesiastical authority of so-called 'foreign' clergy and therefore could not recognise the English monarch as head of the church.⁷⁹ Those who refused the oath were excluded from formal administrative positions; as such, these groups – as in England – were effectively barred from participation upon ethnic grounds, or forced to convert to Anglicanism.

Further evidence of the cultural division between Anglicans and other Protestant churches can be seen in the act's references to freedom of worship. As English subjects, New Yorkers could not be "molested, punished, disturbed, or called into question for any Difference in Opinion, or matter of Religious Concernment." Notably, these rights were not extended to Catholics; as the act explained, this would have been "contrary to the Laws and Statues of their Majesties Kingdom of England." Thus, all Protestants were allowed to "freely meet at convenient Places ... and there Worship according to their respective Persuasions, without

⁷⁶ M. Kammen, 'The American Revolution as a Crise de Conscience: The Case of New York', in R. M. Jellison (ed.), *Society, Freedom, and Conscience: The Coming of the American Revolution in Virginia, Massachusetts, and New York* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1976), p. 135 and p. 156.

⁷⁷ Clause XII, 'William and Mary, 1688: An Act for the Abrogating of the Oathes of Supremacy and Allegiance'. Spelling and punctuation corrected.

⁷⁸ C. Evans, 'Oaths of Allegiance in Colonial New England', *The Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 31.2 (1921), pp. 378-80.

⁷⁹ Such issues would re-emerge during the Revolution, as those who had previously taken an oath to the King and Church felt unable to take one to the new American state. See Kammen, 'The American Revolution as a Crise de Conscience', pp. 125-89.

being hindered or molested”, provided that they did not use “this Liberty to Licentiousness, nor to the civil Injury or outward Disturbance of others.” This clause is significant, serving as a warning to those who might exploit this right to gather in order to conspire and organise a future rebellion. However, it also reflects a direct order given to Sloughter by ministers at Whitehall: as part of his governor’s commission, Sloughter was authorised “to permit a liberty of conscience to all persons (except Papists)” in the expectation that their “quiet and peaceable enjoyment of it” would ensure stability, as long such freedom would not cause “offence or scandal to the government.”⁸⁰

However, the broader act of religious tolerance raises the question of just who was granting religious freedom to whom. As an English colony, the Church of England was established as the official colonial denomination.⁸¹ Its influence would grow during the following years; by March 1696, New York City’s Anglicans would call for the construction of a church to house the city’s growing congregation.⁸² However, New York already had a dominant and well-established church: the Dutch Reformed Church. In establishing the Church of England as the official church, therefore, the act marked the Dutch church and its congregation as outsiders. This subtle shift designated English-born – or converted – settlers as the true subjects of His Majesty’s province of New York, while the status of the founding Dutch population was reduced to foreigners who were to be tolerated. As Ned Landsman explains, the Dutch Reformed Church – as with America’s other dissenting churches – would have increased claims to autonomy following the 1707 Union with Scotland and the creation of two national churches in Britain (the Church of England and the Church of Scotland).⁸³ However, during this intense phase of Anglicisation which was key to the colony’s development, strict rules remained in place which expressly forbade non-Anglicans from participating within New York’s colonial administration. Furthermore, the implication was that should there be another rebellion, waged by a group exploiting the right to convene benevolently bestowed upon them as English subjects, it would be led by the Dutch.

⁸⁰ Commission and Instructions for Colonel Sloughter, Governor of New York, 14 November 1689 - 31 January 1690. TNA: CO 5/1113, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

⁸¹ However, as Ned Landsman outlines, such attempts were ultimately limited. See ‘The Episcopate, the British Union, and the Failure of Religious Settlement in Colonial British America’, in C. Beneke and C. S. Grenada (eds) *The First Prejudice: Religious Tolerance and Intolerance in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), pp. 75-99.

⁸² Petition to Benjamin Fletcher, The Petition of Sundry Inhabitants of the city of New York, Members of the Church of England, 19 March 1696, Council Papers, 1664-1781, NYSA, A-1894, Roll 12.

⁸³ Landsman, ‘The Episcopate, the British Union, and the Failure of Religious Settlement in Colonial British America’, pp. 78-82.

Although it might be tempting to suspect that these subtle shifts in terminology would have little practical impact upon New Yorkers' everyday lives, these changes would have deep and long-lasting implications, especially in relation to the rights of women. For example, one short paragraph within the act formally established the rights of subjects to leave a will and to determine the inheritance of their real and personal estates. As Deborah Rosen argues in her comparison of legal systems of inheritance in colonial New York and New Mexico, such measures severely reduced female autonomy.⁸⁴ She explains that through the process of Anglicisation, New York moved from a Dutch model of civil law to the English model of common law. Under Dutch law, women had enjoyed more control over their own property. For instance, daughters were often left property within their father's wills. When Jan Juriaensen Becker of Albany County composed his will in 1694, he opted to leave more of his property to his daughter Martina than to his son. The reason, he claimed, was "not that I bear less affection to him than to her", but that he felt she should be rewarded for her faithful and diligent service to both himself and her mother. Without Martina's assistance in running the household, Becker claimed that "I could not have put my estate (small as the same may be) in so good a posture."⁸⁵

As property-owners, women were also eligible to leave wills.⁸⁶ Under Dutch law, should a man die intestate, half of his property would be granted to his widow and the rest divided amongst his children (including any daughters). However, under English law, a woman's property transferred to her husband upon marriage unless it was preserved in a separate trust through Equity, something little used in the late seventeenth century; if her husband died intestate, she would receive a third of the property as her dower right, but the practice of primogeniture

⁸⁴ D. A. Rosen, 'Women and Property across Colonial America: A Comparison of Legal Systems in New Mexico and New York', *WMQ*, 60.2 (2003), pp. 355-381; D. E. Narrett, 'Men's Wills and Women's Property Rights in Colonial New York', in R. Hoffman and P. J. Albert (eds) *Women in the Age of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia & United States Capitol Historical Society, 1989), pp. 91-133.

⁸⁵ Will of Jan Juriaensen Becker, 31 Aug 1694, Early Records of the City and County of Albany and Colony of Rensselaerswyck, NYSA, A0126-78, Volume 4.

⁸⁶ See for example the will of Marie Bringuier of New York City, 27 April 1741, Court of Probates, Probated Wills, Subseries 2, c.1739-1787, NYSA, J0038-92, Box 21. Although surviving copies of women's wills are limited, there is evidence of women amassing sufficient property in their own names to warrant the production of an inventory of the estate. See Inventory of Neeltie Claes, widow of Hendrick Gardenier, 7 April 1695, Early Records of the City and County of Albany and Colony of Rensselaerswyck, NYSA, A0126-78, Volume 4; Inventory of Elisabeth van de Poel, widow of the late Mr Sybrant van Schaik, 20 May 1686, Early Records of the City and County of Albany and Colony of Rensselaerswyck, NYSA, A0126-78, Volume 2; Mary Dickinson, South Precinct, Dutchess County, 6 Nov 1753, Court of Probates - Inventories and Accounts, 1666-1822, NYSA, J0301-82, Roll 2; Mary Tuthill, Goshen, Orange County, 31 Mar 1747, Court of Probates - Inventories and Accounts, 1666-1822, NYSA, J0301-82, Roll 3.

dictated that the remainder would transfer to her eldest son only. Thus, Rosen concludes, as New York became more of a patriarchal society under English rule than it had been under the Dutch, wives and widows became increasingly dependent upon their husbands and sons. We shall see in Part Two that these changes would have important implications for loyalist widows as they attempted to claim compensation for their husband's estates. Widows with sons of legal age were placed in an especially precarious situation, as they became dependent upon their sons for a portion of any financial settlement awarded.

The fourth and final act to be considered within this chapter is of a slightly different nature. As this chapter has already outlined, much of the impetus for Anglicisation occurred during 1691 in the immediate aftermath of the conclusion to Leisler's rebellion and was enforced by anti-Leislerian governors until 1698. The fourth major change did not occur until 1703 – after the administration of the pro-Leislerian Lord Bellomont – and introduced a common standard for all weights and measures across the colony.⁸⁷ As further consideration of the act will demonstrate, although it might initially appear somewhat innocuous when compared to its predecessors, its practical and financial implications were widespread and impacted upon everyday life in profound ways. The terminology employed by the act, meanwhile, implied that a moral judgement was being made against Dutch residents.

One consequence of New York's Dutch origins was that by 1700 both Dutch and English standards of weights, measures and barrel sizes were in common use. The purpose of the act, therefore, was to standardise such units of measurement "according to the Standard of her Majesties Exchequer in her Realm of England", with a penalty for non-compliance set at 9d. The benefits of the reform for trade and commerce were obvious: with increasing transactions between merchants in England and New York, standardisation was not only convenient but also provided assurance that the quantity of goods purchased were indeed the amount stated. However, the justification for introducing the change cited more obscure reasons. According to the law, the Anglicisation of weights and measures was introduced to enable New Yorkers to "live in Community and Friendship together." Without one true standard, "many Frauds and Deceits happen" between neighbours which, according to the act, amounted to "little better than Oppression" and "evil".

⁸⁷ 'An Act to Ascertain the Assize of Cask, Weights, Measures and Bricks within this Collony,' New York Legislature, *Acts passed the 2d sessions of the General Assembly, beginning the 13 day of April, 1703. Anno regni Reginae Annae, Angliae, Scotiae, Franciae & Hiberniae, secundo* (New York: William Bradford, 1703), pp. 218-21.

In line with the other measures for Anglicisation considered within this chapter, by introducing the English model as the common standard the act implied that the English approach was the aspirational norm. In practical terms, this again put English residents in an advantageous position, as they already operated according to English standards. Dutch residents were forced to replace all of their measuring equipment, as the act stipulated a 20s fine for “whoever shall sell, buy or keep any other Beam, Weight, Measure or Yard, than as aforesaid.” Not only were individuals obliged to purchase or construct new equipment, they were also required to pay an additional charge of 9d to colonial officials to have these items certified as legally fit for purpose.⁸⁸

As Dutch New Yorkers were overrepresented in skilled trades, the act had a much greater effect upon Dutch communities than amongst the English population.⁸⁹ Additionally, while the population of urban New York City was becoming increasingly English (and its non-English residents increasingly Anglicised), the Dutch remained the majority within upstate and rural regions. The act recognised this, outlining that the changes were to be introduced systematically and without exception “throughout all this Collony, as well in places Priviledged as without”, but did little to alleviate the burden upon majority-Dutch communities. Further evidence of the Dutch being deliberate targets of the act can be found in a comment which singled out coopers for individual treatment. Under the terms of the act, coopers were expressly forbidden from making casks and barrels which did not conform to English standards. Again, as highly-skilled craftsmen, coopers were more likely to have been Dutch than English – especially those based beyond the confines of the city of New York.

Thus, once again implicit in the wording of the act was the assumption that Dutch were outsiders, using foreign and therefore unacceptable methods and practices. Furthermore, the law decreed that Dutch residents, who had been employing such practices for generations, needed to be monitored and authorised by colonial officials – who were exclusively English or Anglicised – to ensure that they adhered to the colonial standard. By systematically enforcing these changes, the act ensured that the Dutch were unable to perpetuate further “evil” and “deceit” against their English neighbours through duplicity and non-conformity to the newly-accepted English norms.

⁸⁸ For an example of commissioners appointed for this purpose, see Council Papers, 1664-1781, NYSA, A-1894, Roll 12, Document I.D. 39:82.

⁸⁹ Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, pp. 68-74.

In the short-term, therefore, New York's Anglicisation laws of the 1690s and early 1700s were unprecedented, intrusive and had significant implications for the colony's overwhelmingly Dutch population. However, it is their longer-term implications which are of special importance for this dissertation, as they marked the beginning of a process that would result in the formation of distinct geographical regions within New York. Changes, which will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Two, were introduced during this period of Anglicisation which led to New York City developing an entirely different local character to upstate and frontier regions. As Part Two of this dissertation demonstrates, the local character of these different regions would ultimately shape the development of loyalism within New York during the American Revolution.

Nevertheless, despite the intensity of these laws, a thorough inspection of New York's colonial records does not reveal any indication of popular protest or opposition to their implementation. This raises important questions regarding why New Yorkers simply accepted these laws, not least the question of why a predominantly Dutch population accepted a series of reforms that ultimately designated them and their culture as outsiders. This chapter suggests, however, that another issue of pressing importance may have made Anglicisation appear a small price to pay.

The Defence of New York

During the 1690s and early 1700s – the same years which witnessed the introduction of New York's Anglicisation policies – Britain and France were repeatedly at war: the Nine Years War was contested between 1688 and 1697, while the War of the Spanish Succession took place between 1701 and 1714. The significance of these events for New York was that each of these European conflicts had a transatlantic counterpart. Thus, between 1690 and 1697, New England and New France were engaged in King William's War, while Queen Anne's War was contested between 1702 and 1713; both of these took place on what would become the Canadian border. As New York shared its northernmost border with New France, the colony was vulnerable to invasion during both conflicts and thus under threat throughout the entire period during which Anglicising legislation was forced upon New York's majority-Dutch population.

Throughout the eighteenth century, New York was repeatedly identified by contemporaries on both sides of the Atlantic as being of strategic military importance on account of its

geographic location. Should New York be conquered by a foreign adversary, New England would become isolated from the southern colonies and both would be significantly weakened defensively.⁹⁰ The threat of invasion from New France was almost perennial: as we have already seen, the perceived threat of French invasion in 1689 was used by Leisler to justify seizing power and would continue to overshadow New York until the conclusion of the Seven Years War in 1763, when New France was ceded to Britain.⁹¹ Thus, when colonial representatives claimed in 1692 that the security of the colony was “of such consequence that the safety of Virginia, Maryland and the rest of your majesty’s colonies on this main depend much upon it”, ministers at Whitehall agreed. They concluded that if New York was lost, then Virginia and Maryland “would not be able to live but in garrison.”⁹²

In addition to the French threat, New York was also vulnerable to Native American invasion. The colony’s western border – the region that would eventually become Tryon County – was shared with the Iroquois confederacy. Relationships between white settlers and Native Americans were not particularly amicable at the best of times and war with France served to exacerbate pre-existing tensions. For instance, in 1686 England and France had signed a treaty of ‘Peace and Neutrality in America’ in which they agreed that, in the event of a war in their American territories, neither side would enlist any slaves or Native Americans to be employed as soldiers.⁹³ However, English settlers remained suspicious of French intentions towards Native Americans, with whom they continued to trade much to the annoyance of English officials.⁹⁴ Within a year of the treaty with France, New York’s Governor Thomas Dongan was advised to protect “their” Five Nations against French attempts upon them; as ministers in England perceived it, “the Five nations ... of Indians ... from all times have submitted

⁹⁰ J. S. Tiedemann, *Reluctant Revolutionaries: New York City and the Road to Independence, 1773-1776* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 4; M. B. Norton and D. W. Blight (eds), *A People and A Nation: A History of the United States* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 1998), pp. 159-60.

⁹¹ Jacob Leisler to the Governor of Boston (Draft), 4 March 1689, William Smith Jr papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol 2796, Box 1, Lot 176, Item 1.

⁹² Address from New York to their Majesties, 10 September 1692. TNA: CO 5/1114, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016]; Order for Mandatory Letters to New England to assist New York, 1 October 1692. TNA: CO 5/1113, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

⁹³ Peace and Neutrality in America Treaty with France, 1686, New York Colony Council Minutes, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol 2166.

⁹⁴ Report on the French trade with Native Americans, 4 December 1684. TNA: CO 5/1112, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

themselves to our government, and by their acknowledgments of our sovereignty are become our subjects.”⁹⁵

Although English officials, from the safe distance of Whitehall, envisioned the Iroquois as submissive British subjects, local tensions remained between Native Americans and white settlers in Albany. Describing their neighbours as “the five most warlike nations of Indians on this main of America”, colonial officials in New York feared an alliance between the French and Native Americans, which would lead to a joint invasion of the colony.⁹⁶ These tensions persisted until the second half of the eighteenth century; for instance, the French use of Native American troops during the Seven Years War led to the conflict being remembered in the American Colonies as the ‘French and Indian War.’ The stereotypical image of Native American warriors going into battle “making the horrid war-whoop”, scalping colonists and sacrificing villages was even more enduring.⁹⁷ Thus in colonial New York, particularly within upstate and frontier communities, white settlers spent much of the eighteenth century in fear of an attack from those who they perceived to be the equally barbarous Native Americans and Catholic French.⁹⁸

Anglicisation, therefore, did not occur within a vacuum, but instead took place against a background of imperial global conflict. Although the colony was surrounded by other English territories on the American mainland, New York was politically isolated and vulnerable to foreign invasion on two fronts. As a result, the 1690s and early 1700s marked the beginning of a special relationship that formed between New York and England. In England, royal officials placed great importance on the defence of New York to the overall safety of their American

⁹⁵ Letter to the Governor of New York to Protect the Indians, 10 Nov 1687. TNA: CO 5/1113, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016]; the Five Nations at this point were the Mohawk, Seneca, Cayuga, Oneida and Onondaga.

⁹⁶ Address from New York to their Majesties, 10 September 1692. TNA: CO 5/1114, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

⁹⁷ Narrative of Events and Observations That Occurred during a Journey through Canada in the Years 1780-81, Papers of Hannah Lawrence Schieffelin, Schieffelin Family Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol 2690, Box 7; Journal and orderly book of John Herbert, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol NYGB 18231.

⁹⁸ Such fears were not entirely unfounded: see for example British intelligence of French spies placed amongst the Five Nations by the Canadians during the 1740s. Abstract of the Intelligence received by the Board of Trade from His Majesty’s Governors in North America relative to the designs of the French attempts and of their lordships proceedings thereupon approved subsequent to the treaty of Aix la Chappelle, 3 June 1749, New York Colony Council Minutes, NYPL; This intelligence also contains an account that French Governor had told the Iroquois that “they were counted by the English as dogs or slaves and had advised them to be on their guard for the English were determined on their first opportunity to destroy them all.”

colonies and were sympathetic to petitions from New York regarding its vulnerability to invasion. Meanwhile, New York's administrators viewed England increasingly in the role of a protector and turned to Whitehall repeatedly for assistance. These were enduring perceptions for both sides which, as we shall see in Part Two, persisted into the late eighteenth century: Britain continued to place special importance upon New York's strategic importance as late as 1783, while many New Yorkers would seek protection from Britain during the American Revolution and in its aftermath.

Despite New York's proximity to enemy forces, the colony seemed unable to raise sufficient numbers of local recruits for its defence. However, this was not the result of any inertia on behalf of the colonial government. In May 1691, Governor Sloughter had re-established New York's colonial militia under English command, ordering that that all persons between fifteen and sixty years of age were to enlist with the militia within a month of their arrival in the province. Punishments for non-compliance were severe: failure to enlist incurred a fine of 20s and refusal to serve was set at five pounds; however should these fines fail to cause distress, offenders were to be punished "by riding the Wooden Horse, or being tyed Neck and Heels, not exceeding one Hour, at the Discretion of their Officers."⁹⁹ Sloughter evidently feared the potential for another militia-led episode of unrest (such as that of Jacob Leisler), as provision was made within the act for severe punishments to be extended to any soldier who caused disorder.¹⁰⁰ However, the importance of defending New York appears to have outweighed fears of internal disobedience.

New York's Assembly was acutely aware of the colony's defensive problems, outlining in September 1691 that "the Fronteers of Albany are in eminent danger to be lost, being daily threatened to be invaded by the French, their Majesties declared Enemies."¹⁰¹ Consequently, throughout the 1690s the Assembly pursued repeated drives for militia recruitment. Reinforcements were brought in from neighbouring counties as men were drafted to New York's frontier from Ulster and Dutchess Counties to resolve an apparent shortage of

⁹⁹ 'An Act for settling the Militia', New York Legislature, *The Laws & Acts of the General Assembly*, pp. 10-15.

¹⁰⁰ See for instance the act's stipulation that soldiers caught firing small arms after 8pm were to be punished "at the discretion of a court martiall not extending to life or limb."

¹⁰¹ 'An Act for the raising and paying one Hundred and Fifty Men, to be forthwith raised, for the Defence and Re-inforcement of Albany for six Months', New York Legislature, *The Laws & Acts of the General Assembly*, pp. 40-46.

manpower.¹⁰² Such attempts were seemingly successful, because by 1696 there were three companies posted at Albany for the security of the frontiers, including a company of fusiliers under the command of Major Schuyler.¹⁰³

In addition to recruiting soldiers from within New York, the Assembly also attempted to gather support from its neighbouring colonies. Having recognised the colony's strategic importance for the security of the American mainland, New York's leaders thought it unfair that their colonists should bear the entire burden – both militarily and financially – for its defence. They felt that the other American colonies should do more to help and made their position clear to officials in England. In a 1692 address to William and Mary, the Assembly claimed that:

the defence of Albany lying wholly upon this small poor province has so exhausted it, that without your majesty's royal commiseration & relief, it will absolutely sink under its burden, and its inhabitants must either be ruined or forced to leave their habitations.¹⁰⁴

Governor Richard Ingoldesby relayed a similar message to the Duke of Bolton in the same year, claiming that "this poor province ... is put to all the charge and expense of men[,] money & provisions to maintain that garrison and none of our neighbouring colonies afford us any aid or assistance tho' it giveth life and safety to them all."¹⁰⁵

The war was allegedly producing negative social and economic effects within New York. As the sole financier of their own defence (and, the argument follows, the defence of all of the American colonies), New Yorkers were taxed heavily to pay for the war. Subsequently, the Assembly claimed that many colonists were leaving to settle in neighbouring colonies to benefit from lower taxes. Not only did this mean that there were fewer men available to serve in the militia, but it was also detrimental to trade. In the event that Albany could no longer sustain a sufficient trade with the Native Americans, the Assembly argued that the Iroquois would be forced to trade with the French. This would make the colony even more vulnerable,

¹⁰² 'An Act for the raising and paying of Eighty Men in Ulster and Dutchess County, to be employed for the Re-inforcing and Security of Albany, from the 15th Day of December next, to the first of March then next ensuing', New York Legislature, *The Laws & Acts of the General Assembly*, pp. 57-58.

¹⁰³ State of New York, *The colonial laws of New York from the year 1664 to the Revolution*, 354-56, pp. 369-75 and pp. 381-83.

¹⁰⁴ Address from New York to their Majesties, 10 September 1692. TNA: CO 5/1114, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

¹⁰⁵ Richard Ingoldesby to the Duke of Bolton, 28 April 1692. TNA: CO 5/1037, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

as economic ties between the French and the Iroquois could easily lead to the military ties which were so feared.

At the close of their petition to Whitehall, the Assembly requested that a royal order be sent to the other colonies, advising them to assist “in the defence of this important place.”¹⁰⁶ Convinced by the argument that New York had been placed under an unfair burden, Whitehall agreed to New York’s request and in October 1692 royal orders were sent to the New England colonies, Maryland and Virginia requesting that they send troops for the assistance of New York.¹⁰⁷ However, officials in England were surprised to find that their instructions were ignored and that the American colonies refused to raise the designated quotas of men.¹⁰⁸ The reasons for this are unclear: as there was little uniting the American colonists at this stage, they may have been unwilling to send their men to fight a war in a distant colony, particularly one which contained a predominantly foreign population. Or perhaps, as was often the case with colonial politics, they simply exploited the physical distance between themselves and London to avoid participating in what they viewed as the unnecessary bloodshed and expense of war.¹⁰⁹ In New York, the Council – buoyed by England’s support for their cause – began an independent campaign of petitioning its neighbours to meet their quotas and were eventually successful in obtaining military support from the militias of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Virginia.¹¹⁰ Meanwhile, in response to the lacklustre response of the American colonies, four new companies of foot were raised in England to be sent for the protection of New York.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ Address from New York to their Majesties, 10 September 1692. TNA: CO 5/1114, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

¹⁰⁷ Order for Mandatory Letters to New England to assist New York, 1 October 1692. TNA: CO 5/1113, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

¹⁰⁸ The Queen’s letter to the Governor of New York relating to the assistance to be given to the adjacent colonies, 1-3 August 1694. TNA: CO 5/1114, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

¹⁰⁹ As Keith Mason explains, rapid colonial growth and change led to development of sophisticated and powerful local institutions which undermined the idea that colonial legislatures were subordinate to Westminster. See ‘Britain and the Administration of the American Colonies’, p. 34.

¹¹⁰ William Stoughton [Governor of Massachusetts Bay] to the Governor of New York, July 1695, Council Papers, 1664-1781, NYSA, A-1894, Roll 12, Document ID 40:36; William Stoughton to Governor Fletcher, 24 August 1695, Council Papers, 1664-1781, NYSA, A-1894, Roll 12, Document ID 40:61; Letter to Colonel Benjamin Fletcher from Hartford, 9 July 1695, Council Papers, 1664-1781, NYSA, A-1894, Roll 12, Document ID 40:42; Caleb Carr [Governor of Rhode Island] to Benjamin Fletcher, July 1695, Council Papers, 1664-1781, NYSA, A-1894, Roll 12; Edmund Andros [Governor of Virginia] to New York, 18 July 1696, Council Papers, 1664-1781, NYSA, A-1894, Roll 13, Document ID 40:170.

¹¹¹ Documents relating to the four new foot companies to be dispatched to New York, April – August 1694. TNA: CO 5/1114, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

During the 1690s and early 1700s, therefore, England offered essential military protection to New York to defend against foreign invasion. Despite the best efforts of the Assembly, New York was underpopulated and unable to defend itself; meanwhile, historic antagonisms which had existed between New York and its neighbouring English colonies appear to have been carried forward, as New England and Virginia were reluctant to respond to the colony's requests for assistance. Thus, although royal officials had imposed intense Anglicisation reforms upon the colony during this same period, acceptance of these changes was a relatively small price to pay when compared to the potential alternative: invasion and conquest by France and once again subject to the laws of a Catholic monarch.

As we shall see in Part Two, the militarisation of upstate New York would have long term consequences. Britain and France would engage in battle in North America four times between 1690 and 1763.¹¹² Upon the outbreak of each conflict, owing to New York's strategic location, its residents were drafted into local militias – working alongside regular British forces – to ensure the colony's defence. Thus, by the outbreak of the American Revolution, Albany's inhabitants were experienced in gaining commissions and forming themselves into organised armed militia units; American-born loyalist claimants would later recall serving in local militia units during the Seven Years War as an indicator of their loyalty.

Longer-Term Impacts of Anglicisation

New York's Anglicisation laws sought to reduce Dutch political influence; however, complementary social and cultural changes – which were not directly influenced by legislation from England – also occurred, which assisted in the overall process of Anglicisation. These social changes were particularly apparent in New York City, where a new Anglicised identity emerged which was different to the local character of upstate regions. The long-lasting social and political ramifications of Anglicisation mark the beginning of the development of local regions which form the focus of Part Two of this dissertation.

One catalyst for social change and the erosion of ethnic divisions were the exogamous marriages which took place between New York City's heterogeneous populations. In New York City, where recent English immigrants tended to be male, the subsequent shortage of English women naturally encouraged marriage between English and Dutch settlers. Joyce Goodfriend

¹¹² King William's War (1690-1697); Queen Anne's War (1702-1713); King George's War, also known as the French and Indian War (1744-1748); and the Seven Years War (1754-1763).

estimates that up to one in three male English immigrants married Dutch women.¹¹³ However, these patterns were also found amongst New York City's other communities: estimates suggest that 25 per cent of French Huguenots married outside of their immediate community, while there is general consensus is that the French had fully assimilated into British New York by the 1720s.¹¹⁴ Such marriages benefited both parties. Susanah Shaw Romney argues that seventeenth-century New Netherland society was based upon a system of "intimate networks": an intricate "web of ties developed from people's immediate, affective, and personal associations", including marriage.¹¹⁵ These networks not only spanned vast cultural and geographic distances, but they also "formed the basis for local life and the local economy in the colonial Hudson valley" and persisted under English rule.¹¹⁶ Thus, English men marrying Dutch brides gained access to existing – and, often, powerful – political and mercantile networks; while the marriage of a young Dutch woman to an influential English administrator or merchant could ensure the future prosperity and importance of Dutch families during a period in which Dutch status was increasingly under threat.

A longer-term impact of intermarriage between New York's heterogeneous communities was the effect that it had on language. In the immediate aftermath of Leisler's rebellion and Governor Sloughter's arrival in the colony, attempts had been made to enforce English as the official language. For instance, at the trial of one of Jacob Leisler's co-conspirators in 1691 – which took place within the new Anglicised judicial system – when the Leislerian attempted to give his evidence in Dutch, the magistrates commanded that he speak in English.¹¹⁷ Colonial officials were also keen to promote the use of English beyond the courtroom and government-controlled spaces: a bill proposed by New York's House of Representatives in April 1691 called for the appointment of a schoolmaster "in every town in the province" to teach written and spoken language to children and youths.¹¹⁸ Exogamous marriage, however, promoted the adoption of English language in a way that legislation would never achieve. In a colony that

¹¹³ Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, pp. 96-97; Notably, Murrin argues that pre-1691 intermarriage of this nature had the reverse effect, assimilating Englishmen into Dutch communities. See 'English Rights as Ethnic Aggression', p. 64.

¹¹⁴ Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, p. 188; Kammen, *Colonial New York*, p. 146; J. Butler, *The Huguenots in America: A Refugee People in New World Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), p. 145.

¹¹⁵ Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, p. 18.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 299-302.

¹¹⁷ Balmer, 'Traitors and Papists', p. 361; E. M. Covart, "'Dam'd Paving" Yankees and Dutch New Yorkers: The Post-Revolution New England Migration and the Creation of American Identity in the Upper Hudson River Valley, 1783-1820', *HRVR*, 29.1 (2012), p. 15.

¹¹⁸ Resolves of the House of Representatives for the Province of New York, May 1691, Council Papers, 1664-1781, NYSA, A-1894, Roll 10, Document ID 37:108(2).

elevated the importance of Englishness, English men were unlikely to learn to speak Dutch; therefore Dutch women would need to speak English in order to communicate with their husbands. That said, Anglicisation was more complex than a simple one-directional process. The evidence of persistent bilingualism indicates that New York's Dutch residents – especially women – made substantial efforts to retain their cultural identity while simultaneously undertaking self-Anglicisation.¹¹⁹ Goodfriend argues that such activity was predominantly female, and especially prevalent amongst the Dutch wives of Englishmen who attempted to instil a sense of their cultural heritage into their children.¹²⁰

The letters of New York City merchant (and later, loyalist) Evert Bancker Jr to his mother demonstrate such activity continuing into the mid-eighteenth century.¹²¹ Although the Banckers were based in New York City, they were a Dutch family with origins in Albany: Evert's grandfather, also named Evert Bancker, had been the mayor of Albany between 1707 and 1709. Throughout the 1760s and 1770s, Evert received a steady stream of letters from his extended Dutch family in Albany and New Jersey, including his mother Maria de Peyster – a member of another of New York City's leading Dutch families. The content of the letters is otherwise unexceptional: Evert's correspondents wrote to him with accounts of family news, neighbourhood gossip, requests for items in his professional line as a merchant and, of course, to berate Evert for being "so much taken up with the world as to forgit he has a mother."¹²² Shaw Romney highlights this "intermingling of family and trade" as being typical of letters exchanged within the intimate networks of Dutch New Netherland.¹²³ What is notable about Maria's letters, however, is their bilingual nature. Although from the 1760s onwards her letters are written in increasingly fluent English, the collection also includes a number of undated letters from Maria to Evert which are written in Dutch. It is unclear whether Evert ever responded to his mother in Dutch, but the letters' existence suggests that at the very least he was able to read the language in order to draft a reply. While Maria de Peyster would have conversed in English with New York's anglicised politicians and merchants when in

¹¹⁹ Joyce Goodfriend views such acts of linguistic and cultural retention as a challenge to elite authority. See D. N. Gellman, review of J. Goodfriend, *Who Should Rule at Home? Confronting the Elite in British New York City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), in *WMQ*, 75.1 (2018), pp. 161-64.

¹²⁰ Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, pp. 96-97 and p. 201.

¹²¹ Evert Bancker Jr (1734- unknown) was the brother of New York State Treasurer Gerard Bancker (1740-1799) and the younger cousin of Evert Bancker (1721-1803), who was speaker of New York Assembly.

¹²² Bancker Family Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol 192, Box 1.

¹²³ Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, p. 112.

public, the letters to her son suggest that, in her private correspondence, Maria retained her Dutch mother-tongue and encouraged its use amongst her children.

As the English language increasingly dominated public and civil life, individuals recognised the political necessity and social advantages of speaking English. In response to this, during the first half of the eighteenth century a market emerged for Dutch-to-English translation guides. These publications included titles such as Francis Harrison's *De Engelsche en Nederduytsche school-meester; or in English, The English and Low-Dutch school-master, Containing alphabetical tables of the most common words in English and Dutch*.¹²⁴ Little is known of Harrison, who is described on the book's title page as a schoolmaster from Somerset County in New Jersey. However, more is known of its printer William Bradford. English-born and apprenticed in London, Bradford – a Quaker – came to Philadelphia in 1685 where he briefly resided before settling permanently in New York City in 1693. Working as a printer and a publisher until 1744, Bradford's publications included New York's first newspaper the *New-York Gazette* (1725-1744) and he was also New Jersey's official printer between 1716 and 1721.¹²⁵ Their Dutch-to-English translation guide published in New York City was aimed at Dutch speakers resident in the colonies – or, as Harrison called them, “de Nederduytsche inwoonders van Nort America” – and its audience were promised definitions and translations of the most commonly-used English words to enable them to read, write and speak English.

Of a similar nature was Pieter Venema's *Arithmetica of Cyffer-konst, volgens de munten maten en gewigten, te Nieu-York*, which loosely translates as *Arithmetic or CIPHERING, according to the coin sizes and weights of New-York*.¹²⁶ This text taught its readers practical applications of

¹²⁴ F. Harrison, *De Engelsche en Nederduytsche school-meester. Behelsende verschydenen tafelen, na de order van A, B, in gericht van de gemeenste woorden, in 't Engels en Duytsch. Met eenige regels en onderwysingen, waar-door de Nederduytsche inwoonders van Nort America in korten tyt de Engelsche taal mogen leeren spellen, leesen, verstaan en spreken. Ende de Engelsche in 's gelyks mogen leeren spellen, leesen, verstaan en schryven, in de nederduytsche taal. Obgestelt door Francis Harrison, school-meester, in Somerset-County, in Nieuw-Jersey, in America* (New York: William Bradford, 1730).

¹²⁵ William Bradford (1663-1752), The Printers' File, AAS; C. S. Brigham, *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820, Volume One* (Worcester, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1947), pp. 633-34; E. C. Latham, *Chronological Tables of American Newspapers, 1690-1820. Being a tabular guide to the holdings of newspapers published in America through the year 1820* (Barre, Massachusetts: American Antiquarian Society & Barre Publishers, 1972), pp. 2-4; I. Thomas, *The History of Printing in America, with a Biography of Printers, Volume Two*. 2nd ed. (New York: Burt Franklin, 1874), pp. 98-99.

¹²⁶ P. Venema, *Arithmetica of Cyffer-konst, volgens de munten maten en gewigten, te Nieu-York, gebruykelyk als mede een kort ontwerp van de algebra, opgesteld door Pieter Venema, mr. in de mathesis en schryf-konst* (New York: Peter Zenger, 1730); See D. E. Smith, *History of Mathematics, Volume Two* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1958), p. 11 for an explanation of the use of arithmetic and algebra in seventeenth century Holland and the Americas.

algebra, arithmetic, abacus work and simple accounting using New York's local currency and Anglicised system of weights and measures. Again, little is known of the author who is described only as a maths and writing teacher. However, a great deal more is known of the text's printer Peter Zenger. Born in Germany in 1697, Zenger came to America in 1710 and was apprenticed to the above-mentioned William Bradford in New York from 1711 to 1719. After a short stay in Maryland, Zenger returned to New York in 1725 where he worked as a publisher until his death in 1746. Amongst his publications was the *New-York Weekly Journal* (1733-46), for which Zenger would gain notoriety.¹²⁷ Established primarily as a political paper, Zenger used his *Weekly Journal* to criticise the administration of New York's Governor William Crosby and his Lieutenant-Governor Clarke; this led to Crosby accusing Zenger of seditious libel in 1734 and ordering his arrest. After eight months imprisonment and a lengthy court trial, Zenger was eventually acquitted and became a symbol for the freedom of the press in New York.¹²⁸

These long-forgotten and otherwise unexceptional publications are important because they show that by the 1730s a market had emerged within New York for educational literature which encouraged and enabled Dutch-speakers to anglicise themselves. Basic literacy in bookkeeping had been an essential skill for traders and merchants within the New Netherlands;¹²⁹ in early eighteenth-century New York, where English was established as the official language and there was an English population with whom to trade, Dutch traders and merchants now needed to be able to conduct their bookkeeping in English. Practical and plain-speaking, these new texts were of a different nature to the Dutch-to-English dictionaries published for gentlemen scholars in the late seventeenth century.¹³⁰ Instead, these American-produced texts responded to local and practical need and were targeted directly at New York City's Dutch residents who sought to conduct themselves and their trades in English. The result of a collaborative effort between Dutch-speaking schoolmasters and New York's leading publishers, these texts were intended for everyday use and to facilitate Dutch integration into an increasingly Anglicised society. Importantly, printing of this nature was confined to New York City; as Part Two of this dissertation will explore further, a printing press was not

¹²⁷ John Peter Zenger (1697-1746), The Printers' File, AAS; Brigham, *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers*, pp. 699; Latham, *Chronological Tables of American Newspapers*, pp. 3-4.

¹²⁸ Thomas, *The History of Printing in America*, pp. 99-104.

¹²⁹ Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, pp. 96-98.

¹³⁰ See for instance J. G. Van Heldoren, *An English and Nether-dutch dictionary composed out of the best English authors, with a most natural and easie method of spelling English, according to the present proper pronunciation of the language in Oxford and London* (Amsterdam: Mercy Bruyning, 1675).

established in Albany County until 1771, while communication difficulties meant that a regular supply of books to be sold in Albany was slow to develop.¹³¹ Therefore, these texts were more readily available to Dutch-speakers living within the City and County of New York than to those living further upstate. Such examples of New York's uneven development impacted the spread of Anglicisation within the colony and, as this thesis will explore in Part Two, these local differences would have important political ramifications almost a century later.

Anglicisation also had long-term political implications. As we have seen, in the aftermath of Leisler's Rebellion, New York had split between two rival political factions: the Leislerians and the anti-Leislerians. According to Lustig, the Leislerian faction was predominantly formed of New York's landowning interest, while the anti-Leislerians were largely comprised from the merchant families.¹³² Patricia Bonomi notes that New York was distinctive in this respect, having both a "thriving merchant community and an influential body of wealthy landowners", whereas its neighbouring colonies tended to be dominated by one or the other interest.¹³³ Although the question of Jacob Leisler's intentions eventually faded from importance, the divisions between these political factions intensified and endured well into the eighteenth century: according to Bonomi, the opposition between landowners and merchants dominated New York politics until at least the 1760s.¹³⁴

Notably, there was also a geographic dimension to New York's political divisions, which served to intensify further the emerging divide between New York City and upstate regions. The landowning faction was dominated by patent-holding families and manorial landlords such as the Morris family and the Livingstons, who were located further upstate in the predominantly Dutch Hudson River Valley region.¹³⁵ In contrast, the merchant or commercial interest included families such as the Philippses, Van Cortlandts, De Lanceys and the Schuylers. With the exception of the Schuyler family who were based in the city of Albany, all of the above-mentioned merchant families were based within New York City.¹³⁶

¹³¹ D. P. Brennan, 'Open to all Parties: Alexander and James Robertson, Albany printers, 1771-77', in J. M. Johnson, C. Pryslopski, and A. Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2013), pp. 125-34; A regular postal service between New York City and Albany would not be introduced until the Seven Years War (1754-63). Kammen, *Colonial New York*, p. 338.

¹³² Lustig, *Privilege and Prerogative*, pp. 1-12.

¹³³ Bonomi, *A Factious People*, p. 56.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 282.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-71.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 60-68; Although the Schuylers remained in Albany, this is not to say that they did not have a presence within in New York City. Serena Zabin notes that Arendt Schuyler left Albany for New

This distinction is important, as the divisions between the two factions were often blurred. The Philipse (of Philipsburg Manor in Westchester County), Van Cortlandts (of Cortlandt Manor in Westchester County) and De Lanceys were all land-owning families. With the exception of the De Lanceys, who were French Huguenots, they were all Dutch elite families.¹³⁷ However, by the mid-eighteenth century the primary residences of these families were in New York City and they identified themselves publicly as merchants. As representatives to New York's General Assembly, these individuals were required to take oaths of allegiance to England; a survey of the assembly's membership between 1695 and 1738 reveals successive generations of the Philipse, De Lancey, Van Cortlandt and Schuyler families accepting the oath upon being elected.¹³⁸ Notably, many of these individuals also had military titles, indicating a further occasion where they would have been required to take the oath. As such, these families provide excellent examples of Dutch residents who took the pragmatic decision to become Anglicised in order to participate in New York City's developing elite society.

Looking beyond New York's leading colonial political families, participation in popular politics also varied according to geographic location. In New York City, colonists were predominantly freeholders and, as such, were able to vote (as long as they met the minimum eligibility requirements). Consequently, New York City would become an increasingly politicised society; in Albany, however, the situation was rather different. Upstate New York was unique in its social structure, containing vast manorial estates which were particularly concentrated in Albany, Dutchess and Westchester Counties. Headed by semi-aristocratic landlords – who,

York in 1695, where he was made a freeman of the city and became a trader. S. Zabin, *Dangerous Economies: Status and Commerce in British New York* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), p. 37.

¹³⁷ According to D. A. Story, Etienne deLancy became Anglicised as 'Stephen deLancey' upon his arrival in the colonies. See *The deLanceys: A Romance of a Great Family, With Notes on these Allied Families who Remained Loyal to the British Crown During the Revolutionary War* (Canada: Thomas Nelson & Sons Limited, 1931), p. v.

¹³⁸ New York General Assembly, *A journal of the House of Representatives for His Majesties province of New-York in America begun the 20th day of June, in the seventh year of His Majesties reign, anno; Dom. 1695* (New York: William Bradford, 1695); New York General Assembly, *A Journal of the Votes of the General Assembly of Her Majesties Colony of New-York in America. Beginning the 20th day of October, 1702, Under the Administration of His Excellency Edward Lord Cornbury, Capt. General and Governor of this Colony* (New York: William Bradford, 1708); New York General Assembly, *A journal of the votes & proceedings of the General Assembly of His Majesty's province of New-York in America.* (New York: William Bradford, 1726); New York General Assembly, *A journal of the votes & proceedings of the General Assembly of His Majesty's colony of New-York, which began the 23d of July, 1728* (New York: William Bradford, 1728); New York General Assembly, *A journal of the votes and proceedings of the General Assembly of His Majesty's colony of New-York, in America* (New York: John Peter Zenger, 1737).

according to Eric Hinderaker, saw America as a place to revive European feudalism – these estates were lived and worked upon by generations of tenant farmers.¹³⁹ In contrast to New York City, the upstate tenant population – by definition, unpropertied – were denied political participation, as Anglicisation laws explicitly defined eligibility for the vote as only available to freeholders and not tenants. Landed families, therefore – including the Livingstons (of Livingston Manor) and the van Rensselaers (of Rensselaerswyck Manor) – dominated local and colonial politics: as the only residents eligible to vote, landlords dispatched members of their own families to New York City to represent their interests on the Assembly, all of whom swore allegiance to England.¹⁴⁰ Anglicisation, therefore, introduced long-lasting structural inequalities into the colony which would have long-term social and political implications.

Conclusion

During the 1690s and early 1700s, a series of Anglicisation reforms were introduced to New York in direct response to Leisler's rebellion. These laws were in stark contrast to England's previous approach to the administration of the colony, which can be described as *laissez-faire* at best. Leisler's Rebellion – considered by many contemporaries as a Dutch plot – highlighted New York's vulnerability to social unrest and created a perceived immediate need to reduce Dutch political influence within the colony. As Greene has rightly established, although all of the English colonies in America underwent a process of development, through which they became increasingly English in their appearance, the manner in which this occurred varied greatly between different regions. This process of standardisation – or, as Murrin terms it, Anglicisation – was typically gradual, taking decades for changes to be implemented. Anglicisation in New York, however, differed in two respects. First, the changes were immediate and sudden, introduced in a comparatively short space of time in response to an urgent need to restore political order. Secondly, because of the colony's origins as a Dutch settlement, Anglicisation in New York had a unique ethnic dimension. As this chapter has outlined in detail, Anglicisation introduced both short- and long-term social implications for its Dutch population.

¹³⁹ E. Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 79.

¹⁴⁰ G. J. Kornblith and J. M. Murrin, 'The Making and Unmaking of an American Ruling Class', in A. F. Young (ed.), *Beyond The American Revolution: Explorations In The History Of American Radicalism* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993), pp. 29-30 and p. 41.

Anglicisation primarily defined New York as an English colony. As such, its colonists were formally confirmed as English subjects, ruled by a royal governor and subject to the laws of England. However, it also granted them the shared rights of Englishmen enjoyed by their fellow subjects across the Atlantic. In a heterogeneous society such as New York City, Anglicisation gave a clear social advantage to English-born subjects or those who chose to become anglicised – either through conversion to Anglicanism or by taking oaths of allegiance to England. During these crucial years for New York’s future development, English rule, politico-judiciary norms and socio-cultural practices became established through England’s capacity to serve successfully as the colony’s protector. Vulnerable to invasion from New France and unable to raise sufficient numbers of troops to defend itself, New York was forced to depend upon England for essential military protection.

Essential for understanding Part Two of this study, the changes introduced by New York’s Anglicisation laws contributed to the uneven development of the colony and the formation of distinct geographical regions, each with their own individual social and political contexts. During the eighteenth century these distinctions between regions would become more pronounced and, by the outbreak of the American Revolution, would shape both the development of loyalism and the activities of loyalists resident within each region.

New York City emerged as a unique region within the colony, forming the centre of political life as a General Assembly, Supreme Court and a Governor were all to be based within the city. As such, the city attracted English migrants who enjoyed an elevated status: lawyers were attracted to New York City as a legal and political centre, while merchants were attracted to the commercial opportunities offered by the port city. New York City’s heterogeneous demographics encouraged Anglicisation, as intermarriage eroded traditional ethnic boundaries, promoted assimilation and the creation of a new anglicised New York identity which had not existed before the eighteenth century. Although there is evidence of Dutch cultural retention as a private activity, the city’s Dutch residents equally recognised the commercial and political advantages of choosing to become anglicised.

Albany, in contrast, did not experience Anglicisation in the same way. In 1691 contemporaries described Albany as a place “which wholly consists of Dutch people”; a century later, little had

changed.¹⁴¹ In the post-war years of the American Republic, New Englanders migrating to the Hudson Highlands would complain of the “backwards” culture of the Dutch population.¹⁴² Meanwhile, in a 1793 diary documenting a journey from New York to Detroit, William Hartshorne described Albany and the surrounding region as largely Dutch in appearance and behaviours, suggesting it as un-American. Hartshorne wrote that:

Albany appears to be a place of considerable trade, some of the houses are well-built, the streets mostly paved, but some of them very narrow and irregularly laid out – here the low Dutch language is generally spoken and the manners of the inhabitants not esteemed very pleasing.

Similarly, although Hartshorne described nearby Schenectady as “a pretty well built handsome inland town, a place of considerable trade, being the carrying place between the Mohawk and Hudsons rivers – here, as at Albany, the language is low Dutch.”¹⁴³

Anglicisation, therefore, was uneven in its application. Although it generated extensive social change in New York City, its full effects did not extend northwards into the Hudson Highlands. Almost overwhelmingly Dutch in its population, Albany remained relatively homogeneous until at least the nineteenth century. Dutch-to-English assimilation guides, which were of special importance in New York City, were of limited use in Albany, where there was neither a press to print them nor an English-speaking population with which to converse and trade. While there was a thriving community of merchants, traders and a few limited political roles based within the City of Albany, all of this existed on a much smaller scale to New York City. Instead, Albany’s residents were mainly small farmers or tenants, living on the vast landed estates of their landlords who dominated colonial politics. Tryon County – the third region to be considered within this study – did not yet exist as a formal administrative entity, but remained part of Albany’s western frontier.

Moving away from the top-down initiatives imposed by the colonial government to anglicise the colony, Chapter Two focuses on the complementary social and cultural changes which occurred during the mid-eighteenth century. For instance, we have already briefly seen some of the ways in which print culture was used to encourage social change in New York through

¹⁴¹ A Memorial of What has Occurred in their Majesties Province of New York since the news of their Majesties happy arrival in England and an answer to that Memorial, 1691. TNA: CO 5/1082, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016]. An undated draft of this document can also be found in Council Papers, 1664-1781, NYSA, A-1894, Roll 10.

¹⁴² Covart, “‘Dam'd Paving’”, p. 6.

¹⁴³ William Hartshorne Diary, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol 1340.

Chapter One: Anglicisation and Political Change, 1691-1763

a consideration of the Dutch-to-English dictionaries. Exploring the evidence for colonial improvement and development in the form of an 'Urban Renaissance', the following chapter takes a closer look at the role of material culture in shaping local identities within New York's emerging distinct regions.

Chapter Two: Material Culture and Social Change

While government-led Anglicisation policies had long lasting effects upon the development of the colony, legislative reform alone was not sufficient to alter New Yorkers' everyday behaviour. As this chapter shall explore, Anglicisation was more than simply political and legislative change, it also had important social, material, economic and cultural implications. Ignacio Gallup-Diaz provides one of the most comprehensive definitions of Anglicisation, describing it as:

the process through which the English colonies of the Americas emerged from their diverse beginnings to become increasingly more alike, expressing a shared Britishness in their political and judicial systems, material culture, economies, religious systems, and engagements within the empire.¹

The eighteenth century marked a period of significant cultural change across the British-Atlantic: technological improvements extended the accessibility of consumer goods that had previously been confined to the elites to a wider portion of the population; meanwhile, towns across provincial Britain and the North American colonies underwent physical and cultural improvements which reflected the increased wealth and status of their inhabitants. This development of eighteenth-century material culture has been the focus of an extensive body of scholarly literature, which explores the impact of the so-called 'Consumer Revolution'.² Coined by Neil McKendrick, John Brewer and J. H. Plumb in the 1980s, the term was initially used to describe the changing nature of the eighteenth-century British marketplace.³ Importantly, 'consumer revolution' is a historiographical construct: although eighteenth-century observers recognised that significant economic and cultural changes were occurring, the phrase was not used or recognised by contemporaries.

¹ I. Gallup-Diaz, A. Shankman, and D. J. Silverman, 'Introduction', in I. Gallup-Diaz, A. Shankman, and D. J. Silverman (eds), *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), p. 1.

² N. McKendrick, J. Brewer and J. H. Plumb (eds), *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialisation of Eighteenth-Century England* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 1; J. Brewer and R. Porter (eds), *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London & New York: Routledge, 1993); M. Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); J. Styles and Amanda Vickery (eds), *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America 1700–1830* (New Haven and London: Yale Center for British Art and Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2006).

³ N. McKendrick, 'The Consumer Revolution of Eighteenth-Century England', in N. McKendrick, J. Brewer and J. Plumb (eds), *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialisation of Eighteenth-Century England* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 29.

Timothy Breen has led the way in assessing the impact of the so-called 'consumer revolution' within its North American context. He notes that each colony had its own local 'consumer revolution', the timings, character and pervasiveness of which varied according to the unique social and economic circumstances present within each colony. Nevertheless, American colonists alike were ready consumers of British merchandise: Breen argues that by 1750 Britain enjoyed an Atlantic-wide "empire of goods."⁴ Similar to their counterparts across the Atlantic, American colonists were preoccupied with the acquisition of luxuries – or, as Breen calls them, the "baubles of Britain."⁵ According to Breen, consumers on both sides of the Atlantic used these items to shape their identities and to reflect their inclusion within the British-Atlantic community.⁶ Thus follows his assertion that "an American who managed to purchase a porcelain teacup or a modest pewter bowl could fancy that he or she partook of a polite society centred in faraway places such as London or Bath."⁷

However, such approaches are not without their limitations. Frank Trentman in particular calls for a move beyond studies of consumerism. He claims that such works are in danger of becoming of "diminishing analytical and conceptual usefulness" as they ignore the complexities of historic consumption in favour of a simplistic and uniform model.⁸ This chapter adopts somewhat of a middle-ground, arguing that studies of the consumer revolution can be useful for revealing important changes to the colonial marketplace in terms of the numbers, types and variety of goods available. However, studies such as Breen's which focus upon sellers' advertisements alone cannot tell us how these items were used and perceived by those who consumed them. As Sheryllyne Haggerty identifies, focusing on the increased availability of goods rather than their distribution and consumption is more effective for a study of sellers' practices than for improving our understanding of consumer behaviours.⁹ Furthermore, in the American context, studies of consumer culture typically focus upon towns and port cities located along the eastern seaboard – where the availability and distribution of such goods was highest – rather than on rural regions where the majority of the population

⁴ T. H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford & NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. xv.

⁵ T. H. Breen, "'Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century", *Past and Present*, 119 (1988), pp. 73-104.

⁶ Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, p. xi.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. xi-xii.

⁸ F. Trentman, 'Beyond Consumerism: New Historical Perspectives on Consumption', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 39.3 (2004), p. 376.

⁹ S. Haggerty, *The British-Atlantic Trading Community, 1760-1810: Men, Women, And The Distribution Of Goods* (Leiden: Brill, 206), p. 7.

were resident.¹⁰ Although they provide an indication that there was a gradation in consumption patterns between urban centres and the rural frontiers, there is much more to be done.

A more effective methodology for tracing the spread of material culture, therefore, is Peter Borsay's model of an 'Urban Renaissance'. Borsay identifies four main developments which he argues indicate the existence of significant social and cultural change: the development of leisure facilities; significant changes to the local economy; the development of public amenities; and architectural change.¹¹ As this chapter will demonstrate, his framework can be applied to any eighteenth-century society – rural as well as urban, despite its name – to trace the influence of the new markets of consumer goods and their accompanying social and cultural changes.

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part explores mid-eighteenth-century changes to New York's colonial marketplace. It primarily draws upon newspaper advertisements from the colonial press and contemporary accounts from colonial merchants, traders and consumers. Such accounts must be used with caution: much of this evidence relates to New York City, rather than to the colony as a whole. Consequently, such evidence can be potentially misleading, as it suggests that all regions of the colony experienced the consumer revolution and its accompanying socio-cultural changes in the same way and to the same extent. As such, attempts to trace an urban renaissance in regions beyond New York City become all the more important.

This chapter does not assert that the province of New York was unique amongst American colonies in experiencing a consumer revolution. Neither does it attempt to maintain that such changes were solely a phenomenon of the British-Atlantic: Robert DuPlessis identifies similar emulation of European metropolitan fashions within the wider Atlantic world.¹² As we shall see, however, the mid-eighteenth century represents a key moment in the rise of popular consumer goods in New York which were accessible to a broader cross-section of its

¹⁰ See for instance, E. Hart, *Building Charleston: Town and Society in the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic World* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010); J. McCusker and R. R. Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

¹¹ P. Borsay, 'The English Urban Renaissance: The Development of Provincial Urban Culture, c.1680-c.1760', *Social History*, 5.2 (1977), pp. 581-603.

¹² J. Styles, 'An Ocean of Textiles', review of R. S. DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic: Clothing, Commerce, and Colonization in the Atlantic World, 1650–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016) in *WMQ*, 73.3 (2016), pp. 531-37.

inhabitants. However, this only tells part of the story: to paraphrase Richard Sher, just because scholars recognise that a boom in print and material culture had occurred does not equate to our understanding of what was actually taking place.¹³

With this in mind, the second part of this chapter questions how such goods – and their corresponding ideas relating to emerging British identities – contributed to large-scale social and cultural change within the colony. It asks to what extent these changes were confined to New York City, or whether they had a similar impact upon rural and frontier communities. In order to do this, Borsay's framework is applied to a comparative assessment of New York City and Albany County (which includes the frontier region that would later become Tryon County) in turn – the regions which form the focus of this dissertation – to trace the evidence for an urban renaissance within these distinct locales.

This chapter argues that, during the eighteenth century, there was an influx of British material culture into the colony of New York, which prompted accompanying social and cultural changes. These developments served to facilitate the non-legislative aspects of Anglicisation – social, material and economic – to which Gallup-Diaz refers. However, just as we have seen in Chapter One, the impact of these changes was uneven, having greater significance within particular regions of the colony than others. In New York City, the influx of British material culture prompted an urban renaissance comparable to those witnessed in eighteenth-century England and the city emerged as a recognisably-Georgian provincial town, equipped with the necessary institutions to facilitate Anglicisation and participation in British-Atlantic culture.¹⁴ In Albany County, however, the evidence for an urban renaissance is severely limited, indicating that contemporary ideas of consumption and British-Atlantic culture had minimal impact upon frontier and rural communities. As such, loyalism in these regions was prompted by a different set of circumstances, which Part Two of this study considers in greater depth. Thus, in areas where the effects of the social, material and economic changes that Gallup-Diaz identifies were felt most strongly, they complemented important elements of the Anglicisation laws introduced in the aftermath of Leisler's Rebellion. Building upon the conclusions of Chapter One – that Anglicisation reform sparked the development of distinct

¹³ R. Sher, *The Enlightenment and The Book: Scottish Authors and their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 4; H. Berry, 'Shopping in Eighteenth-Century England', *TRHS*, 12 (2002), p. 376.

¹⁴ K. Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 10-12.

regions of New York – this chapter explores the role of British social and material culture in the formation of these locales.

New York's Changing Colonial Marketplace

New York's colonial press provides an excellent resource for tracing changes in the availability of British material culture. Clarence Brigham's bibliography of American newspapers indicates the existence of twenty one individual titles which were in circulation in colonial New York between 1725 and 1776, many of which have been digitised and are easily accessible for consultation.¹⁵ Importantly, all but one of these titles was printed in New York City. While the inclusion of items of 'news' and current affairs was optional, colonial newspapers did contain pages of advertisements detailing the latest British goods available for sale; such advertisements are of key importance to this study. The evidence from New York's press indicates that the colony's 'consumer revolution' generally coincided with its British counterpart, beginning during the 1740s and firmly in place by the 1750s.

In his assessment of the North American colonial press, Breen identifies two main characteristics which he argues signifies the occurrence of a consumer revolution. First, he found that the number of British goods advertised per issue rose drastically; while there were only approximately 5 or 6 per issue in the 1720s and 1730s, by the 1770s this figure ranged between 350 and 1,000 items. Secondly, Breen argues that not only were there greater quantities of goods available, but also increasing variations of the same product. For instance, while consumers could buy "paper" in the 1740s, by the 1760s they had the choice of demy paper, post paper, writing paper, vellum paper or foolscap. The same pattern can be found with satin, carpets, gloves and tableware, which included forty-four varieties ranging from high-end "Queen's Ware" and china to more affordable coarse and earthenware.¹⁶

An application of Breen's methodology to New York's colonial press identifies the occurrence of the same trends. Before 1740 advertisements mainly referred to estate sales, land sales, or sales of slaves. Advertisements for consumer goods were few in number and those that did exist were physically small, simple in design and offered few varieties of products. After 1740,

¹⁵ C. S. Brigham, *History and Bibliography Of American Newspapers, 1690-1820, Volume One* (Worcester, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1947), pp. 527-725; E. C. Latham, *Chronological Tables of American Newspapers, 1690-1820. Being a tabular guide to the holdings of newspapers published in America through the year 1820* (Barre, Massachusetts: American Antiquarian society & Barre Publishers, 1972), pp. 2-12; EAN [accessed 21 August 2017].

¹⁶ Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, pp. 53-58.

however, the numbers of consumer goods advertised per issue increased considerably. For instance, in March 1733, Peter Zenger's *New-York Weekly Journal* contained three advertisements for the sale of two products: two advertisements were for land sales, the third was for imported Cheshire cheese.¹⁷ By March 1770, however, James Parker's *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy* contained fourteen advertisements for more than 250 consumer goods. Although advertisements for land sales, house sales and tenancies remained, advertisements were increasingly focused on consumer goods, with some listing over 100 different variations of item available.¹⁸

The content of advertisements also changed. Items were described in increasingly elaborate terms as merchants and shopkeepers across the British-Atlantic engaged with new methods of print advertising.¹⁹ As advertisements became increasingly descriptive, they also became physically larger in size. Merchants and printers experimented with variations in font, text size and decorative borders to increase their visibility and compete for readers' attention. This increase in size can be attributed in part to the sheer number of different goods included within a single advertisement. As DuPlessis describes, the practice of listing dozens of varieties of goods available for sale "promised a consumer cornucopia."²⁰ Thus, newspaper advertisements served as a printed version of the emerging shop-window display.²¹

The eighteenth-century development of New York's bookselling trade provides an excellent case study, as it exhibited many of the developments outlined above. Before the 1740s, advertisements for books were typical of other consumer goods: they were few in number, small in size and contained limited amounts of detail. Often, books were only mentioned in passing; for instance, a 1740 advertisement for a post-mortem public vendue in the *New-York Weekly Journal* offered "several Sorts of Household Goods, viz. Books, Waggon, Carts, Plows ... and all Sorts of Utensils."²² Similarly, a 1741 advertisement for book-binder Robert M'Alpine noted in the postscript, "N.B. He also sells sundry Sorts of Books."²³

¹⁷ *New-York Weekly Journal*, 4 March 1733.

¹⁸ *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 5 March 1770.

¹⁹ R. S. DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic: Clothing, Commerce, and Colonization in the Atlantic World, 1650–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp.71-74.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²¹ J. Stobart, 'Shopping Streets as Social Space: Leisure, Consumerism and Improvement in an Eighteenth-Century County Town', *Urban History*, 25.1 (1998), p. 19; DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic*, p. 71; J. Stobart, A. Hann and V. Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption: Leisure and Shopping in the English Town, c.1680–1830* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 2.

²² *New-York Weekly Journal*, 23 March 1740.

²³ *Ibid.*, 11 January 1741.

By the end of the decade there had been a transformation in the advertisement and sale of books, as a 1748 example from the *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy* demonstrates. No longer simply a sideline activity, bookselling had become a lucrative profession in its own right.²⁴ Occupying a full page, the advertisement lists an assortment of books “just imported from London, in the last Ships.”²⁵ References to London were a further marketing tool and will be explored later within this chapter. The staggering size of the advertisement can be attributed to its extensive content: there are over 230 individual titles listed – some of which include more than one volume – and references to many more. Genres include histories, poetry, English law, Shakespeare, conduct books, dictionaries and moral fables: in essence, the “consumer cornucopia” described by DuPlessis. One other notable feature is that the books were listed according to size, ranging from expensive folios and quartos to smaller octavos and duodecimos, before even cheaper stitched books and pamphlets. This range of sizes, genres, binding options and price points reflected the wide range of New Yorkers who were potential readers and consumers; while those on lower incomes may not have been able to afford the prestigious pre-bound folios destined for display in the private libraries of gentleman’s houses, stitched pamphlets and duodecimos would have been much more accessible.²⁶

Not only were more items available, but there were more varieties and gradations in quality to choose from. With the introduction of “populuxe” products – defined by DuPlessis as cheaper or imitation products made with lower-quality components and materials which were more accessible to the growing middling classes – consumers were able to select items according to the material, texture or finish that best-suited their own price point.²⁷ Unlike British provincial towns such as Chester – where luxury retailers were deliberately positioned

²⁴ Eighteenth-century bibliomania was so lucrative that it supported a complementary industry of “reading furniture,” as domestic libraries were furnished with items designed to enhance the reading experience. See J. Raven, ‘From Promotion to Proscription: Arrangements for Reading and Eighteenth-Century Libraries’, in J. Raven, H. Small and N. Tadmor (eds) *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 175-201; R. Wittmann, ‘Was there a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century?’, in G. Cavallo and R. Chartier (eds), *A History of Reading in the West* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), p. 299; *New-York Mercury*, 7 January 1754.

²⁵ *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 12 September 1748.

²⁶ Prices depended on size, quality and whether the book was bound. Importing pre-bound books was expensive, but preferred, as binding was expensive in America. See Sher, *The Enlightenment and The Book*, p. 506; J. Raven, H. Small and N. Tadmor, ‘Introduction’, in J. Raven, H. Small and N. Tadmor (eds) *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 8.

²⁷ DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic*, p. 227.

within the most fashionable thoroughfares along the city's Row, while the more base professions of butchers and markets were located at street level – New York City's neighbourhoods and shopping streets were not stratified by wealth or class.²⁸ Thus, with items targeted at the wealthy, the poor, and those inbetween, New York City's stores catered for the town's full social range. Take, for instance, Edward Nicoll, who had a store in New York City's Broad Street.²⁹ Nicoll's range of products was representative of the variety of quality on offer. The city's wealthiest residents would be interested in his "crates of Delph Ware" – the expensive, Dutch-produced tin-glazed pottery which was popular in Europe.³⁰ However, Delftware was sold alongside crates of "blue and white"; these were likely to have been less-expensive English-made imitations which replicated the blue and white designs of the Dutch originals and were therefore more accessible to the middling sort.³¹ Meanwhile, "white stone cups and saucers" represented an even cheaper option for those on the lowest incomes.³²

Similar patterns can be found elsewhere. In New York City's Broadway, for instance, Thomas Duncan offered an equally diverse selection of fabrics ranging from the inexpensive to the luxurious.³³ At the lower end of the scale were Duncan's linens and woollens, including a selection of "white, red, yellow, and striped flannels." Cottons were typically a better quality fabric but, as DuPlessis explains, these also had their own gradations: Duncan's Asian calicoes and muslin cottons would have been of better quality than his English-made "cotton checks", which were likely to have contained linen or wool fibres.³⁴ For New York's wealthiest residents, the most prestigious fabrics available for purchase included "taffeties" [taffeta] and "mohair silk", presumably imported from the Ottoman Empire [Turkey].

²⁸ Stobart, 'Shopping Streets as Social Space', p. 14; S. Zabin, *Dangerous Economies: Status and Commerce in British New York* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), p. 63.

²⁹ *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 31 October 1757; Nicoll's store is advertised as being "Next door to Philip Livingston's, Esq"; According to his ANB entry, Livingston's property was located on Duke Street (now Stone Street). See C. A. Kierner, 'Philip Livingston', *ANB*. However, according to Livingston's will, the front of his New York City property ran along Broad Street, between Duke (Stone) Street and Mill (South William) Street. See 'Will of Philip Livingston – 1748, New York State Museum', reproduced at <http://exhibitions.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/wills/willphlivingston86.html> [accessed 18 August 2017].

³⁰ J. Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: An Archaeology of Early American Life*. Expanded and Revised Edition (New York: Anchor Books, 1996), p. 71.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-71.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 69-72.

³³ *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 31 October 1757; For a hierarchy of the four largest categories of consumer textiles, see T. J. Shannon, 'Uniformity and Fashion in the Atlantic World', review of R. S. DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic: Clothing, Commerce, and Colonization in the Atlantic World, 1650–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016) in *WMQ*, 73.3 (2016), p. 550.

³⁴ DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic*, p. 30.

Knight and Company, meanwhile, at the “shoe ware-house” on New York City’s Whitehall Street exhibited similar behaviour.³⁵ Selling London-made imports, Knight and Company’s product range equally reflected the differing incomes of their customers. While gentlemen were able to purchase “neat shoes and pumps”, there were “strong double soal’d shoes” which were specifically orientated towards “working men.” The fabrics used for women’s shoes ranged from the sturdy “ever-lasting”, to the more refined “calimancoe” or damask.³⁶ Poorer women who were unable to avoid New York’s severe winters could also purchase “strong toed clogs.”

Importantly, New York was slow to develop local manufacturing. For instance, while Laurel Thatcher Ulrich identifies the development of New England’s homespun movement occurring in tandem with the consumer revolution there, similar activities did not occur within New York.³⁷ Instead, New Yorkers preferred to import basic necessities – including the ceramics, fabrics and shoes considered above – from Britain.³⁸ Cathy Matson estimates that, after 1763, 50 per cent of New York’s clothing and textiles were produced from imported English cotton or linen, as colonists shunned the use of locally-produced textiles in favour of following metropolitan fashions.³⁹ This continued as late as 1776 and the onset of the American Revolution: New Yorkers would incur criticism from their revolutionary neighbours for their refusal to give up British cloth, as they repeatedly broke the boycott agreements and continued to import British fabrics.⁴⁰ As such, the items considered so far were necessities rather than luxuries. Importantly, many of them could only be sourced from Britain, including London-made shoes, Staffordshire-produced porcelains, “drab Yorkshire cloths” – named after the English region in which they were produced – and cotton checks.⁴¹ Imperial legislation stipulated that other goods – such as Dutch Delftware, Asian cottons and tea –

³⁵ *New-York Mercury*, 28 April 1760.

³⁶ For more on eighteenth-century women’s shoes, see ‘What Were 18th-Century Shoes Made From?’ <<http://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/colonial-life-today/shoe-shopping-with-martha-washington/>>[accessed 18 August 2017].

³⁷ L. T. Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth* (New York: Vintage, 2002), pp. 4-5 and pp. 25-26.

³⁸ Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, p. 75.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 66; C. Matson, *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore & London: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), pp. 248-49 and p. 278.

⁴⁰ Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, p. 70 and p. 269; L. Brekke, “‘To Make a Figure’: Clothing and the Politics of Male Identity”, in J. Styles and A. Vickery (eds), *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America 1700–1830* (New Haven and London: Yale Center for British Art and Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2006), p. 226.

⁴¹ *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 31 October 1757; J. Rule, ‘Manufacturing and Commerce’, in H. T. Dickinson (ed.), *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), p. 128.

could only officially be imported to the American colonies via Britain. Thus, Britain was central to the availability and variety of consumer goods available.⁴²

The consumer revolution also prompted changes to the local economies of towns. As both the availability of goods and popular demand for them increased, shop-keeping became a professional occupation. Successful shopkeepers needed to master the art of advertising their wares in the provincial presses, to create appealing window displays and to ensure that their premises were located within the most appropriate areas of the town, as the new pastime of “going a-shopping” became a leisure activity.⁴³ In contemporary British towns, as the marketplace became flooded with new luxury and “semi-luxury” goods, a new generation of specialised retailers emerged to sell them.⁴⁴ As Jon Stobart explains, these included mercers, linen and woollen drapers, goldsmiths and toy men in contrast to baser professions such as victuallers and butchers.⁴⁵ Apparently unnoticed by Breen, this trend was visible in New York City: rather than simply acting as wholesalers of general goods, New York’s merchants began to increasingly specialise in stocking particular items.⁴⁶ As we have seen so far, Knight and Company specialised in shoes, Nicoll concentrated on pottery and Duncan focused on fabrics.

One unintended consequence of specialisation were the closer relationships – both personal and professional – that developed between New York City-based merchants and their suppliers in Britain. With significant financial and commercial interests in Britain, New York City’s merchants became increasingly Atlantic-facing in their economic, social and cultural perspectives, which would have important political consequences. As we shall see, this was in stark contrast to Albany County, where interests remained largely parochial. Consider the example of Frederick, Philip and William Rhinelander: three brothers who formed a

⁴² P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 68.

⁴³ DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic*, pp. 71-73; Stobart, ‘Shopping Streets as Social Space’, p. 5; F. Burney, ‘Letter X: Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars’, in *Evelina, or The history of a Young Lady’s Entrance into the World* (Adelaide: The University of Adelaide Library, 2004). First published in 1778, Burney makes reference to the popular London activity of ‘going a-shopping’; J. Styles and A. Vickery, ‘Introduction’, in J. Styles and A. Vickery (eds), *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America 1700–1830* (New Haven and London: Yale Center for British Art and Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2006), p. 2.

⁴⁴ Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 15.

⁴⁵ Stobart, ‘Shopping Streets as Social Space’, p. 14.

⁴⁶ A. Palmer Schwind, ‘The Ceramic Imports of Frederick Rhinelander, New York Loyalist Merchant’, *Winterthur Portfolio*, 19.1 (1984), p. 21.

commercial partnership in New York City.⁴⁷ Although the family were presumably of German origin (the Rhineland region) – in other words, with no prior emotional or cultural attachment to Britain – Frederick Rhinelander would later become a loyalist during the American Revolution. His letters to his suppliers in England provide an insight into how Frederick perceived his own identity within the British Atlantic, which later developed into political loyalism.

Predominantly specialising in chinaware, pottery and glassware, the Rhinelanders maintained regular correspondence with their suppliers in Liverpool during the 1770s. Consideration of these letters reveals that the relationship that developed between merchant and supplier bordered somewhere between the personal and professional, but did not quite reach the familiarity defined by Sarah Pearsall.⁴⁸ Although the letters were concerned primarily with commercial transactions – including shipments, orders and payment negotiations – their content often strayed into more conversational topics. In this respect, the Rhinelanders' actions were typical of those participants of Atlantic-wide "intimate networks" – described by Susanah Shaw Romney – as they blurred the distinction between personal intimacy and economic ties.⁴⁹ Frederick was especially concerned with the political situation as it unfolded in New York City and the suggestion was that his contacts in Liverpool were equally interested. Hence, in a letter which was initially dedicated to business transactions, Frederick notes "as to politicks" and begins his narrative of local developments.⁵⁰

Some of this interest was pragmatic: the rulings of the Continental Congress and the campaigns to boycott British imports had implications for ships carrying deliveries which were unable to reach New York harbour.⁵¹ However, when Frederick was accused of loyalism in 1775 (described at this point as "unfriendly to liberty" and "an enemy to my country [America]"), he expressed his unhappiness to his contacts in England. Importantly, although Frederick described himself as American rather than British, this marker of identity relates to

⁴⁷ Rhinelander Papers 1771-1848, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS; A. Palmer Schwind, 'The Ceramic Imports of Frederick Rhinelander', pp. 21-36.

⁴⁸ S. M. S. Pearsall, *Atlantic Families: Lives And Letters In The Later Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 56-69.

⁴⁹ S. Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), p. 112.

⁵⁰ F. Rhinelander to Mr. Blancher, July 1775, Rhinelander Papers 1771-1848, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS.

⁵¹ With shipments unable to dock in New York, alternative arrangements were made to direct them through Halifax in Nova Scotia. See F. Rhinelander to T. Aldersey, February 1775, Rhinelander Papers 1771-1848, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS.

his place of birth rather than suggesting any adherence to a uniquely 'American' identity. Indeed, Frederick perceived the future prosperity and advantage of both countries as being inextricably linked. Thus, he wrote that he considered himself to be "as well attached to the interest of America as any man in it", but "viewing the interest of it [America] and Great Britain [as] inseparable." Frederick also worried about the damage to his reputation in England, writing that he was "exceedingly unhappy to be thought by you to be unfriendly to my [country]."⁵² We shall see in Part Two of this dissertation that personal reputation played an important role in the identification of suspected loyalists in New York City. Continuing his trade during wartime under the protection of British forces, Frederick provided a commentary of his sentiments towards Congress, independence and his hopes for the success of the British military campaign.⁵³

Experiences such as those of Frederick Rhinelander, therefore, are indicative of the regular interactions and personal relationships that developed between merchants in New York City and their counterparts based across the Atlantic. As Jack Greene argues, in regions where these interactions occurred most regularly – both commercial transactions between merchants and the pursuit of material culture – it prevented the development of a distinctly 'American' identity in favour of an idealised English version.⁵⁴ This was particularly the case in New York City, which was especially close to Britain through its mercantile and economic ties, but less common in upstate and frontier regions. In the case of Frederick Rhinelander, these connections resulted in deeper ties of loyalism.

Britishness, Quality and Trust in New York

The advertisements considered thus far reveal a trend which has not yet been fully explored: the role of Britishness as a marketing tool. As we have already briefly glimpsed, advertisements for goods often included variations of the tagline "just imported from London, in the last Ships."⁵⁵ Some were incredibly specific: for instance, when John Smith of New York City's Hanover Square advertised the sale of "A large assortment of European Goods" imported from Liverpool and London, he named both the ships' captains and the names of

⁵² Frederick Rhinelander to Unnamed Recipient, April 1775, Rhinelander Papers 1771-1848, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS. Word illegible in original text, is most likely to have been either 'Country' or 'Countrymen'.

⁵³ A. Palmer Schwind, 'The Ceramic Imports of Frederick Rhinelander', p. 21.

⁵⁴ J. P. Greene, *Imperatives, Behaviors, and Identities: Essays in Early American Cultural History* (Charlottesville, VA, 1992), p. 159-60 and p. 144.

⁵⁵ *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 12 September 1748.

their vessels.⁵⁶ Others were more vague, naming only the country of origin: Thomas Clark of New York City's Bayard Street, for example, had a small assortment of fabrics "lately imported from England."⁵⁷

In employing this marketing tactic, New York's merchants imitated the practices of their British counterparts. In her study of provincial towns in Northern England, Hannah Barker claims that "there was a specific kudos associated with something from London."⁵⁸ This was especially true for luxury goods and women's fashions, as those with social aspirations attempted to emulate the style of London's eighteenth-century *beau monde*. Just as perceptions of the *beau monde* as "matchless masters of fashion" spread to British provincial towns, they equally made their way across the Atlantic.⁵⁹ Thus, merchants in Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield stressed the London connections associated with their wares and American colonists followed suit.⁶⁰ However, although luxury goods often displayed a London bias, this was not the case for "everyday" goods.⁶¹ As "manufacturing regions" emerged in Britain, with particular goods becoming associated with specific areas, Barker finds that some northern merchants boasted that their locally-produced wares were "far superior" to those found in London.⁶²

Crucially, references to London imports in New York's press are potentially misleading: they only indicate the port of origin and thus potentially disguise the place of production. Hence, advertisements for goods imported from ports such as Liverpool or Bristol – or even vague references to arrivals "from England" – carried equal appeal for colonial consumers.⁶³ As Maxine Berg notes, British imports were not tailored to the American market, but were

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 31 October 1757.

⁵⁷ *New-York Gazette*, 26 January 1760.

⁵⁸ H. Barker, "'Smoke Cities': Northern Industrial Towns in Late Georgian England", *Urban History*, 31.2 (2004), p. 183.

⁵⁹ H. Greig, 'Leading the Fashion: The Material Culture of London's *Beau Monde*', in J. Styles and A. Vickery (eds), *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America 1700–1830* (New Haven and London: Yale Center for British Art and Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2006), p. 293.

⁶⁰ This was also true of Charleston, see Hart, *Building Charleston*, p. 60.

⁶¹ Barker, 'Smoke Cities', p. 188.

⁶² Rule, 'Manufacturing and Commerce', p. 127; R. Sweet, *The Writing Of Urban Histories In Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 7; Barker, 'Smoke Cities', p. 185; H. Clifford, 'Concepts of Invention, Identity and Imitation in the London and Provincial Working Trades, 1750-1800', *Journal of Design History*, 12.3 (1999), pp. 241-55.

⁶³ See for example Hubert Van Wagenen's advertisement for stoneware, cutlery and ironmongery imported from Bristol. *New-York Mercury*, 13 February 1760.

fashionable largely on account of their Britishness alone.⁶⁴ Savvy British merchants exploited this to their advantage: according to Berg, Josiah Wedgwood used the American colonies as a “dumping ground” for his outdated stock. Owing to geographical distance, American colonists were unaware of the unpopularity of the lines in England. Meanwhile, London booksellers employed similar tactics with poor sellers.⁶⁵

Thus, it is clear that New York City’s merchants and traders flooded the market with British goods and employed contemporary marketing practices to promote their wares. However, the following pages turn to consider New York’s consumers, questioning what evidence there is to indicate that such business practices reflected the purchasing aspirations of consumers. Contemporary accounts suggest that New Yorkers strove to keep up with British trends, clamouring for the newest products and latest fashions to maintain parity with their counterparts across the Atlantic. According to New York City lawyer and politician William Smith Jnr, for instance, “in the City of New-York, through our intercourse with the Europeans, we follow the London fashions”.⁶⁶ Of course, the logistical practicalities of transatlantic shipping created an inevitable time delay, which contemporaries noted their concern about. Smith was almost apologetic for the cultural delay between New York and London, admitting that “though by the Time we adopt them [the London fashions] they become disused in England.”⁶⁷ Consequently, New York’s merchants sought to assuage those fears by emphasising the shortness of time that their goods had been in America: advertisements stressed that British imports were “just imported”, “fresh” or “fashionable.”⁶⁸

The purchasing behaviour of one particular consumer demonstrates the hunger for the latest British goods. Originally from Chester in England, Anne Hulton was the sister of Henry Hulton; the Boston Commissioner of Customs who would later become a loyalist. During the 1760s and 1770s, Anne maintained a regular correspondence with her friend Hannah Lightbody, the wife of Liverpool-based merchant Adam Lightbody. While Hulton’s letters are more commonly

⁶⁴ Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 279-81.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 314; J. Raven, *London Booksellers and American Customers: The Transatlantic Literary Community and the Charleston Library Society* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2002), p. 7.

⁶⁶ W. Smith, *The History of the Province of New-York, from the first discovery to the year M.DCC.XXXII. To which is annexed, a description of the country, with a short Account of the Inhabitants, their Trade, Religious and Political State, and the Constitution of the Courts of Justice in that Colony* (London: Thomas Wilcox, 1757), p. 210.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

⁶⁸ DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic*, p. 73.

regarded for her commentary on the deteriorating political situation in Boston, their interest for this study is what they reveal about her purchasing habits and her perception of British goods. Although Hulton lived in Boston, her experience is still helpful for understanding the experiences of New York's consumers, who equally held British imports in high regard. Hulton's purchasing behaviour was replicated amongst New York's wealthiest residents.

The letters reveal requests for particular items to be purchased in Liverpool and shipped to Hulton in Boston; for instance, a pair of shoes from "Mr Garnet" in August 1772. Importantly, Hulton's concern was not with the price or the availability of the goods, as she wrote to Lightbody that "I can buy here as cheap as them [from Liverpool]." Instead, her reason for requesting the items directly from Liverpool was that she found the Boston versions "not to fit so well."⁶⁹ Her perception was that the British-made shoes were of better quality.

Taking advantage of the commercial links between Liverpool and the Staffordshire potteries – one of the "manufacturing regions" identified by John Rule – Hulton also requested that Lightbody purchase "any new fashion or invention of Mr Wedgwood."⁷⁰ Hulton was incredibly specific with her requirements despite her geographic distance from England, demonstrating both an awareness of the products available for purchase and an understanding of what was appropriate for a woman of her social standing. Hulton knew which items she wanted ("sauce boats rather without spoons, as these break") and those she did not ("one [Tureen] is sufficient as we have several china ones"). As these items were for "common servise", contemporary rules of taste dictated that they were to be simple and functional rather than ostentatious.⁷¹ Thus, Hulton requested that Lightbody "chuses the usefull & neat, rather than ornamental ... therefore nothing Gilt."⁷² Despite her own substantial knowledge of the products available, when it came to the most up-to-date fashions Hulton deferred to Lightbody's local expertise, requesting that "if there's any new fashion or invention ... of this kind of ware, that is approved, [my sister] shod prefer it to the yellow [ware] over again."⁷³

⁶⁹ A. Hulton, *Letters of a Loyalist Lady: Being the Letters of Anne Hulton, Sister of Henry Hulton, Commissioner of Customs at Boston, 1767-1776* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1928), Letter XII, p. 49.

⁷⁰ Rule, 'Manufacturing and Commerce', p. 127; Hulton, *Letters of a Loyalist Lady*, Letter XII, p. 49.

⁷¹ For more on eighteenth-century ideas of taste see Styles and Vickery, 'Introduction', pp. 14-15, and B. L. Herman, 'Tabletop Conversations: Material Culture and Everyday Life in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World', in J. Styles and A. Vickery (eds), *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America 1700-1830* (New Haven and London: Yale Center for British Art and Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2006), p. 43 and p. 57.

⁷² Hulton, *Letters of a Loyalist Lady*, Letter XII, pp. 47-50.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

For a conspicuous consumer and a polite woman such as Anne Hulton, although the common service needed to demonstrate tasteful simplicity, it still needed to be Wedgwood.

This sort of purchasing activity allowed a further method of social distinction. Acting as middlemen, merchants exercised vast amounts of control over which products made their way into the colonies and which did not.⁷⁴ By asking friends in Britain to make purchases by proxy – in the manner described by Claire Walsh – those with the necessary connections were able to bypass colonial merchants.⁷⁵ Therefore, by-proxy purchases carried an additional element of exclusivity. Considering the implications of this in New York, while the middling and lower classes were restricted to selecting from the options presented to them by local merchants, those with the necessary social connections and financial resources were able to exploit the local knowledge of their British-based associates to purchase the most current goods.⁷⁶

However, for those who did not have such resources at their disposal, there was another more democratising option. According to DuPlessis, ships' passengers were able to carry a limited number of goods in transit – which were exempt from freight charges – that could be sold upon arrival in the colonies.⁷⁷ Evidence of this behaviour can be found in New York: see for instance, the notification in the *New-York Mercury* that Captain William Bryant, “being lately returned from England”, had brought with him “a genteel assortment of new articles, PARTICULARLY FOR THE LADIES.”⁷⁸ Notably, these individuals were not merchants, but often sailors, ships' officers, civilian officials or military officers. However, they demonstrate awareness of the popular marketing techniques which were being employed in both the New York and British presses to advertise such goods. By emphasising that he was “lately returned”, Bryant implied not only the “freshness” of his products, but the suggestion that his recent personal experience in England made him an authority on the very latest in English fashions.

As Britishness became synonymous with quality and fashionable goods, intriguingly, this association was not solely confined to the finished articles. New York's skilled professionals

⁷⁴ DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic*, p. 54.

⁷⁵ C. Walsh, 'Shops, Shopping, and the Art of Decision Making in Eighteenth-Century England', in J. Styles and A. Vickery (eds), *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America 1700–1830* (New Haven and London: Yale Center for British Art and Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2006), p. 170.

⁷⁶ Greig, 'Leading the Fashion', p. 308.

⁷⁷ DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic*, p. 54.

⁷⁸ *New-York Mercury*, 21 October 1754. Emphasis in original text.

and craftsmen emphasised their connections to Britain as an indication of their expertise and credibility. This was especially true for – although not confined to – purveyors of men and women’s fashions.⁷⁹ Thus, Joseph Beck of New York City’s Queen Street described himself as a “stay-maker, from London”, who could “make all Kinds of Stays for Ladies and Misses, in the newest Taste.”⁸⁰ Thomas Hartley – another stay-maker – took this a step further: Hartley was not simply from London, but “late from London”, implying an even closer knowledge of the latest trends. Appealing to middle-class desires to emulate British elites, Hartley boasted of his personal connections to royalty, claiming that he “hath just receiv’d Advice from the Queen’s Stay-maker, of the newest Fashion this Spring.”⁸¹ Meanwhile, Adam Gilchrist – a tailor “from London” – similarly offered “gentlemen’s clothes... in the best manner, and in the newest fashion now wore in England.”⁸² Indeed, tailors played an important role in making the “newest” fashions available to those who could not afford to purchase an entirely new wardrobe. As DuPlessis explains, tailors and seamstresses who were well-versed in the latest European styles were able to rework second-hand clothing and fabrics into something more current.⁸³

So far this chapter has demonstrated that between the mid-eighteenth century and the American Revolution New York experienced a consumer revolution. Particularly concentrated in New York City, the colonial marketplace was saturated with British material culture which was increasingly accessible to a larger section of colonial society. In contrast to the heavy-handed Anglicisation policies explored in Chapter One, the Anglicising effects of the consumer revolution were more insidious. Not only did British material culture serve as an indicator of status but, as Berg argues, the acquisition of specific goods and apparel offered the promise

⁷⁹ See, for instance, Joseph Cox, an upholsterer, cabinet and chair-maker from London, offered products “all finished after the newest taste” from his premises on New York City’s Wall Street. *New-York Gazette, and Weekly Mercury*, 4 May 1772; Robert Hartley, a marble worker from Kingston upon Hull, claimed that he could make “new invented ovens ... such as have not been known in America before.” *New-York Gazette, and Weekly Mercury*, 4 May 1772; meanwhile, Doctor Graham, a physician and surgeon “from London”, used his British education and experience as an assurance of his competence and to generate trust. *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 10 December 1770; For more on trust, see H. Barker, ‘Medical Advertising and Trust in Late Georgian England’, *Urban History*, 36.3 (2009), p. 382 and pp. 389-393.

⁸⁰ *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 3 September 1767.

⁸¹ *New-York Gazette, and Weekly Mercury*, 4 May 1772.

⁸² *New-York Mercury*, 26 July 1756.

⁸³ DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic*, p. 76; Zabin, *Dangerous Economies*, p. 74; Evidence of reworking older fabrics into new styles exists in other British provincial cities. See for example the Open Gown (*robe à l’anglaise*) worn by Agnes Freeland, Walker Art Gallery, NML, 50.87.1. Although the design of the dress dates to c.1770-80, the fabric is a silk brocade woven between 1736-38.

of inclusiveness within what Benedict Anderson might describe as an imagined British-Atlantic community, constructed by its participants.⁸⁴

The distribution of British material culture within the colony and amongst its different socio-economic groups was highly uneven, though. By the outbreak of the American Revolution distinct cultural zones had emerged and specific regions envisioned themselves part of the imagined community of the British-Atlantic more than others. Thinking back to Sher's precautionary note, the presence of such goods alone does little to aid our understanding of how such items were used and understood by consumers.⁸⁵ The remainder of this chapter, therefore, turns to an assessment of the pervasiveness of British material culture – brought into the colony as a consequence of the consumer revolution – within the City and County of New York and the City and County of Albany.

An Urban Renaissance: The Case of New York City

In 1977, Peter Borsay proposed a theoretical framework to trace the development of English provincial towns, arguing that the presence of four elements – the development of leisure facilities, changes to the local economy, advancements in public amenities and architectural change – indicated the occurrence of a so-called “urban renaissance”.⁸⁶ Forty years later, Borsay's approach remains current to recent scholarship and is equally useful for this study.⁸⁷ Using Borsay's approach as a framework around which to consider broader historiographical questions relating to eighteenth-century American culture, this section of the chapter focuses directly on the city and county of New York.⁸⁸ It demonstrates that by the outbreak of the

⁸⁴ Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 280; B. R. O'G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 2006).

⁸⁵ Sher, *The Enlightenment and The Book*, p. 4.

⁸⁶ Borsay, 'The English Urban Renaissance', pp. 581-603.

⁸⁷ Barker, 'Smoke Cities', pp. 176-77; Stobart, 'Shopping Streets as Social Space', pp. 4-6; Sweet, *Urban Histories*, p. 276; Hart, *Building Charleston*, p. 6; B. Harris and Charles McKean, *The Scottish Town in the Age of the Enlightenment 1740-1820* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), p. 80; Borsay revisited his initial theory with 'The Urban Renaissance Revisited', in J. Hinks and C. Armstrong (eds), *The English Urban Renaissance Revisited* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018), pp. 6-27. Hinks and Armstrong's work is an edited collection of essays which reconsiders the relevance of Borsay's theory through the use of local case studies.

⁸⁸ Referred to by contemporaries as 'the city and county of New York', the city of New York was a county in its own right. For more on the sometimes-blurred distinctions between eighteenth century towns and counties, see Sweet, *Urban Histories*, p. 8.

American Revolution New York had developed into a provincial Georgian town, complete with the necessary structures required to facilitate Anglicisation.⁸⁹

For a contemporary description of the colony, William Smith's 1757 *History of the Province of New-York* is of particular interest. As Rosemary Sweet explains, the new genre of urban histories gained widespread popularity in eighteenth-century England. A product of the urban development that this chapter will consider momentarily, the writing of urban histories was a popular activity for the middling sort, conducted alongside the polite pursuits of "book-clubs, subscription libraries, literary societies, concerts, and theatres."⁹⁰ Writing at the outbreak of the Seven Years War – when New York was under the protection of vast numbers of British soldiers – Smith hoped to remove any misconceptions about New York that he perceived had led to the colony being "disregarded and despised" in England.⁹¹ Smith's *History*, therefore, was different to contemporary urban histories in that it was produced solely for the British market, rather than for the benefit of his fellow New Yorkers.⁹² An American edition would not be published until 1792 in Philadelphia, when the young Republic sought new editions of colonial histories to help bolster its emerging 'American' identity.⁹³ Notably, the American edition was simply a reprint, with no mention of Smith's notorious loyalism.

Smith was American-born to English parents and his account reflected his dual identity as a proud New Yorker and British subject in equal measure. He did this by locating New York's history within the wider history of the British Empire, from its discovery by Henry Hudson – who Smith emphasised was "an Englishman" – until 1732.⁹⁴ Such literary techniques were

⁸⁹ Bob Harris and Charles McKean question whether a "British" Georgian town actually existed in terms of physical form. However, they agree that the processes through which eighteenth-century towns developed were very similar. *The Scottish Town*, p. 489.

⁹⁰ Sweet, *Urban Histories*, p. 276.

⁹¹ Estimates suggest that during the Seven Years War Britain deployed approximately forty thousand sailors and troops to New York alone. See G. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: The Northern Seaports and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 149; Smith, *History of the Province of New-York*, vii-xii.

⁹² Sweet, *Urban Histories*, pp. 12-13; *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Volume 27 (1757), p. 243.

⁹³ W. Smith, *The History of the Province of New-York, from the first discovery to the year 1732. To which is annexed, a description of the country, with a short account of the inhabitants, their religious and political state, and the constitution of the courts of justice in that colony*. 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Mathew Carey, 1792). The introductory note to the American edition states that "the re-publication of this volume is the first part of a plan undertaken at the desire of several gentlemen of taste, who wish to supply their libraries with histories of their native country."

⁹⁴ Plans were made for a second volume covering the period following 1732. See M. G. Kammen, 'Introduction: A Character of William Smith, Jr', in M. G. Kammen (ed.), *The History of the Province of New-York, by William Smith Jr. Volume One* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1972), pp. xvii-xxxviii.

common in urban histories, as authors attempted to link the history of their own town to the history of the nation.⁹⁵ Annexed to the *History* are detailed descriptions of New York's different colonial counties, which are of special interest to this study.

Let us turn to the first of Borsay's indicators of an urban renaissance: the development of leisure facilities.⁹⁶ In their study of consumption, leisure and shopping, Stobart, Hann and Morgan defined walks, promenades, pleasure gardens, theatres, assembly rooms, coffee-houses and libraries as places for polite sociability.⁹⁷ New York boasted a range of these establishments. Smith described how the city's assembly-room, known as the Exchange, hosted music, concerts, balls and assemblies, while playbill evidence indicates that a theatre also existed on Nassau-Street during the 1750s.⁹⁸ During the 1760s, New York's Ranelagh and Vauxhall gardens – modelled after their namesakes in London – provided arenas for public walks and promenades.⁹⁹ Newspaper advertisements indicate that Ranelagh also hosted open-air concerts and firework displays.¹⁰⁰ The city's bowling green, adorned with the statue of George III that would become symbolic during the Revolution, was another space for New York's residents to congregate and socialise.¹⁰¹

In addition to venues which facilitated sociability, New York also developed institutions which hosted informed and politicised discussion. There were at least two enduring coffee-houses in operation from the 1730s: the "Exchange Coffee-House" (later re-named the "Gentlemen's Exchange") which served customers on Broad Street from 1732 until the 1750s, and the "Merchant's Coffee-House" located on Wall and Water Streets, near to the city's wharf and meal market. This is in accordance with John Brewer's claim that there was "at least one [coffee-house] in most substantial [British] market towns" and David Shields's conclusion that

⁹⁵ Sweet, *Urban Histories*, pp. 1-2.

⁹⁶ Borsay, 'Urban Renaissance', pp. 582-584.

⁹⁷ Stobart, Hann and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*, p. 6.

⁹⁸ Smith, *History of the Province of New-York*, p. 195; see playbills published in New York, *Evans* [accessed 8 February 2017].

⁹⁹ Kammen, *Colonial New York*, pp. 242-43; C. A. Kierner, *Traders and Gentlefolk: The Livingstons of New York, 1675-1790* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), pp. 141-42; A. S. Turberville, *English Men & Manners in the Eighteenth Century: An Illustrated Narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), p. 92.

¹⁰⁰ W. H. Ukers, *All About Coffee* (New York: The Tea and Coffee Trade Journal Company, 1922), p. 124; See for example an advertisement notifying readers that 'The Proprietor begs Leave to acquaint the Gentlemen and Ladies, that he has employed a very dexterous Hand to exhibit his Fire-works... The Concert begins at 7 o'Clock this Evening.' *New-York Gazette*, 18 August 1766.

¹⁰¹ B. McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), pp. 309-11; H. Hoock, *Empires of the Imagination: Politics, War, and the Arts in the British World, 1750-1850* (London: Profile Books, 2010), pp. 49-53.

American cities contained “at least one and as many as three major coffee-house-commercial centres.”¹⁰² While contemporary British provincial cities such as Liverpool and Chester had six coffee-houses each, New York was unable to support more than one permanent house at a time.¹⁰³ The Exchange lost ground to the Merchant’s during the 1750s and eventually closed. Thus, the Merchant’s became known simply as “The Coffee House.” During the Revolution, it would become a central point for the reading of declarations and signing of petitions.¹⁰⁴ There were, however, other attempts to establish coffee-houses within the city, as a search of New York’s colonial press reveals references to other venues. Some of these establishments continued life as taverns or inns, such as that of Samuel Fraunces.¹⁰⁵

As “A Friend to the City” described in a letter to the *New-York Journal* in 1775, New York’s coffee-houses were spaces where men could meet daily to “hear and communicate intelligence from every quarter, and freely confer with one another, on every matter that concerns us” at only “a small expence of time or money.”¹⁰⁶ Imitating the practices of British coffee-house culture, patrons in New York engaged in political and literary conversation, drinking tea, coffee or chocolate, sharing gossip or simply reading the newspapers.¹⁰⁷ As one contemporary described the practice of reading at the coffee-house, “I overlooked several persons in the neighbouring boxes who had other [news]papers in their hands, reading aloud to their acquaintance, such articles of Advertisements or intelligence as struck them.”¹⁰⁸

Libraries were a further venue for polite sociability. New York boasted two public libraries: the corporation library and the exclusive “Society Library.” According to Smith, the City of New York owned a collection of 1,000 volumes which had been bequeathed by the Society for the

¹⁰² J. Brewer *Party Ideology And Popular Politics At The Accession Of George III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 7; D. S. Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), p. 60; Ukers, *All About Coffee*, pp. 118-120. Ukers claims that New York’s first coffee-house opened in 1696, although it is unclear whether this was truly a coffeehouse or a tavern, see pp. 116-117.

¹⁰³ Brewer, *Party Ideology And Popular Politics*, p. 7 and p. 150.

¹⁰⁴ Ukers, *All About Coffee*, p. 118-120.

¹⁰⁵ These include the “White-Hall Coffee-House” in 1763, next door to the tailor Michal Hyams; “Fraunces’ Tavern and Coffee-House” on the corner of Broad and Pearl Street in 1767, where Washington gave his farewell address to the troops while the establishment was a tavern in 1783; Mr Bolton’s “New Coffee-House” in 1767; and Mahitabel and Abigail Down’s Coffee-House “for gentlemen and ladies” on the corner of Pearl Street in 1775. Each of these establishments were only referred to as coffee-houses once, although they may have continued in other capacities. The “Coffee-House” or “Merchant’s Coffee-House” located in the city’s dock area is repeatedly mentioned as a city landmark between 1754 and 1783. See EAN; Ukers, *All About Coffee*, pp. 121-122.

¹⁰⁶ *New-York Journal*, 19 October 1775.

¹⁰⁷ Turberville, *English Men & Manners*, p. 88.

¹⁰⁸ *Royal Gazette*, 15 January 1780.

Propagation of the Gospel. An examination of the corporation's 1766 library catalogue supports Smith's complaints that the texts were predominantly theological and that "through the Carelessness of the Keepers many are missing."¹⁰⁹ The books were also incredibly outdated; most of those listed had been published during the seventeenth century and some were as early as the sixteenth.¹¹⁰

Responding to the lack of a suitable public library within the city, in 1754 Smith – along with his business partner William Livingston and John Morris Scott – established the New York Society Library.¹¹¹ Subscribers were required to pay an initial payment of five pounds New York Currency, to be followed by an annual charge of 10s. Twelve trustees were to be elected on an annual basis who were responsible for purchasing the necessary books, procuring a house or room and appointing a salaried librarian to administer them. Initial subscriptions raised £600, which was used to purchase 7,000 "new, well-chosen Books."¹¹² An assessment of the Society Library catalogues from 1758 and 1773 reveals that the collection contained texts which were popular in Britain – and, as we have seen, were available for purchase in New York City – including histories, letters and dictionaries.¹¹³ Notably, the titles were much more current than those of the Corporation Library, including William Blackstone's *Commentaries*, Voltaire's *Letters* and two volumes of Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*.¹¹⁴

Both libraries were housed in the same room on the second floor of New York's City Hall, described by Smith as "a strong Brick Building, two Stories in Height, in the Shape of an Oblong."¹¹⁵ This would change after 1772, when the Society Library was granted a Royal Charter by George III and sought to procure separate premises.¹¹⁶ Until at least 1766 the libraries also shared the same "keeper" – Thomas Jackson – and the same hours of

¹⁰⁹ Smith, *History of the Province of New-York*, p. 195.

¹¹⁰ *A Catalogue of the Library, Belonging to the Corporation of the City of New-York* (New York: John Holt, 1766).

¹¹¹ Kammen, 'A Character of William Smith, Jr', p. xxviii; the first British library opened in Liverpool (1758), although the Library Company of Philadelphia had opened earlier (1731). See Raven, 'From Promotion to Proscription', p. 175.

¹¹² Smith, *History of the Province of New-York*, p. 195; *Charter and Bye-Laws of the New-York Society Library; with A Catalogue of the Books Belonging to the Said Library* (New York: Hugh Gaine, 1773), pp. 3-4.

¹¹³ See, for example, the catalogue of the Liverpool Library in M. Kay Flavel, 'The Enlightened Reader and the New Industrial Towns: A Study of the Liverpool Library', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 8.1 (1985), pp. 21-24.

¹¹⁴ *A Catalogue of the Books Belonging to the New-York Society Library* (New York: Hugh Gaine, 1758); *Charter and Bye-Laws of the New-York Society Library*, pp. 15-35.

¹¹⁵ *A Catalogue of the Library*, p. 2; Smith, *History of the Province of New-York*, p. 194.

¹¹⁶ *Charter and Bye-Laws of the New-York Society Library*, pp. 3-11.

operation.¹¹⁷ As Jackson explains, the Corporation Library contained “many antient, curious and valuable Books”, while the Society owned a “very valuable modern Library.”¹¹⁸ Although access to the Society Library required subscription, non-subscribers were permitted to borrow from the collection at an additional charge.¹¹⁹

Although the library room at City Hall initially appears to be of a somewhat unusual nature, it was typical of contemporary libraries both in England and North America: the Library Company of Philadelphia was housed at the librarian’s dwellings, before moving to the Statehouse in 1742; while the Charleston Library Society was contained in a number of different houses and taverns before moving to the city’s courthouse in 1792.¹²⁰ Across the Atlantic, Liverpool’s first library – the second being that of the Athenaeum – established in 1758 was initially housed within a coffee-house and a hotel, before eventually moving to the purpose-built Lyceum in 1802.¹²¹ In New York, the keeper described the library room as “convenient” and appropriately “fitted up for it.”¹²² Thus the implication is that, despite not being purpose-built, the library room was still able to facilitate the necessary activities of conversation and communal reading found in similar libraries in provincial Britain.¹²³ Indeed, the fact that the Society did not move to a purpose-built premises until 1795 further suggests that the colonial incarnation served its purpose.¹²⁴ Demonstrating the ambiguous nature of circulation libraries outlined by James Raven, New York’s library was simultaneously public and private: the room at City Hall was a public space, potentially open to all for reading and polite conversation; however access to the most recent titles remained exclusive, dependent upon library membership or the ability to pay to borrow.¹²⁵

The second of Borsay’s indicators of an urban renaissance considers changes to the local economy of the town. As he explains, rather than being preoccupied with the manufacture of basic necessities essential for survival, new types of professions emerged which supported the burgeoning leisure culture outlined above: these included shopkeepers, musicians,

¹¹⁷ *A Catalogue of the Library*, p. 2.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹²⁰ Raven, *London Booksellers and American Customers*, pp. 60-64.

¹²¹ D. Allan, *A Nation of Readers: The Lending Library in Georgian England* (London: The British Library, 2008), p. 54.

¹²² *A Catalogue of the Library*, p. 2.

¹²³ Raven, ‘From Promotion to Proscription’, p. 176.

¹²⁴ Raven, *London Booksellers and American Customers*, p. 64.

¹²⁵ Raven, ‘From Promotion to Proscription’, p. 176.

gardeners and brewers, as well as luxury craftsman.¹²⁶ We have seen that these new professions can be found in mid-eighteenth century New York City, where both British immigrants and American-born residents became experts in producing luxury goods “in the newest taste.”¹²⁷ Looking beyond the evidence from newspaper advertisements, the account book of merchant Samuel Deall provides further evidence of these new types of tradesmen living in New York City. Recording the names, addresses and occupations of his customers between 1758 and 1775, Deall’s clientele included members of the new leisure and luxury professions such as tailors, gardeners, lawyers, watch-makers, stay-makers, peruke-makers and a tinsmith.¹²⁸

One new profession identified by Borsay was the printer and bookseller. We have already considered the extensive advancements of New York’s book trade during the mid-eighteenth century.¹²⁹ The city equally enjoyed a relatively vibrant print trade: according to Brigham, between 1725 and 1776, there were twenty individual newspaper titles in circulation within New York City, published by 15 different printers.¹³⁰ However, publishing was only part of their role; as Richard Sher explains, many printer-publishers were also booksellers.¹³¹ Hugh Gaine for instance – printer of the *New-York Mercury* – used his paper to advertise his own stock of books which were “just imported from London.”¹³² Knowledgeable contemporaries would have recognised the significance of London as the “undisputed capital of the English-language book trade.”¹³³ Meanwhile, Gaine demonstrated further links between London printers and New York booksellers – similar to those of the Rhinelanders – when he offered the *Mercury’s* readers the opportunity to purchase by subscription “any kind of books from England.”¹³⁴

Borsay’s third indicator of an urban renaissance is improvements to public amenities, including the introduction of brick buildings, paved streets, street-lighting and improved

¹²⁶ Borsay, ‘Urban Renaissance’, pp. 584-87.

¹²⁷ See silk-dyer and scourer Samuel Foster, a native of Philadelphia, who promised that those “Gentlemen and Ladies who please to favour him with their work, may depend on having it done in the best-Manner, as in London.” *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 31 October 1757.

¹²⁸ Samuel Deall Account Books, Volumes 1 & 2 (1758 – 1775), Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS.

¹²⁹ Raven, *London Booksellers and American Customers*, p. 6.

¹³⁰ Brigham, *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers*, pp. 613-704.

¹³¹ Sher, *Enlightenment and The Book*, p. 5.

¹³² Brigham *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers*, p. 662 and pp. 639-640; I. Thomas, *The History of Printing in America, with a Biography of Printers, In Two Volumes. Volume Two*. 2nd ed. (New York: Burt Franklin, 1874), pp. 109-110; *New-York Mercury*, 25 November 1754.

¹³³ Sher, *Enlightenment and The Book*, p. 8.

¹³⁴ *New-York Mercury*, 25 November 1754; Raven, *London Booksellers and American Customers*, p. 9.

access to water supplies.¹³⁵ Returning to Smith's 1757 description of New York, he described the city's streets as "irregular, but being paved with round Pebbles are clean, and lined with well built Brick Houses, many of which are covered with tiled Roofs."¹³⁶ Although a publicly-funded initiative to provide street-lighting would not be approved by the General Assembly until December 1761, the city's residents had begun to introduce their own system of street-lighting by 1751.¹³⁷ The New York Assembly recorded that "sundry of the Inhabitants of the City of New-York are willing, at their own Expencc, to hang out or fix up in the Night Time, before their Dwelling-Houses, large Glass Lamps, to illuminate the Streets of the said City." They were keen to encourage the spread of such measures, setting severe penalties for those who damaged, removed or destroyed the lamps.¹³⁸

Finally, let us turn to architectural change. According to Borsay, enlightenment ideals of improvement and rationality were reflected in the changing physical landscape of towns as buildings showed increasing conformity to each other. Houses began to look more alike: existing structures were remodelled with regularly spaced windows and doors, while new houses were built within fashionable squares.¹³⁹ Evidence from New York City demonstrates that the city's wealthier residents embraced this architectural trend.

Some chose to construct new homes. Traditionally reserved for the elites – including the landed gentry of upstate New York's manorial estates – Stephen Hague identifies a sudden increase in construction of so-called small "gentleman's houses" by the new class of merchants and professionals. According to Hague, there was an initial increase in house-building between 1720 and 1750, followed by a boom during the 1770s.¹⁴⁰ Moving away from the simple two-storey open-plan houses of the seventeenth-century, the multi-roomed

¹³⁵ Borsay, 'Urban Renaissance', pp. 587-89.

¹³⁶ Smith, *History of the Province of New-York*, p. 187.

¹³⁷ 'An Act to empower and enable the Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen of the City of New-York, for the Time being, or the major Part of them, to order the raising a Sum not exceeding Eighteen Hundred Pounds, by a Tax on Estates real and personal in the said City, for fixing of Lamps, and providing a sufficient Number of Watchmen', 31 Dec 1761, *Laws of New-York, from the 11th Nov. 1752, to 22d May 1762*. (New York: William Weyman, 1762); The wartime accounts of city treasurer John Smyth indicate continued responsibility for repairs to the city's streetlamps through 1783. John Smyth Accounts 1778-1783, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS.

¹³⁸ 'An act to prevent the breaking, or otherwise injuring glass lamps in the city of New-York', *At a session of the General Assembly of the colony of New-York, held at the city-hall in New-York; begun the first of October, 1751, and continued by divers adjournments to the twenty-fifth of November following* (New York: James Parker, 1751), pp. 26-27.

¹³⁹ Borsay, 'Urban Renaissance', p. 589-90.

¹⁴⁰ S. Hague, *The Gentleman's House in the British Atlantic World 1680-1780* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 9-13.

gentleman's house was more like Mark Girouard's "social house": a circle of rooms arranged around a central staircase.¹⁴¹ The gentleman's house contained a mixture of private and public space, used to showcase the material goods discussed within the first half of this chapter.¹⁴² This Atlantic-wide trend, traceable within both England and the North American colonies, began in port cities – such as New York – and later extended into the countryside.¹⁴³

Others opted to remodel their existing properties in the popular Georgian style. As Bushman explains in his study of gentility in America, individuals could add an air of Georgian refinement to their homes by installing features such as sash windows, a brickwork façade, a parlour, or adding a staircase.¹⁴⁴ By partitioning large rooms into smaller spaces and creating attic space, those with smaller budgets were able to replicate the multi-roomed gentleman's house, albeit on a more simplistic scale. However, the decision to remodel rather than rebuild was not necessarily connected to cost. For instance, the Philipses – highlighted in Chapter One as one of New York's leading families – chose to remodel their historic family seat in neighbouring Westchester County from a Dutch structure to a Georgian mansion twice; once during the 1720s and again during the 1740s.¹⁴⁵

Evidence of architectural improvement can also be found within the New York press, where advertisements for the sale of a "Genteel two story Brick House" or a "Handsom two Story Brick House" were commonplace by the 1770s.¹⁴⁶ A 1767 advertisement for a "Two story and a Half Brick House" is suggestive of some of the Georgian alterations which could have been made to a simple structure. Located in New York City's Maiden Lane, the house boasted a good cellar, four rooms and a large garret and had formerly been owned by New York City councilman and acting-Governor Rip Van Dam.¹⁴⁷ Although the details are limited, information provided within similar contemporary advertisements helps to interpret how the house may have been configured. A 1772 advertisement for a two-and-a-half storey house at nearby Newark in New Jersey includes a description of its layout: the first storey was formed of the cellar, which contained two storage rooms; the second storey was at ground level and

¹⁴¹ Girouard discussed in Styles and Vickery, 'Introduction', p. 10.

¹⁴² Bushman, *Refinement of America*, pp. 103-05; Hague, *Gentleman's House*, p. 157.

¹⁴³ Hague, *Gentleman's House*, pp. 9-13.

¹⁴⁴ Bushman, *Refinement of America*, pp. 110-116; According to Paul Langford, such material improvements "charted the progress of politeness in eighteenth-century" England. See Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, pp. 70-71.

¹⁴⁵ Bushman, *Refinement of America*, p. 117.

¹⁴⁶ *New-York Gazette, and Weekly Mercury*, 17 August 1772.

¹⁴⁷ *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 16 April 1767.

contained four rooms, each containing a fireplace; while the upper half-storey contained three bedrooms and a garret or attic space.¹⁴⁸ Thus, the Maiden Lane property, with its cellar and garret, was likely to have been of a similar layout, demonstrating how Bushman's example of the addition of a staircase to create an upper floor and creative use of a cellar could convert a single storey house into a two-and-a-half storey property. It is unclear whether the house was originally brick, or whether this was an eighteenth-century addition.

Moving beyond the physical structure of the houses, significant scholarly attention has been paid to the items contained within and their importance for expressing identity.¹⁴⁹ Hague, for instance, identifies the furnishing of household interiors as one of the most significant acts of consumption for eighteenth-century elites on both sides of the Atlantic, as individuals used their houses to construct and demonstrate their identities. Notably, as we shall see, furnishing was an activity shared by both male and female members of the household.¹⁵⁰ For Hague, the pageantry of household entertaining was especially important for displaying genteel status. Thus, the interiors of houses were deliberately staged according to a hierarchy of rooms, with particular goods to be displayed within public spaces, linking conspicuous consumption to the construction of identity.¹⁵¹

Although Hague pays limited attention to New York in his study, his approach can be used to interpret inventory evidence from New York City. Taking the 1797 inventory of New York City gentleman Charles Ward Apthorp – the son of British-born Boston merchant Charles Apthorp – as an example, we can see that Ward Apthorp subscribed to the hierarchy of rooms which Hague describes. With individual items listed according to their location within Ward Apthorp's farmhouse in Bloomingdale, the estate contained a mixture of worn, functional items and expensive, fashionable pieces.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ *New-York Gazette, and Weekly Mercury*, 17 August 1772.

¹⁴⁹ N. Cooper, 'The Gentlemanly House, 1500-1750', *TRHS*, 12 (2002), pp. 291-310.

¹⁵⁰ A. Vickery, 'His and Hers: Gender, Consumption, and Household Accounting in Eighteenth-century England', *Past and Present* (2006), Supplement 1. The Art of Survival: Gender and History in Europe, 1450-2000, pp. 12-38; A. Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 13; Styles and Vickery, 'Introduction', pp. 4-5.

¹⁵¹ Hague, *Gentleman's House*, pp. 5-7; for more on the hierarchy of rooms, especially the display of fabrics within private spaces, see R. Waine, 'Refashioning Patriotic Display in Britain and America: Rebellion, nationhood, and sartorial culture, c.1745-1825' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Southampton, forthcoming 2018), Chapter Five.

¹⁵² Inventory of the estate of Charles Ward Apthorp, dated June 13, 1797, listing the contents of his house, his livestock, slaves, and library, Charles Ward Apthorp collection, 1756-1908, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS.

There was a clear difference in quality between items contained within private rooms versus those displayed in public, confirming Girouard's claim that there were clear distinctions between useful items of "convenience" and items for "shew."¹⁵³ For instance, hidden within the working areas of the estate where visitors would not venture were "an old chariot", an "old Phaeton", and a "fire engine (much decayed)." The semi-private areas of the hall, bedchambers and small parlour contained better quality furniture, including mahogany pieces, mirrors and a writing table. However, the public space of the large parlour contained a fashionable "seven-day clock and case", a marble side board and a pair of globes.¹⁵⁴ Ward Apthorp's most expensive pieces – which were listed separately on his inventory – were his tableware items for entertaining. These included a tea pot, coffee pot, serving dishes (large and small), bread basket, butter boats, a punch strainer, cross stand for dishes, soup spoons, two dozen knives, forks and table spoons, and twelve desert knives, forks and spoons – precisely the types of items that became more accessible during the consumer revolution.¹⁵⁵

Similar accounts suggest that Ward Apthorp's patterns of spending were not atypical of a genteel New York City household. The inventory of New York City lawyer Thomas Barclay submitted to the Loyalist Claims Commission in 1787 listed a similarly impressive collection of tableware, including four dozen glasses, a dozen cups and saucers, various items of earthenware, chinaware, teapots, tea canisters, and other items of "tea furniture."¹⁵⁶ Meanwhile, the personal accounts of Captain James De Lancey and his wife Ann reveal the staggering amount that they spent on luxury goods and tea equipage, including £28 on a damask table cloth purchased in 1773 from a linen draper in London's West End.¹⁵⁷ The De Lancey's choice to purchase directly from London was similar to the experience of Anne Hulton. Ownership of tea equipage enabled women to host tea tables: a female-only activity which served as a counterpart to male-dominated venues of sociability such as the coffee-house or tavern.¹⁵⁸ Echoing Hague's conclusions, therefore, private homes were instrumental

¹⁵³ Girouard discussed in Styles and Vickery, 'Introduction', p. 10.

¹⁵⁴ Jefferson had a similar piece at Monticello, see 'The Great Clock', <<https://www.monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens/great-clock>>[accessed 21 August 2017].

¹⁵⁵ Inventory of the estate of Charles Ward Apthorp, dated June 13, 1797, listing the contents of his house, his livestock, slaves, and library, Charles Ward Apthorp collection, 1756-1908, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS.

¹⁵⁶ Thomas Barclay, 'sold at Publick Vendue at his house in Ulster County on the 2nd of June 1777 by John Sleght, Patrick Barber and Benjamin Smedes, Commissioners of Sequestration appointed by the Convention of the State of New York', in *American Loyalists Claims, Series II* (New York). TNA: AO 13/11, ff. 168-82.

¹⁵⁷ James De Lancey Family papers, 1735-1869 (bulk 1760-1800), Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS, Box 1.

¹⁵⁸ Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters*, pp. 104-126.

in constructing anglicised identities, as they provided the spaces and furnishings required to facilitate polite British “social routines such as letter writing, visiting, tea drinking, and book collecting.”¹⁵⁹

While it was one thing to own such indicators of status, it was another thing entirely to know how to behave in polite society. For socially aware New Yorkers, conduct books provided one route to gaining the necessary education. An extremely popular genre on both sides of the Atlantic, eighteenth-century conduct books provided behavioural guidance for a range of everyday situations.¹⁶⁰ In colonial America, conduct books were initially popular with the middle classes and elite who, having surrounded themselves with conspicuously fashionable British material goods, sought guidance on how to distinguish themselves from their less-refined neighbours.¹⁶¹ As Serena Zabin highlights, this was of particular concern in New York City where the strength of the second-hand market and the availability of populuxe and imitation pieces undermined the traditional ability of material goods to act as a reliable indicator of status. Thus, sociability and manners – which needed to be learned, not purchased – emerged as an alternative way of creating status.¹⁶² However, colonial literacy rates suggest that conduct books were potentially accessible to a much broader section of society, including those on lower incomes. Although literacy is notoriously difficult to gauge, there is a general consensus that literacy rates were higher in urban centres such as New York than in more rural regions; Farley Grubb, for instance, estimates that literacy rates in New York City were as high as 87-90 per cent.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ Hague, *Gentleman's House*, p. 8; see also A. Williams, *The Social Life of Books: Reading Together in the Eighteenth-Century Home* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), pp. 36-64.

¹⁶⁰ J. P. Fritzer, *Jane Austen and Eighteenth-Century Courtesy Books* (Westport, CT & London: Greenwood Press, 1997), pp. 1-2; E. H. Gould, 'An Empire of Manners: The Refinement of British America in Atlantic Perspective', *Journal of British Studies*, 31.1 (2000) p. 115; C. D. Hemphill, *Bowing To Necessities: A history of manners in America, 1620-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 4; J. Gillingham, 'From Civitas to Civility: Codes of Manners in Medieval and Early Modern England', *TRHS*, 12 (2002), pp. 267-89.

¹⁶¹ Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, pp. 31-38.

¹⁶² Zabin, *Dangerous Economies*, pp. 81-83.

¹⁶³ Raven, Small and Tadmor, 'Introduction', p. 10; While seventeenth-century laws in urban New York and Massachusetts Bay ordered that children be instructed to read, literacy and book-learning were not considered to be as important amongst settlers in backcountry and frontier regions. As Richard Brown summarises, America's rural poor “had little time or occasion for reading beyond the bible and almanacs.” R. D. Brown, *Knowledge Is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700 – 1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 283. For more on colonial literacy, see L. Andes, 'Literacy's Role in Revolution and Independence: Where have we been, where are we going?', *The International Journal of the Book*, 6.3 (2009), pp. 9-17; E. J. Monaghan, 'Literacy, Instruction and Gender in Colonial New England', *American Quarterly*, 40.1 (1988), pp. 18-41; H. Hodgkins, 'Reading Boone's Writing: Issues in Backcountry Literacy', *Journal of Backcountry Studies*, 6.2 (2011), pp. 1-17; J. Schorb, *Reading Prisoners: Literature, Literacy, and the Transformation of American Punishment*,

Conduct books could perform two functions. As we have seen in Chapter One, texts could be educational, providing practical guidance on literacy, pronunciation and basic book-keeping or accounting.¹⁶⁴ Some even helped aspiring individuals to master the crucial art of letter-writing.¹⁶⁵ However, this chapter is primarily concerned with those guides that were designed to inform social behaviour. Targeted primarily at adolescents and young adults, this genre of conduct books reinforced pre-determined societal roles and – when employed in practical situations – enabled New Yorkers to configure and display their self-identities as polite British subjects. While some conduct books sold in New York – including George Washington’s own *Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation* – were published in America, many were reprints of British imports; notably, American conduct books were remarkably similar in structure and content to British versions.¹⁶⁶

The Friendly Instructor provides an excellent example. First published in London in 1741, the *Instructor* was a popular British text: it had been expanded to two volumes by 1784 and was in its tenth edition by 1790.¹⁶⁷ The *Instructor’s* author remained anonymous, however a preface by Philip Doddridge – a popular English non-conformist minister and teacher – claimed that the lessons contained within had been written by “a lady ... who has been long employed in the Education of children, with great Wisdom, Piety and Tenderness.”¹⁶⁸ Aimed at “young ladies and gentlemen”, the *Instructor* was set at what Doddridge considered a “moderate price” in the hope that it would be “introduce[d]... into many families.”¹⁶⁹ Turning

1700-1845 (New Brunswick, New Jersey, & London: Rutgers University Press, 2014); F. W. Grubb, ‘Growth of Literacy in Colonial America: Longitudinal Patterns, Economic Models, and the Direction of Future Research’, *Social Science History*, 14.4 (1990), pp. 452-54.

¹⁶⁴ See for example F. D. Pastorius, *A New Primer or Methodical Directions To attain the True Spelling, Reading & Writing of ENGLISH. Whereunto are added, some things Necessary & Useful both for the Youth of this Province, and likewise for those, who from foreign Countries and Nations come to settle amongst us* (New York: William Bradford, 1698), or W. Bradford, *The Secretary’s Guide, or Young Man’s Companion. In FOUR Parts: Containing Directions for Spelling, Reading and Writing true ENGLISH, with the Pronunciation, &c...* 2nd ed. (New York: William & Andrew Bradford, 1710); Haggerty, *The British-Atlantic Trading Community*, p. 39.

¹⁶⁵ For more on letter-writing guides, see Pearsall, *Atlantic Families*, pp. 70-74, and E. Tavor Bannet, *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1680-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2005).

¹⁶⁶ See for instance George Fisher’s *The American Instructor: or, Young Man’s Best Companion*, 9th ed. (Philadelphia: Benjamin Franklin & David Hall, 1748).

¹⁶⁷ British Library, *English Short Title Catalogue*, <<http://estc.bl.uk/>>[accessed 12 January 2018].

¹⁶⁸ I. Rivers, ‘Philip Doddridge (1702-1751)’, *DNB*; F. W. Grubb, ‘Growth of Literacy in Colonial America: Longitudinal Patterns, Economic Models, and the Direction of Future Research’, *Social Science History*, 14.4 (1990), pp. 452-54.

¹⁶⁹ Anonymous, *The Friendly Instructor: or, A companion for Young Ladies and Young Gentlemen In which Their Duty to God and their Carriage to Superiors and Inferiors, and several other very useful and instructive Lessons are recommended, in Plain and Familiar Dialogues* (New York: John Holt, 1769), p. vi.

to the content of the text, the *Instructor* contained sixteen chapters or “instructive lessons.” Written in the popular dialogue format between fictional characters – which, the author claimed, made it easier for young readers to understand – the text included behavioural guidance for everyday situations, including how to interact with one’s parents and how to behave towards social inferiors.

Rather than importing the text from London, by 1769 the *Instructor* was being reprinted locally in New York by John Holt, indicating its popularity. Originally from Williamsburg in Virginia, Holt had relocated to New York in 1760 to manage the printing house of James Parker. Holt later became a printer in his own right; his publications included the *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy* and the *New-York Journal*.¹⁷⁰ As Richard Sher explains, the practice of local re-printing became increasingly common between the 1770s and 1800s as it was cheaper and more convenient than the “slow, uncertain nature of transatlantic importing.”¹⁷¹ The text is almost a carbon-copy of the London original, however there are some changes to the text size and layout.¹⁷² The American version has substantially more pages than its British counterpart, with fewer words to a page. The physical variation may be indicative of cost-reducing tactics used by American printers described by Sher, including the use of smaller formats and altering the number of words to a page.¹⁷³ The English edition was a duodecimo, while the New York reprint was slightly smaller.¹⁷⁴

Many of these texts were specifically aimed at young women and girls, supporting Penelope Fritzer’s claim that the years 1760 to 1820 were “the age of courtesy books for women.”¹⁷⁵ Take, for example, *The Lady’s Preceptor*. First published in London in 1743, the *Preceptor* was another popular British text: by 1768 it was in its sixth edition and being reprinted in Birmingham and Dublin.¹⁷⁶ According to the *Preceptor’s* frontispiece, the text was a translation of a French work by Abbé D’Ancourt and “Adapted to the Religion, Customs, and Manners of the English Nation by a Gentleman of Cambridge.” Notably, the American reprint

¹⁷⁰ Brigham, *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers*, pp. 592-93, pp. 635-36, pp. 653-55 and pp. 724-25; Thomas, *The History of Printing in America*, pp. 116-20; K. J. Hayes, ‘John Holt’, *ANB*.

¹⁷¹ Sher, *Enlightenment and the Book*, p. 506.

¹⁷² Holt’s American edition was compared against an early 1741 edition and a more contemporary 1770 sixth edition digitised for ECCO. See *The Friendly Instructor ...* (London: John Wilson and James Hodges, 1741) and *The Friendly Instructor ...* 6th ed. (London: J. Buckland, 1770).

¹⁷³ These practices were also common in Dublin reprints, see Sher, *Enlightenment and the Book*, p. 509.

¹⁷⁴ The British prints were both duodecimo, while the New York reprint was slightly smaller at 14cm.

¹⁷⁵ Fritzer, *Jane Austen*, p. 2.

¹⁷⁶ British Library, *English Short Title Catalogue*.

retains the emphasis on the *Preceptor's* suitability for the English – rather than the American – nation.¹⁷⁷

In America, the *Preceptor* was reprinted by James Parker. Despite remaining based at his family home in Woodbridge in New Jersey, Parker was an established printer in New York City. Having been apprenticed to New York's official printer William Bradford, Parker revived Bradford's *New-York Gazette* in 1742 and later began his own *New York Weekly Post-Boy*. During the 1740s, Parker was the librarian of New York's corporation library.¹⁷⁸ As is true of the *Instructor*, the *Preceptor* is almost an exact copy of its London original. However it too demonstrates similar changes to size and layout; printing more words to a page in the New-Jersey version caused it to be twenty pages shorter than its London equivalent.

The text promised to help its readers master "politeness." While modern-day scholars struggle to reach a consensus regarding the term's meaning, the *Preceptor's* author defined politeness as a quality which "is an Accomplishment of so singular a Nature, that the less People have it the more they generally think that they have it."¹⁷⁹ Specifically intended for female readers, the *Preceptor* enforced contemporary British ideas by providing advice on suitable activities for gentlewomen in the American colonies: these included letter writing, hosting or visiting acquaintances and reading – as long as the texts were instructive, rather than novels or romances. Responding to the emergence of public leisure culture, the *Preceptor* outlined appropriate behaviour for women at assemblies, operas and plays, but condemned their attendance at unfeminine "publick Spectacles of Terror and Barbarity, such as Executions, Prize-fightings, &c."¹⁸⁰ Detailed and specific advice was given on how to dress for social occasions, when it was appropriate to laugh (and with how much enthusiasm – "much less to such a Degree as to put you out of Breath") and suitable topics of polite conversation, reminding women never to say "any thing that is shocking or ill-bred".¹⁸¹ A large

¹⁷⁷ Anonymous, *The Lady's Preceptor. Or, a Letter to A Young Lady of Distinction Upon Politeness. Taken from the French of the Abbé D'Ancourt, And Adapted to the Religion, Customs, and Manners of the English Nation*. 6th ed. (New Jersey: James Parker, 1762).

¹⁷⁸ Brigham, *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers*, pp. pp. 635-36, pp. 653-54, p. 674 and p. 704; Thomas, *The History of Printing in America*, pp. 104-07 and pp. 125-26; J. Ashton, 'James Parker', *ANB*; The Printers' File, AAS.

¹⁷⁹ Harris and McKean, *The Scottish Town*, p. 502; J. Tosh, 'English Politeness: Conduct, Social Rank & Moral Virtue, c. 1400-1900 – Introduction', *TRHS*, 12 (2002), p. 264; P. Langford, 'The Uses of Eighteenth-Century Politeness', *TRHS*, 12 (2002), pp. 311-12; R. H. Sweet, 'Topographies of Politeness', *TRHS*, 12 (2002), pp. 355-56; Anonymous, *The Lady's Preceptor*, p. 1.

¹⁸⁰ Anonymous, *The Lady's Preceptor*, p. 46.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

portion of the text was dedicated to interactions with men, stressing the importance for women to navigate the fine line between being “neither a Prude or a Coquette.”¹⁸²

For socially aware New Yorkers, such texts were important for confirming their status and civility. Owing to the relative anonymity of city life compared to the small communities of rural areas, city-dwellers needed to establish their own reputations while simultaneously distinguishing themselves from their social inferiors, particularly those with aspirations of social mobility.¹⁸³ As Zabin stresses, in a cash-poor society such as New York City, such indicators of status were essential requirements for obtaining necessary credit.¹⁸⁴ In the absence of an appropriate American social model, New Yorkers turned to well-established British social norms as indicators of politeness. This was particularly important for those who feared that their American-born status diluted their Britishness, whiteness, and civility.¹⁸⁵ For New York’s female population there was an additional dimension to this, as adherence to British models of behaviour enforced emerging gender stereotypes which defined particular activities as feminine or unfeminine.¹⁸⁶

Venues of sociability – both public and within private homes – provided opportunities for New York City’s inhabitants to showcase their wealth and status, which was displayed through their dress, deportment and conversation. Together, these new social structures formed what Jürgen Habermas describes as a public sphere.¹⁸⁷ As this public aspect became deeply engrained within everyday life, New Yorkers needed to be “seen” to be conducting themselves in the correct manner. An appreciation of the public nature of life in New York and the importance of personal reputation is crucial for understanding the attitudes of the city’s loyalists during the American Revolution.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁸³ M. Kaartinen, A. Montenach and D. Simonton, ‘Luxury, Gender and the Urban Experience’, in D. Simonton, M. Kaartinen and A. Montenach (eds), *Luxury and Gender in European Towns, 1700-1914* (New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 6-8.

¹⁸⁴ Zabin, *Dangerous Economies*, pp. 10-13 and p. 23.

¹⁸⁵ G. H. Nobles, ‘Breaking into the Backcountry: New Approaches to the Early American Frontier, 1750–1800’, *WMQ*, 46.4 (1989), p. 644.

¹⁸⁶ According to the *Preceptor*, feminine activities included letter writing, a basic knowledge of the history “of your own Country, and of a few of her Neighbours, whom she is more intimately concerned with”, and “Knowledge of some of the foreign Languages in vogue” (pp. 48-49). Meanwhile, “beat[ing] Time with your Feet, Hands or Head [to music]” was deemed “a masculine and indelicate Behaviour” (p. 9), while laughing “to such a Degree as to put you out of Breath” was considered to be “a Behaviour too unguarded and indelicate” (p. 31).

¹⁸⁷ J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1991); J. Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 1-16.

Thus, the effects of the consumer revolution were deeply felt within New York City, with the region experiencing extensive urban development and the introduction of structures which would aid the spread of Anglicisation. But what of regions located away from the mercantile and political centre of New York – to what extent was the impact of the consumer revolution felt there? The remainder of this chapter considers the spread of British material culture and its accompanying social changes within Albany County. Importantly, the region that would become Tryon County still formed part of Albany County until 1772; therefore, the findings of this section also apply to the case study of Tryon considered within Part Two of this thesis.

The Consumer Revolution in Albany County

In contrast to the highly developed, concentrated metropolis of New York City, Albany was a vast expanse of land. Indeed, the county did not have a defined northern limit from its creation in 1683 until the establishment of the province of Quebec in 1763. Its eastern border with New Hampshire was also unclear, thus prompting the dispute over the so-called New Hampshire land grants during the 1760s and the subsequent creation of the state of Vermont.¹⁸⁸ By 1774 the counties of Cumberland, Charlotte, Gloucester, Ulster and Tryon had all been created from land ceded by Albany County.¹⁸⁹

Albany County contained a mixture of both urban space and rural farmland. On the one hand, the “city” of Albany formed the county’s urban centre and political seat. Although Thomas Wermuth and James Johnson describe colonial Albany as a “port town” and a “thriving commercial entrepôt”, their assessment is somewhat optimistic.¹⁹⁰ By contemporary standards, the city of Albany was still relatively small: its population in 1790 was fewer than 3,500 persons, making it of a similar size to contemporary Providence in Rhode Island or New Orleans in Louisiana.¹⁹¹ Nevertheless, as we shall see momentarily, the city of Albany did

¹⁸⁸ Klopott, ‘Civil War in Schaghticoke’, pp. 218-22.

¹⁸⁹ See the individual county chronology for Albany, in *Atlas of Historical County Boundaries*, Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture, The Newberry Library, reproduced at <<https://www.nypl.org/collections/articles-databases/atlas-historical-county-boundaries>>[accessed 4 November 2016].

¹⁹⁰ Wermuth and Johnson, ‘The American Revolution in the Hudson River Valley’, in J. M. Johnson, C. Pryslopski and A. Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), p. 1.

¹⁹¹ B. R. Mitchell, *International Historical Statistics: The Americas and Australasia* (London: Macmillan, 1983), p. 83; Harris and McKean define towns as containing 10,000 persons. According to their definition, Albany was a “small town” on a par with Port Glasgow in Renfrewshire or Dalkeith in Midlothian. *The Scottish Town*, pp. 1-3.

achieve a limited degree of gentrification and urban improvement during the eighteenth century.

Beyond the city of Albany, however the county was predominantly rural and agricultural.¹⁹² As one of “the most fertile and productive regions in North America”, Albany County was largely settled by tenant farmers, many of whom were resident on one of the county’s manorial estates.¹⁹³ These manorial estates – which were headed by semi-aristocratic landlords – were unique to upstate New York and not found elsewhere within the thirteen British North American colonies. Albany County contained two of the largest manors: Rensselaerswyck Manor, which covered one million acres; and Livingston Manor, covering 160,000 acres.¹⁹⁴ Upon the manorial estates and within the rural territory beyond, families in Albany County typically worked their lands in household units. Primarily descended from the original Dutch settlers of the New Netherlands, Albany’s rural population was overwhelmingly Dutch in both language and culture. As such, everyday life remained centred around the idea of the *huysgezin* (household) – as explained by Susanah Shaw Romney – as the basis for political, social and economic life.¹⁹⁵ Multiple generations of the same family lived and worked together on the same plots, as mothers, daughters, fathers and sons each had important roles to play in ensuring productivity and the endurance of the *huysgezin*. Meanwhile, the gendered nature of roles within the *huysgezin* – including the sole ability of the “master” (husband) of the *huysgezin* to define the entire family’s political allegiances – resulted in the formation of a patriarchal society.

Individual *huysgezins* were connected to one another through bonds of commerce and kinship, until they formed the “intimate networks” that Shaw Romney describes.¹⁹⁶ In many respects, therefore, life in the Hudson Valley was not dissimilar to that of agricultural families resident in eighteenth-century New England, as depicted by Daniel Vickers.¹⁹⁷ In both instances, as Kathleen DuVal notes, individuals were dependent upon “a web of economic,

¹⁹² Beyond the city of Albany, the county’s population were almost exclusively farmers. See S. Bielinski, ‘The People of Colonial Albany, 1650-1800: The Profile of a Community’, in W. Pencak and C. E. Wright (eds), *Authority and Resistance in Early New York* (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1988), p. 5.

¹⁹³ Wermuth and Johnson, ‘The American Revolution in the Hudson River Valley’, p. 1.

¹⁹⁴ Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York*, p. x.

¹⁹⁵ Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, p. 6.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

¹⁹⁷ D. Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen: Two Centuries of Work in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1630-1830* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), pp. 31-84.

social and political connections that provided stability and opportunity even as they limited complete freedom of action.”¹⁹⁸ In contrast to New England, however, Albany shared a border with the Iroquois Confederacy. In this backcountry region (which would later be separated to form Tryon County in 1772), priorities were focused westward rather than across the Atlantic: generally speaking, colonists resident in this region were more preoccupied with trade and maintaining peace with Native American populations than with the pursuit of gentility and manners conducted by their fellow colonists resident in urban centres.¹⁹⁹

Borsay’s approach, therefore, is arguably of limited use for an assessment of Albany County as it predominantly applies to urban centres. However, Stobart, Hann and Morgan warn of the danger of overstating the urban-rural divide.²⁰⁰ Bob Harris and Charles McKean, meanwhile, trace substantial urban improvement even in the smallest rural Scottish burghs: Dunkeld, for instance, had a population of fewer than 1,000 residents, making it considerably smaller than the city of Albany.²⁰¹ Thus, an application of Borsay’s framework to Albany County not only provides consistency, but enables a fair comparison with New York City. As we shall see, by the outbreak of the American Revolution, Albany County had not experienced the same urban development and social change which had occurred within New York City. Lacking the structures which were necessary to facilitate Anglicisation, Albany remained predominantly Dutch in character and maintained largely rural communities. An understanding of Albany’s different local context to that of New York City is fundamental for interpreting the manner in which loyalism developed within that region.

Considering the first of Borsay’s indicators, the evidence from Albany County shows that by the late eighteenth century the region lacked the walks, promenades, pleasure gardens, theatres, assembly rooms, coffee-houses and libraries defined by Stobart *et al.* as places for polite sociability.²⁰² Considering Smith’s 1757 account of the city of Albany, he states that – aside from two churches, one Episcopalian and the other Dutch Reformed – “they have no other publick Buildings, except the City Hall and the Fort.”²⁰³ We saw that, in New York City, these structures enabled the development of an enlightened public sphere and a politicised

¹⁹⁸ K. DuVal, *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution* (New York: Random House, 2015), p. xxi.

¹⁹⁹ E. Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 147 and p. 162.

²⁰⁰ Stobart, Hann and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*, p. 4.

²⁰¹ Harris and McKean, *The Scottish Town*, p. 489.

²⁰² Stobart, Hann and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*, p. 6.

²⁰³ Smith, *History of the Province of New-York*, pp. 197-98.

society, in which educated individuals could discuss and reflect upon matters of general interest. In Albany, in contrast, the lack of such institutions prevented such developments. Instead, the centre of civic society remained rooted in traditional structures of the church, landlords and government.²⁰⁴

However, this lack of public buildings was not the consequence of inertia or unwilling by the city's residents. Perhaps encouraged by the success of the New York Society Library a few years earlier, Albany's residents had made efforts in 1758 to establish a subscription library, as it was felt that "a publick library would be very useful as well as ornamental to this city".²⁰⁵ According to the call for subscribers, the Albany Library was to operate on an almost identical model to its counterpart in New York: subscriptions were based on the same financial terms, while ten trustees were to be elected on an annual basis with identical responsibilities to those in New York. Library membership was not restricted to Albany County, but open to anybody who resided within the colony. This imitation is somewhat predictable: as David Allan explains, the typical subscription library format was replicated across English towns.²⁰⁶ However, just as Scottish 'burghs' looked to Glasgow and Edinburgh – rather than London – as models for urban renewal, it is possible that Albany looked to New York City for inspiration.²⁰⁷

However, there was one substantial difference between the two libraries. In Albany, subscribers were required to leave cash deposit of at least one-third of the value of any books borrowed: in a largely rural community, such requirements were simply not feasible. The call for subscribers was not successful and Albany would not benefit from a subscription library until 1790.²⁰⁸ Those seeking literary conversation and personal improvement were forced to find it elsewhere: those with financial means developed their own private libraries, whereas

²⁰⁴ Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, p. 10; T. McCarthy, 'Introduction', in J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1991), pp. xi-xiv.

²⁰⁵ *Whereas a publick library would be very useful as well as ornamental to this city.* (New York: Printer Unknown, 1758), *Evans*, Document Number 40946 [accessed 17 January 2018].

²⁰⁶ Allan, *Nation of Readers*, p. 72.

²⁰⁷ Harris and McKean, *The Scottish Town*, p. 82.

²⁰⁸ According to the 1792 'Law of the Legislature of the State of New-York, to Incorporate the Trustees of the Albany Library', the Albany Society Library was established in January 1790 on different terms to those outlined in 1758. In 1792, ownership of the books was transferred to the new Albany Library. See *A Catalogue of the Books belonging to the Albany Library: with the Law of the Legislature of New-York, to Incorporate the Trustees; The Bye-Laws of the Corporation; &c.* (Albany: Barber and Southwick, 1792), pp. 3-11.

Albany elite Robert Livingston was not only a subscriber to the Society Library in New York but also a trustee.²⁰⁹

Albany also lacked that other crucial eighteenth-century structure of sociability: the coffee-house.²¹⁰ Again, evidence suggests that residents were aware that Albany, as an urban centre, should follow the example of its contemporary cities and introduce such an establishment. In 1759, when merchants Thomas and Benjamin Forsey advertised the sale of their Albany premises, they suggested that the new owners might wish to use it as “any house in the public Way, such as a Coffee House, or Tavern.” The premises were described as “being very convenient” for such purposes on account of its “large Conveniences for the same” and nine fireplaces.²¹¹ Despite the Forsey’s hopes, however, there is no evidence that this building was ever used as a coffee-house. As merchants, the Forseys were keen to embrace the new models of consumption and sociability witnessed in New York, while their fellow residents in Albany were evidently slightly more reluctant.

Although the city of Albany did not develop the public leisure facilities witnessed within New York, its residents frequented a vibrant network of taverns which extended from the urban centre to the remote frontiers and manorial estates of the Hudson Highlands. Recent scholarship on eighteenth-century taverns outlines their important role as venues for politicised socialising, serving as both meeting places for formal political associations and spaces to host ad-hoc activities such as debates or the signing of petitions.²¹² As Beat Kümin and B. Ann Tlusty explain, these multifunctional spaces “hosted much of local cultural life, as well as providing platforms for political and religious discussions.”²¹³ In Albany County, therefore, the tavern partially fulfilled the role of the urban coffee-house, enabling the

²⁰⁹ *Charter and Bye-Laws of the New-York Society Library*, pp. 4-6.

²¹⁰ While a search of the colonial press indicated repeated references to New York’s coffee-houses, a similar search did not produce any indication that there was a coffee-house in Albany between 1754 and 1783. Similarly, Ukers does not refer to any coffee-houses in Albany, see *All About Coffee*.

²¹¹ *New-York Gazette*, 20 August 1759.

²¹² E. Chalus, ‘Elite Women, Social Politics, and the Political World of Late Eighteenth-Century England’, *Historical Journal*, 43.3 (2000), p. 675; J. Chartres, ‘The Eighteenth-Century English Inn: A Transient ‘Golden Age’?’, in B. Kümin and B. A. Tlusty (eds), *The World of the Tavern: Public Houses in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 205-226; M. Jasanoff, ‘Loyal to a Fault’, *New York Times Magazine*, 1 July 2007 <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/01/magazine/01wwln-essay-t.html?_r=2&oref=slogin&> [accessed 15 March 2017].

²¹³ B. Kümin and B. A. Tlusty, ‘Introduction’, in B. Kümin and B. A. Tlusty (eds), *The World of the Tavern: Public Houses in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 3-11. As part of their introduction Kümin and Tlusty explain the differencing roles and functions between the two premises, although the terms are used interchangeably within this thesis; Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters*, pp. 17-18.

performance of similar political and social functions – albeit without the element of politeness seen in urban spaces like New York City.²¹⁴

Notwithstanding the potential for small town and semi-rural taverns to fulfil some of the functions of an urban public sphere, Albany's leisure facilities were largely underdeveloped compared to New York City. As such, there is limited evidence of the second of Borsay's indicators of urban development – changes to the town's economy – as the range of new professions associated with the so-called 'urban renaissance' were not required. Although Stefan Bielinski argues the case for occupational specialisation during the mid-eighteenth century in the city of Albany – for instance, "traders" had diversified to include general merchants, dry-goods merchants or specialised retailers of rum or cloth – such specialisation was not comparable with that seen in New York City and there remained an absence of the new leisure-based professions until the 1780s and 1790s. Additionally, most of these new professions were practiced by newcomers to the colony.²¹⁵

Taking shopkeeping as an example, contemporary accounts indicate that Albany did not experience the changes in shopping behaviour that were witnessed in New York. Consider the experience of Andrew Elliot. As a younger son of Sir Gilbert Elliot (Lord Minto), Andrew would not inherit his father's title and so migrated to the American colonies from Scotland during the 1740s. After initially arriving in Philadelphia, Elliot relocated to Albany and attempted to establish himself there as a merchant. His letters to his brother, the third Lord Minto, reveal that consumers in Albany were slow to adopt the new fashionable manner of social shopping that scholars have associated with the consumer revolution.²¹⁶

According to Elliot, Albany had recognised main shopping streets containing large stores. These stores were well-stocked with large quantities of goods to create a sense of value; the rationale for consumers, Elliot explains, was that "they think, you can't have good goods and sell them so cheap as those that have a great many." Elliot lacked sufficient quantities of stock to be able to sell in this manner, so was obliged to take a store "out of the way" of Albany's

²¹⁴ For more on politicised tavern culture in the American colonies, see B. L. Carp, *Rebels Rising: Cities and the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); A. Tully, *Forming American Politics: Ideals, Interests, and Institutions in Colonial New York and Pennsylvania* (Baltimore & London: John Hopkins University Press, 1994); D. Copeland, 'America, 1750-1820', in H. Barker and S. Burrows (eds), *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760–1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 140-59; Sweet, 'Topographies of Politeness', pp. 355-56.

²¹⁵ Bielinski, 'The People of Colonial Albany', p. 6.

²¹⁶ Andrew Elliot Letters, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS.

main streets. However, in his small store containing a select number of items, he found that “the country people never will buy where they see few goods”. Elliot blamed his economic failure on the purchasing behaviour of Albany’s residents, which he noted was different to that witnessed in other eighteenth-century towns. Concluding that “this Albany is a wretched place”, Elliot left for New York City.²¹⁷

The experience of the aforementioned Thomas and Benjamin Forsey is particularly intriguing and suggestive of a similar experience. According to their 1757 advertisement, the Forseys initially appear to have overcome the barriers encountered by Elliot a decade earlier: their store was located in the centre of town “between the English and Dutch churches, and opposite the main-guard”, it was of a large size and stocked with a large assortment of goods.²¹⁸ However, the Forseys went out of business and were forced to sell their premises two years later.²¹⁹ The suggestion is that their commercial failure was caused by the content or variety of their stock, rather than its quantity.

Offering “a choice and neat assortment of European and east and west-India goods”, the Forseys sold a selection of consumer goods similar to those sold by their counterparts in New York City. Thinking back to DuPlessis’s hierarchy of fabrics, the Forseys’ stock included cheaper items, such as coarse broadcloths, flannels, Irish linens and “Shrewsbury cottons” – an English-made cotton blend named after the town in which they were produced. However, the advertisement also contained details of a large number of luxury items, including calamanco, silks, damask and velvet, as well as coffee, chocolate, teas and spices.²²⁰ Many of these items would have been beyond the reach of much of Albany’s population, who lacked both the resources to purchase them and the ritual social performances of promenades, assemblies and balls which required their display.

This is not to say that there was a complete absence of any luxury craftsmen in the city of Albany, as the example of Basil Francis identifies. Francis was a watch-maker and clock repairer in the City of Albany, who was based in a similar central location “between the Dutch Church and the Market.” Just as we have seen in New York City, Francis emphasised his

²¹⁷ Andrew Elliot to Sir Gilbert Elliot, 4 May 1747, *Ibid*.

²¹⁸ *New-York Gazette*, 20 August 1759.

²¹⁹ *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 31 October 1757.

²²⁰ Coarse broadcloths were likely to have been made in Scotland. Harris and McKean, *The Scottish Town*, p. 24; *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 31 October 1757.

experience as an apprentice in England as an indicator of his reputability.²²¹ Francis's experience of "having wrought for some of the most eminent masters of that art in said city [London]" implied that he could manufacture new watches in the latest London styles for those who could afford them. Perhaps of more use in Albany County was Francis' skill as a watch-repairer. Not entirely dissimilar to those tailors who could re-fashion older fabrics into newer styles, as a repairer, Francis catered to those who could not afford to replace broken or worn items entirely.²²² Further examples of luxury craftsmen in Albany are extremely limited, indicating that there was insufficient local demand to support a luxury trade on the same scale that we have seen in New York City. Moreover, watchmaking was by this time already a fairly traditional luxury craft, rather than one of the newer luxury trades to which Borsay and Stobart refer.²²³

Although demand for luxury items was generally lower in Albany than in New York, there remained a small portion of the local population who could afford to purchase such goods. For instance, the inventory of Albany merchant Alexander Cruckshank submitted to the Loyalist Claims Commission was comparable to those seen in New York City. Listed within Cruckshank's claim were substantial pieces designed for entertaining, precisely the sort of new items introduced during the consumer revolution and discussed earlier within this chapter. These included a chafing dish, large china bowls with accompanying punch ladles, pewter dishes and plates, a coffee pot, three wine decanters and ten wine glasses.²²⁴ Similarly, John Macomb of Hoosick, who served as Justice of the Peace and Assistant Judge at the Court of Common Pleas in Albany, included expensive mahogany furniture, looking-glasses and £40 worth of table linen within his inventory. Macomb also claimed for chinaware, including the popular Dutch delftware.²²⁵

However, examples such as these are few and far between. As merchants and local officials, Cruckshank and Macomb constituted Albany's local elite. Thus, their individual instances of conspicuous consumption cannot be interpreted as being reflective of the wider population. Beyond the city of Albany, Albany's rural and poorer populations did not experience anything like the pervasive consumerism that we have seen within the city of New York. Consideration

²²¹ *New-York Gazette, and Weekly Mercury*, 7 June 1773.

²²² Harris and McKean note wide ownership of watches in eighteenth-century Scotland, even amongst rural and artisan populations. *The Scottish Town*, p. 41.

²²³ Stobart, 'Shopping Streets as Social Space', p. 14.

²²⁴ American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

²²⁵ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/30.

of surviving inventories from Albany's more humble residents indicates that the content of personal inventories remained largely unchanged between the 1690s and 1780s.²²⁶ However, there is limited evidence of poorer residents owning small luxuries, confirming Marjo Kaartinen, Anne Montenach and Deborah Simonton's claim that "all classes aspired to engage in consumption at some level."²²⁷

Take for instance, the inventory submitted to the Loyalist Claims Commission by Isaac Friot. A small farmer from the rural community of Saratoga in Albany County, Friot was unable to afford the expensive chinaware popular amongst the upper classes. Instead, he owned pewter dishes and plates, as well as knives and forks.²²⁸ Pewter in particular was a low-cost material; a "populuxe" version of silver or silver plate, it would be eye-catching when polished.²²⁹ Friot's claim is not atypical of those of his contemporaries: cutlery and pewterware were the most frequent eighteenth-century additions to inventories in rural Albany.²³⁰ This reflected a wider trend, as tea, teawares, knives and forks became the most commonly purchased items amongst the colonial poor.²³¹ Although these items may not have been constructed of the best quality materials, they were still prestigious to their owners. As Bushman explains, cutlery was initially reserved for the wealthy as an indicator of gentility, while the lower classes continued to eat with their fingers or spoons.²³²

The acquisition of such "luxuries" by New York's rural and more humble residents was noted by contemporaries, who expressed their concern at such behaviour. While travelling through New Jersey and New York during 1748-49, Swedish scientist and professor Peter Kalm disapproved of what he considered to be excessive tea-drinking amongst New York's "farmer's wife or poor woman".²³³ Similarly, Scottish doctor Alexander Hamilton criticised the

²²⁶ Court of Probates, Inventories and Accounts, 1666-1822, NYSA, J0301-82, Reels 1-3 (Boxes 3-5); Early Records of the City and County of Albany & the Colony of Rensselaerswyck, NYSA, A0126-78, Vol. 4: Mortgages (1658-1660) & Wills (1681-1765) and Vol. 2.

²²⁷ Kaartinen, Montenach and Simonton, 'Luxury, Gender and the Urban Experience', p. 1.

²²⁸ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/26.

²²⁹ Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, p. 163-68.

²³⁰ See the inventory of Thomas Brewer, Schenectady. Court of Probates, Inventories and Accounts, 1666-1822, NYSA, J0301-82, Reels 1 (Box 3); Peter Ziellie of Schoharie, Court of Probates, Inventories and Accounts, 1666-1822, NYSA, J0301-82, Reel 3 (Box 5).

²³¹ G. L. Main, 'The Standard of Living in Southern New England, 1640-1773', *WMQ*, 45.1 (1988), p. 129; L. Green Carr and L. S. Walsh, 'The Standard of Living in the Colonial Chesapeake', *WMQ*, 45.1 (1988), p. 138.

²³² Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, pp. 75-77.

²³³ P. Kalm, *Travels into North America* (London: T. Lowndes, 1771), reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/travelsintonort00forsgoog>>[accessed 31 May 2016].

humble Stanesprig family of the Hudson Highlands for acquiring “several superfluous things which showed an inclination to finery in these poor people.” These “superfluous” semi-luxury goods included a looking-glass, pewterware and a teapot. Hamilton condemned the “tea equipage” in particular as “quite unnecessary”, suggesting that the Stanesprigs might do better to sell these pieces and use the money to purchase items of more practical use: “a little water in a wooden pail might serve for a looking glass”, while the pewterware should be changed for “wooden plates and spoons [which] would be as good for use, and when clean would be almost as ornamental.”²³⁴ Thus, although Kalm and Hamilton’s accounts primarily point to contemporary fears about the corrupting influence of luxury goods, they simultaneously reveal that New York’s rural communities engaged in the new practices of consumption associated with the consumer revolution; albeit on a much smaller scale to wealthier consumers in New York City.

Another of the new professions identified by Borsay was the printer and bookseller. Compared to New York’s vibrant print trade, Albany’s was almost non-existent. As Dennis Brennan outlines in his study of Albany printers James and Alexander Robertson, Albany’s sole printing house was not established until 1771. From there, the Robertson brothers printed the *Albany Gazette*, which was the first paper to be printed outside of New York City. The Robertsons were from a printing family: their father had been a printer in Edinburgh, while James had served as a printer’s apprentice in Boston. Moving to New York City in 1768, James printed the *New York Chronicle* in partnership with his brother. The *Albany Gazette*’s success was limited and reflected the difficulties associated with establishing a printing business on the frontier. For instance, during the *Gazette*’s short run from November 1771 to August 1772 only twenty-four issues were printed. Although the *Gazette* was intended to be a weekly paper, this figure equated to only three issues every four weeks, in contrast to the regular weekly offerings of the long-running *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy* and the *New-York Mercury*.²³⁵ The Robertsons attributed this failing to their dependence on shipments of paper from New York; with no local paper mills, if the raw material did not arrive in Albany then

²³⁴ See A. Hamilton, *Hamilton's Itinerarium; being a narrative of a journey from Annapolis, Maryland, through Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, from May to September, 1744* (St. Louis, MO: W. K. Bixby, 1907), p. 183, reproduced at http://mith.umd.edu/eada/html/display.php?docs=hamilton_itinerarium.xml [accessed 31 May 2016].

²³⁵ C. S. Brigham, *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820, Volume One* (Worcester, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1947), pp. 635-66 and p. 662.

there could be no news.²³⁶ The Robertsons continued to print various pamphlets, plays and municipal proceedings until 1777 when, as loyalists, the brothers were forced to flee to New York for safety. The only other Albany paper, the *New-York Gazetteer, or, Northern Intelligencer* would not enter print until July 1782. Thus, between August 1777 and July 1782, there was no printing in Albany.²³⁷

Turning to Borsay's final two indicators of an urban renaissance, there is limited evidence of improvements to public amenities or architecture within Albany County. In 1793, William Hartshorne described the streets of Albany as "mostly paved, but some of them very narrow and irregularly laid out."²³⁸ As Elizabeth Covart explains, legislation to introduce paving in Albany was passed in 1767, although some streets had been paved earlier during the 1740s. However, the paving appears to have been completed in the Dutch taste: migrants from New England would complain during the 1790s that the streets were paved using small paving stones, fashionable amongst the Dutch, in contrast to the larger stones found elsewhere within American colonial towns.²³⁹ Meanwhile, though New York City saw the introduction of street-lighting during the 1750s – even if this was initially led informally by wealthy residents – there is no evidence of the same in the city of Albany. As late as 1787, legislation to punish criminals made specific reference to the deliberate destruction of street lamps in New York, but no reference to the same in Albany or Schenectady.²⁴⁰

Although Smith described the city of Albany as containing brick houses, these were not completed in the anglicised Georgian style, but rather "in the Dutch taste."²⁴¹ As Smith describes it, even the city's Anglican church – which was possibly the most anglicised building in Albany – was constructed of stone, rather than brick. The Dutch church, which Smith states was frequented by "almost all the Inhabitants" of the city, was also stone. According to Covart, Albany's architecture would remain in the Dutch style until the 1790s, when its buildings were

²³⁶ D. P. Brennan, 'Open to all Parties: Alexander and James Robertson, Albany printers, 1771-77', in J. M. Johnson, C. Pryslopski and A. Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2013), pp. 125-34.

²³⁷ Brigham, *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers*, p. 538.

²³⁸ William Hartshorne Diary, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol 1340.

²³⁹ E. M. Covart "'Dam'd Paving": Yankees and Dutch New Yorkers: The Post-Revolution New England Migration and the Creation of American Identity in the Upper Hudson River Valley, 1783-1820', *HRVR*, 29.1 (2012), p. 11.

²⁴⁰ An act for the more effectual Punishment of Persons who shall be guilty of the Trespasses therein mentioned, in the cities of New-York, Albany and Hudson, and the Township of Schenectady', 24 March 1787, *Laws of the state of New-York, passed by the Legislature of said state, at their tenth session*. (New York: Samuel and John Loudon, 1787), pp. 127-28.

²⁴¹ Smith, *History of the Province of New-York*, p. 197.

replaced with Federalist-style structures.²⁴² In this respect, therefore, Albany's urban improvement was not dissimilar to that of provincial Scotland which largely followed a fashion similar to that of the rest of Britain but had distinctly Scottish elements.²⁴³

Thus, although there was an influx of new consumer goods and British material culture into the colony, they had minimal impact upon the development of Albany County. Despite a limited number of isolated instances of conspicuous consumption and a slight improvement in living standards amongst the rural poor, Albany did not experience the extensive social and cultural changes which encouraged Anglicisation that we have seen in New York City. Although there appears to have been a genuine desire amongst some to make improvements to the City of Albany, in line with those being undertaken in New York City, these attempts were ultimately not sustained. By the outbreak of the American Revolution, therefore, Albany remained largely Dutch in character and appearance. While a vibrant community existed within Albany, it was not the recognisably Georgian and anglicised community that was visible 150 miles south in New York City.

Conclusion

As the first sections of this chapter demonstrated, during the mid-eighteenth century New York experienced a consumer revolution. Not only was the colonial marketplace flooded with new material goods from Britain, but these goods also had the potential to generate fundamental social change and urban development: new structures and pastimes associated with the sale and consumption of these goods gained popularity, while the goods themselves carried cultural significance. Where the effects of the consumer revolution were felt most strongly, ideas relating to British material culture acquired heightened importance.

Although material culture had the potential to change the way in which everyday colonists lived their lives, as the latter part of the chapter identified, the impact of such change was uneven. The pervasiveness of material culture varied according to location and wealth. Breen's claim that "within a few decades during the middle of the eighteenth century, imported goods transformed monochrome spaces into Technicolor" is particularly evident in the case of New York City, which between the 1740s and the outbreak of the American

²⁴² Covart, "Dam'd Paving", p. 12.

²⁴³ Harris and McKean, *The Scottish Town*, p. 81.

Revolution had developed into a recognisably-Georgian provincial town.²⁴⁴ As the so-called “Metropolis ... of the Province”, New York also enjoyed the prestige of being the centre of colonial government, containing the Assembly and Courts outlined in Chapter One.²⁴⁵ Equipped with the structures necessary to facilitate Anglicisation – such as coffee-houses, printing presses and polite society – New York City’s residents envisioned themselves as members of an Atlantic-wide British community, where even those on more modest incomes were preoccupied with acquiring small luxuries and emulating the fashions of their counterparts in the metropolis.

Beyond New York City, these changes were limited. In the city of Albany, attempts were made to replicate the urban development witnessed in New York. This included attempts to launch a subscription library and improvements to the physical landscape of the town. However, as we have seen, such attempts largely failed or – if completed at all – were completed in the Dutch taste. While there is evidence of Albany’s wealthier urban residents participating in conspicuous consumption, their numbers were too few to sustain large-scale luxury industries or to change overall consumer behaviour. As Borsay explains, urban development was triggered by surplus wealth; in the rural countryside of the Hudson Highlands, there was insufficient wealth to develop the structures that would have promoted social and cultural Anglicisation.²⁴⁶ By the outbreak of the Revolution, therefore, Albany remained predominantly Dutch in culture, language and architectural appearance.

During the period considered within this chapter, the frontier region that would become Tryon County in 1772 still formed the western fringes of Albany County. Rural, underpopulated and yet to experience any substantial urban improvement, while New Yorkers were preoccupied with overcoming the time delay associated with following the London fashions, Tryon’s residents were more concerned with the everyday challenges of frontier survival.²⁴⁷ As Part Two of this thesis shows, many of the loyalists from Tryon County were new arrivals to New York, migrating to the Johnstown area following the conclusion of the Seven Years War. Therefore, any evidence of consumerism amongst these populations is likely to be linked to ideas of Anglicisation and consumerism in their places of origin (which was often Highland

²⁴⁴ Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, p. xi; this study subscribes to Styles and Vickery’s perception of the British Atlantic as a series of provinces, with London as the metropolis. New York City was fundamentally a British province. See Styles and Vickery, ‘Introduction’, p. 24.

²⁴⁵ Smith, *History of the Province of New-York*, p. 188.

²⁴⁶ Borsay, ‘Urban Renaissance’, p. 590.

²⁴⁷ Hodgkins, ‘Reading Boone’s Writing’, *Journal of Backcountry Studies*, 6.2 (2011), pp. 2-14.

Chapter Two: Material Culture and Social Change

Scotland), rather than a consequence of New York's consumer revolution. For this reason, this chapter has not considered responses to the consumer revolution in Tryon County.²⁴⁸

Taken together, the current and previous chapters argue that the uneven impact of Anglicisation reform combined with the uneven impact of social and cultural to produce different rates of development within New York. As different regions experienced different levels of urban development, distinct areas with unique local characters and socio-cultural contexts began to emerge. As Part Two of this thesis now explores in further detail, the multiple variations of loyalism in New York were the product of these different localities.

²⁴⁸ Evidence from the loyalist claims indicates Tryon County residents owning consumer goods such as tea pots, coffee pots, pewter plates, knives, forks and spoons. See the inventory of Michael Carman, a joiner and tenant on Sir John Johnson's lands of New Philadelphia, Tyron County, and John Alt, who lived near Johnstown in Tyron County, both American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

Part Two

Part Two: Introduction

Between Jacob Leisler's Rebellion of 1691 and the outbreak of the American Revolution, the colony of New York experienced significant political, social and cultural development. However, as Section One of this dissertation covered in detail, the impact of such change was uneven and resulted in the formation of distinct geographical regions, each with their own unique social and political contexts. Anglicisation laws introduced during the 1690s and 1700s established New York City as the centre of political and commercial life, while complementary cultural and social changes during the mid-eighteenth century established the city as a recognisably-Georgian provincial town. Further upstate in Albany County and the frontier region that would become Tryon, the impact of political and social Anglicisation was limited. Although isolated (and, ultimately, unsuccessful) attempts were made to improve the City of Albany, the county's rural regions remained comparatively untouched by Anglicisation.

During the American Revolution, the colony of New York was notorious amongst its revolutionary neighbours for the strong loyalist sentiment of its population. However, as we shall find in the following chapters, New York loyalism varied significantly according to geographic location. Individual counties entered the war at different stages, while loyalists from different regions acted in different ways, described their loyalty in different terms and conducted a range of varying activities to support the British cause. This dissertation argues that, in the colony of New York, the decision to remain loyal and the nature of loyalism there was the result of unique local circumstances present within each region, rather than ideological factors.

The following chapters turn to a close assessment of the records of the Loyalist Claims Commission and form case studies of three distinct geographic regions: urban New York City; rural Albany County; and the frontier county of Tryon. As we shall see, despite their different local characters, all three counties acted as loyalist strongholds for the duration of the war. As such, there is a sizeable body of claims available from each region to enable a comparative study of the development of loyalism. Furthermore, each of the counties studied had a unique local character which contrasted significantly with the others. These differences allow us to trace how local circumstances within each region influenced both the decision to remain loyal and the actions of loyalists resident there. Each case study follows a similar format: each category of loyalist – defined within the introduction to this dissertation – is considered in turn to allow for detailed evaluation and discussion. The purpose of this continuity in structure is to facilitate comparison between loyalists of the same category residing within different regions of the colony.

Chapter Three:

Case Study – The City and County of New York

The city and county of New York played a unique role during the American Revolution and became a region of unparalleled importance. Captured by the British in the summer of 1776, New York was established as their permanent military headquarters until the large-scale evacuation of the city in November 1783.¹ The city also became a focal point for loyalists from across the British colonies in North America: having been driven away from their properties, loyalist refugees sought protection from the British forces based at New York. As such, residents of New York City experienced the war in a different way to their fellow colonists living within New York's other counties.

Wartime New York City has been the focus of much recent scholarly attention. Ruma Chopra's *Unnatural Rebellion* focuses upon the experiences of the city's loyalists living under British occupation, while Judith Van Buskirk's *Generous Enemies* explores the ongoing relationships – both commercial and personal – that continued between loyalists and revolutionaries living in close proximity to each other for the duration of the war.² In contrast to such studies, this chapter uses the testimonies of New York City's loyalists to determine how and why these allegiances developed. Exploring how loyalists were initially identified as such, how they defined themselves in contrast to their revolutionary opponents and the range of possible activities available to them to support the British cause, this chapter forms a case study of loyalism in New York City.

This chapter undertakes a close textual analysis of the compensation claims submitted to the Loyalist Claims Commission by loyalist claimants from the city of New York between 1783 and 1789. The claims of 66 loyalists are considered, all of whom were resident within the city and county of New York and its immediate surrounding environs. This includes the claims of ten loyalists from Long Island – which remained accessible throughout the war via the municipally-operated Brooklyn Ferry – three loyalists from Staten Island and six from neighbouring New

¹ R. Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion: Loyalists in New York City During the Revolution* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), pp. 1-6; J. Shy, 'The Loyalist Problem in the Lower Hudson Valley: The British Perspective', in R. A. East and J. Judd (eds), *The Loyalist Americans: A Focus on Greater New York* (Tarrytown, NY: Sleepy Hollow Restorations, 1975), p. 5.

² Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*; J. L. Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

Jersey.³ Although New Jersey's loyalists have their own dedicated volume of claims, these individuals were filed by the commissioners within the New York volumes as they fell under the cultural zone of New York City.⁴ Despite residing a short distance across the water in "the Jerseys", they were New York-facing in their perspectives, with many claiming for businesses and property held in the city.⁵ Nineteen of the loyalists considered are known to have travelled to England to submit their claims in person; the remainder either appeared before the commission when it travelled to Canada or are unknown.⁶

Although the New York claimants form the smallest group when compared with the claimants from Albany and Tryon Counties, they still merit a detailed analysis. Covering an area less than one mile squared on the southern-most point of Manhattan Island, New York City was the most anglicised and developed region within the colony.⁷ With an estimated population size of 22,000 in 1771, New York was the most culturally and socially British area of the colony and the second-largest city within the North American colonies.⁸

New York City's loyalists displayed a range of different behaviours: the claims of white male loyalists – who form the majority of the claimants – can be considered as either 'active', 'reluctant' and 'passive'. After considering these claims, the chapter turns to a consideration of the claims of black loyalists – who are unique to New York City – and female loyalists.

³ The accounts of New York City Treasurer John Smyth demonstrate that the Brooklyn Ferry remained in operation throughout the war. See John Smyth Accounts 1778-1783, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS; for a study of Staten Island, see P. Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island: Staten Island And The American Revolution* (New York & London: New York University Press, 2007). According to Papas, Staten Islanders were overwhelmingly loyal. He claims that "almost 99% of Staten Islanders remained loyal to the Crown by defying the colonial resistance movement and refusing to support American independence." (p.1)

⁴ New Jersey claimants can be found under American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New Jersey), TNA: AO 12/13-18.

⁵ See for example the claim of Thomas Miller, a merchant who was resident in New Brunswick but claimed for a store within the city of New York. American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/19.

⁶ The records of the Commission are inconsistent: Commissioners did not always record the location where a claim was heard, while the same volumes are used for claims heard in both Britain and Canada.

⁷ R. Ketchum, *Divided Loyalties: How the American Revolution Came to New York* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2002), p. 6.

⁸ J. S. Tiedemann and E. R. Fingerhut, 'Introduction', in J. S. Tiedemann and E. R. Fingerhut (eds), *The Other New York: The American Revolution Beyond New York City, 1763-1787* (Albany: SUNY University Press, 2005), p. 2; Philadelphia's population was estimated at 24,000 in M. Kammen, *Colonial New York: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp 278-279.

This dissertation argues that loyalism was a product of local circumstance. As such, this chapter argues that New York's unique nature as a Georgian provincial city and its status as Britain's military headquarters during the Revolutionary War heavily influenced the activities of the city's loyalists. The politicised nature of New York's public and social spheres was fundamental in the early identification and targeting of suspected loyalists, while the commercial focus of the city prompted residents into choosing a side much earlier than in other regions. Thus, this chapter concludes that remaining loyal in New York City meant something different than remaining loyal elsewhere within the same colony.

Active Loyalists

Of the 66 loyalists considered from the city and county of New York, 29 (44 per cent) can be considered as 'active' loyalists. These individuals conform most closely to the classic historiographical definition of loyalists: that is, they allied themselves with the British cause (apparently voluntarily) in a range of military services and non-military supporting roles. However, continued analysis of the claims reveals that a single label of 'active' is too simplistic to adequately describe the individual experiences of loyalist claimants. Instead, different clusters of the same type of loyalists emerged, which were largely determined by geographic location. One trait which was unique to the claims from the New York City region was that loyalists there were often suspected of loyalism before the war had officially begun: over half of the 66 active loyalists from New York (52 per cent) reported being targeted for loyalism in 1775 and early 1776. That is, they had been identified as loyalists by their fellow colonists before the arrival of British troops and before the signing of the Declaration of Independence.⁹

As the following examples show, these suspected loyalists came from a range of socio-economic backgrounds and endured different experiences. Take, for instance, the case of Azor Betts, an American-born surgeon and physician from New York City. Betts spent the war in a combination of military roles and acted as an army surgeon. His wife would lose two brothers in active service with the British forces. According to his testimony before the Loyalist Claims Commissioners in 1787, New York's Provincial Congress had charged him with providing intelligence to the British in 1775. Imprisoned on the American prison fleet at Esopus Creek on the Hudson River and sentenced to death, Betts described the conditions of his confinement as "cruel to the last degree & enough to kill a more robust constitution."

⁹ British troops first landed on Staten Island, before capturing Long Island and New York City, at the end of June 1776. See Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island*, p. 63.

During his confinement, the barrack-master for the continental troops broke into Betts's home and commandeered his medical supplies for the American forces.¹⁰

James Hughston – a merchant and storekeeper from Jamaica in Queen's County, Long Island – was another claimant who had been targeted for loyalism at an early stage of the conflict. After failing to attend what he considered to be the "unlawful" meetings of the revolutionary committees and refusing to participate in militia duty, Hughston and his wife were threatened by what they described as a "cruel & lawless Mobe [sic]." One night in March 1776, Hughston's house and store were destroyed by fire, almost killing his wife and six children as they slept. Hughston attributed this crime to the local mob, he "being most reliably informed that one of the party exultingly boasted [that] he had burned one Tory's home and store in Jamaica." As soon as the British troops landed at New York, Hughston joined them and enlisted with the city's Loyal Volunteer regiment.¹¹

Similarly, Samuel Hallott of Queen's County on Long Island informed the Commissioners that he was suspected of loyalism as early as June 1776. After being named on what he called "the Black List", Hallott was brought before New York's Provincial Congress by armed guard.¹² The so-called "Black List" was a document issued by Congress in June 1776 which explicitly named one hundred persons in Queens, Kings, Richmond (Staten Island), New York and Westchester Counties as "dangerous and disaffected to the American cause" and called for their apprehension.¹³ After initially transporting soldiers across the Hudson River from Long Island to New York, Hallott spent the latter years of the war in Georgia and South Carolina as a captain with General DeLancey.

New York City lawyer Thomas Barclay, meanwhile, had a similar experience. Barclay was from a prominent New York family: his father was the Anglican rector of New York's Trinity Church, while his wife Susan was a member of the prestigious DeLancey family.¹⁴ During the American Revolution, Barclay served as a Major in Colonel Beverley Robinson's Loyal American

¹⁰ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/25; American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

¹¹ American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/13.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ New York Provincial Congress, *Resolutions relative to persons dangerous and disaffected to the American cause, and to persons of equivocal character*, 5 June 1776, FAA [S4-V6-p1365].

¹⁴ J. Tulloch, 'Thomas Henry Barclay', *Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume VI: 1821 to 1835* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987). Reproduced at <http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/barclay_thomas_henry_6E.html> [accessed 31 August 2017].

Regiment. According to his testimony before the Loyalist Claims Commissioners in 1785, Barclay had been driven from his property in July 1776 “to avoid the persecution of the rebels who drove him to the necessity of taking up arms either for or against his ... sovereign.”¹⁵ In 1779, he was formally named in the Act of Attainder as an enemy to the American State and his estate was forfeited.¹⁶

These accounts (combined with similar recollections by many others) raise important questions regarding how individuals came to be suspected of loyalism at such an early stage. Before the British invasion, there was little that would-be loyalists could practically do to assist the British cause, yet they were still accused of being hostile to American liberties. What processes led to these men being identified as possible loyalists and named on so-called “Black Lists”?

A clue lies in the terminology used to define loyalism. According to James Johnson, being identified as a “Tory” did not necessarily equate to being a loyalist; for many, they were simply “disinterested” towards the American cause.¹⁷ Beginning in August 1775, New York’s Provincial Congress introduced a series of measures designed to control the activities of those who were believed to be “disaffected” or “inimical to the grand cause”. Failure to support the movement for independence increasingly qualified as a crime.¹⁸

But what was the contemporary understanding of “disinterested”, and what sort of people qualified as such? In March 1776, Provincial Congress explicitly defined those “who have not associated, and shall refuse to associate, to defend, by arms, these United Colonies against the hostile attempts of the British Fleets and Armies” as being “notoriously disaffected to the

¹⁵ American Loyalist Claims Commission: Records. TNA: T 79/70; American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

¹⁶ Barclay is named in item one of the Act of Attainder, see New York Legislature, *The New York Act of Attainder, or Confiscation Act*, 22 October 1779, reproduced at <http://archives.gnb.ca/exhibits/forthavoc/html/NY-Attainder.aspx?culture=en-CA> [accessed 22 September 2017]; according to his testimony, Barclay’s estate had been forfeited in the Autumn of 1776.

¹⁷ J. M. Johnson, ‘Introduction’, in J. M. Johnson, C. Pryslopski and A. Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), p. xv.

¹⁸ A. C. Flick, *Loyalism in New York during the American Revolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1901), pp. 60-62.

cause of America.”¹⁹ By order of Congress, such people were to be disarmed. Under this definition and at this early stage of the war, therefore, loyalism was demonstrated through inaction; whether this was refusal to attend committee meetings, failure to enlist in the local militia, or failure to sign the Articles of Association. Indeed, it was not until June 1776 that those persons considered “dangerous and disaffected to the American cause” were accused of performing any positive action to assist the British forces.²⁰ For the earliest part of the conflict therefore, “loyalists” – as we consider them by modern definitions – continued to be referred to in vague, interchangeable descriptions such as “disinterested”, “disaffected”, “suspicious” or “of unequivocal character.”

When considered in light of the public nature of life in New York City, these vague descriptions of loyalism take on a new significance. By the outbreak of the American Revolution, New York City had transformed from the Dutch colonial settlement of New Amsterdam into a Georgian provincial town. Complete with venues which promoted polite sociability – including assembly-rooms, theatres, pleasure gardens, coffee-houses and libraries – New York City’s residents were active participants within a vibrant public sphere. Competing for space, attention and influence within the hustle and bustle of city life, New Yorkers strove to establish genteel and refined reputations for themselves amongst their peers.²¹ Information spread quickly within this network of social spaces and an individual’s private sentiments could become the subject of speculation, if not public knowledge. This was especially true of venues such as coffee-houses and taverns, which served as places for political discussion.²² As the case of New York City merchant Hendrick Oudenaarde demonstrates, when personal conflicts became the topic of coffee-house conversation, matters could escalate into violence – even during peacetime.

After being imprisoned following a financial dispute, Oudenaarde published a series of inflammatory letters in 1766 about Daniel Horsmanden, the Chief Justice of New York’s

¹⁹ New York Provincial Congress, *Eight thousand men ordered for the defence of New-York, All persons disaffected to the cause of America, in the several Colonies, to be disarmed*, 14 March 1776, FAA [S4-V5-p1638].

²⁰ New York Provincial Congress, *Resolutions relative to persons dangerous and disaffected to the American cause*.

²¹ M. Kaartinen, A. Montenach and D. Simonton, ‘Luxury, Gender and the Urban Experience’, in D. Simonton, M. Kaartinen and A. Montenach (eds), *Luxury and Gender in European Towns, 1700-1914* (New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 6-8.

²² B. L. Carp, *Rebels Rising: Cities and the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 63-68.

Supreme Court.²³ Having subsequently recanted the letters as “injurious, false, and scandalous”, he publicly apologised to Horsmanden and believed the matter to be resolved. In 1767, therefore, Oudenaarde was “surprised” to find himself the subject of “Calumny and Abuses” by New York’s residents. He discovered that the source of his unpopularity came from the city’s coffee-house, where a paper had been posted which documented his previous accusations regarding Horsmanden. In a letter to the *New-York Gazette’s* editor, Oudenaarde requested that his letter of apology be printed once again in order to put a stop to his ordeal.²⁴ Oudenaarde’s example is only one of many local disputes, but it demonstrates how smaller personal issues could easily escalate into matters of public concern. During the American Revolution, the political sentiments of suspected loyalists or disaffected persons would be discussed and speculated about in the same way, with the same potential to escalate into physical violence and public retribution.

Returning once again to the claims of Betts, Hughston, Hallott and Barclay, what insight can we gain as to why these individuals might have been suspected of loyalism? One frustrating limitation of the source material is that, as the claims are primarily an account of services provided and financial losses incurred as a result of the claimant’s loyalty, their narratives typically begin at a point after the individual has already been suspected of loyalism. Thus, they provide little information on how the claimant initially came to be identified as a loyalist by their peers. Samuel Hallott’s memorial, for instance, begins in January 1776 when, as a known “friend to Government”, he was captured by a party of one hundred rebels and brought before the Continental Congress at Philadelphia. We can only presume that he had already been identified as potentially inimical to the American cause before this point, but without further information we are unable to determine the specific circumstances.²⁵

Fortunately, Barclay’s account is much more illuminating. Claiming that he “never made any submissions to the Americans”, Barclay demonstrated his disaffectedness to the American cause through his lack of action. Although Barclay does not provide specific details of his lack of “submissions” – and, indeed, this statement appears sufficient for the Commissioners’

²³ H. Oudenaarde, *An expostulatory letter to the Honourable Daniel Horsmanden, Esq, concerning the unnecessary and cruel imprisonment of Henry Oudenarde, late merchant in the city of New-York* (New York: William Weyman, 1766); H. Oudenaarde, *Seven letters to the Honourable Daniel Horsmanden, Esq; concerning the unnecessary and cruel imprisonment of Hendrick Oudenaarde, late merchant in the city of New-York* (New York: William Weyman, 1766).

²⁴ *New York Gazette*, 14 September 1767.

²⁵ American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/13.

assessment of his claim – we can assume that he refused to engage in activities such as taking an oath of allegiance to the revolutionaries, signing the association, engaging with the new government or enrolling with the militia. Instead, in 1776 he purchased a private estate in Ulster County where he hoped to retire and await the war’s conclusion. As a practicing lawyer, Barclay was associated with the traditional establishment through his professional activities and, although he does not make reference to it in his claim, his father’s reputation as a prominent Anglican clergyman would have further strengthened connotations of an association with Britain.

Notably, Barclay was not atypical of his peers in his initial attempts to withdraw from the arena of war: New York City lawyer William Smith – the author of the *History of the Province of New-York* considered in Chapter Two and a staunch loyalist, who would later be appointed as Chief Justice of Quebec – similarly retired to his country estate at Haverstraw in Orange County to avoid the conflict.²⁶ This stance was evidently so common that by the nineteenth century it had become the stereotype of the wealthy New York City gentleman. In James Fenimore Cooper’s 1821 novel *The Spy*, Mr Wharton – the head of the household, who is described as one “who loves his own countrymen, and he loves the British,—so he takes sides with neither” – opted to withdraw to his summer residence in Westchester County, where he attempted “to maintain so strict a neutrality as to insure the safety of his large estate, whichever party succeeded”.²⁷ Unlike the fictitious Wharton, however, Thomas Barclay returned to New York and entered British military service.

Hughston similarly demonstrated his loyalty through non-participation in revolutionary activity, refusing to attend the “unlawful” meetings of the revolutionary committees and failing to participate in militia duty. However, the reasons for his identification as inimical to the American cause might have been more simple: in his professional capacity as a merchant, he supplied the British troops with provisions as they were preparing to land on Long Island.²⁸

²⁶ M. G. Kammen, ‘Introduction: A Character of William Smith, Jr’, in M. G. Kammen (ed.), *The History of the Province of New-York, by William Smith Jr. Volume One* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1972), p. xxx.

²⁷ J. Fenimore Cooper, *The Spy: A Tale of the Neutral Ground* (Digital Edition, 2011), reproduced at <<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/9845/pg9845.html>>[accessed 22 September 2017], Chapters One and Two.

²⁸ American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/13.

Such efforts to assist the British fleets were an example of the very behaviours prohibited by Congress in July 1776.²⁹

Betts's experience is especially intriguing. Initially, he began in similar vein to those of his contemporaries, defining his loyalty through his refusal to engage in any revolutionary activity. He also claimed that he "in short did every Thing in his Power to suppress an unnatural Rebellion", although he did not mention any specific examples of this (nor was he asked to provide any by the Commissioners interviewing him). Where Betts's claim differs from those of his peers, however, is in the direct links that he drew between his reputation as a figure of authority and his identification as a suspected loyalist. Betts described himself as a "well known Practitioner of Physick in New York", who had enjoyed particular success in inoculations. In addition to being "well known", Betts also claimed to be "naturally warm & of an open Disposition." As such, he was "thought to have Influence among the People" and "became immediately very obnoxious to the malcontents."³⁰ Betts's use of the term "people" – as with Hughston's use of the term "mob" – is important and will be explored in more detail in the next section.

In New York City's public sphere, Betts was a well-known and respected figure. As such, he was deemed able to influence the political persuasions of the people around him. This could have included his acquaintances and peers, but also the wider population of his patients; in other words, the poorer members of society who formed the popular element of the revolutionary movement in other American towns.³¹ Thus, Betts was recognised at an early stage by local revolutionary leaders as a person of importance and potentially dangerous. It is unclear what action (if any) Betts took to demonstrate his opposition to the American cause and why he was suspected of providing intelligence to the British in 1775, however it was enough to make his disinterest publicly known.

Thus, through their inaction and failure to engage with the revolutionary movement, the loyalists considered above demonstrated exactly the sort of behaviours that would identify them as being "notoriously disaffected" to the American cause. During the earliest years of

²⁹ New York Provincial Congress, *Resolutions relative to persons dangerous and disaffected to the American cause*.

³⁰ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/25; American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

³¹ For more on class and revolution, see G. B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: The Northern Seaports and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1986).

the Revolution, the alleged political inclinations of New York's residents became topics of public conversation and speculation. The examples considered above suggest that this was especially true for well-known figures and those with connections to Britain or the traditional establishment; this included those whose professions required them to take an oath of allegiance to Britain, such as lawyers and magistrates.

In New York City, this behaviour was not new. The public aspect to daily life had been a common feature of the city for much of the second half of the eighteenth century; men and women engaged in polite social activities within the city's new leisure spaces, discussing politics and their peers.³² What was new, however, was that by the outbreak of the American Revolution such activities potentially carried more sinister consequences. By 1775, in addition to the apparently harmless activities of rumour, gossip and speculation that occurred within the coffee-house or around ladies' tea-tables, there were also state-controlled structures in place which were designed to detect and prosecute those who opposed American independence.³³

In October 1774, the first meeting of the Continental Congress at Philadelphia issued the Articles of Association: a "non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation agreement" anticipated to be a temporary measure "until such parts of the several acts of parliament passed since the close of the last war [1763], as impose or continue duties ... are repealed". Under the terms of the Association, Congress called for a committee to be chosen "in every county, city, and town ... attentively to observe the conduct of all persons touching this association."³⁴

Although they were initially introduced to monitor adherence to the Articles of Association, the actual activities of Committees of Correspondence were often shaped in response to local requirements.³⁵ As we shall see in Albany County, for instance, they became the *de facto* government, fulfilling the municipal functions of the former colonial administration. However, they also functioned as self-styled Committees of Protection and Safety, extending their

³² Carp, *Rebels Rising*, pp. 62-98.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

³⁴ Continental Congress, *The Articles of Association*, 20 October 1774, Article Eleven, reproduced at <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/contcong_10-20-74.asp>[accessed 22 September 2017].

³⁵ Breen in particular has argued that the vagueness of article eleven enabled local committees to shape the terms of their own activities in response to local requirements and extend their authority beyond the powers defined in the initial proceedings. See T. H. Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010), p. 169.

authority to detect and apprehend suspected loyalists. This was usually achieved through informers – who would have gleaned intelligence through hearsay – and by observation of the behaviour of local residents.

In New York City, which continued to enjoy a municipal government – the Provincial Congress – until the British invasion, the Committees of Correspondence did not gain the same significance as they would do further upstate. However, they remained an important presence. Take, for instance, the Committee at Brookhaven in Suffolk County on Long Island. Established in June 1775, the Committee encouraged local residents to monitor their neighbours and to report any suspicious behaviour. Thus, in August 1775, the minutes included a resolution “that a letter be wrote to the Provincial Congress informing them of the conduct of several persons within the limits of this committee.”³⁶ Under New York State law, these committees formed part of a clearly defined hierarchical structure which extended to Provincial Congress and by October 1775 the Committees were granted with powers to apprehend those believed to be inimical to the American cause.³⁷

Thus, with the Committee structure in place to monitor and apprehend suspected loyalists – be they proactively supporting the British or simply “disaffected” to the American cause – speculation about an individual’s political preferences was no longer simply harmless gossip. Within this environment of heightened awareness and neighbourhood monitoring, rumours could escalate to the point where an individual was named on so-called “black lists”, apprehended and questioned by the revolutionary government, or in the worst cases prosecuted and imprisoned on suspicion of being a danger to “the safety of the Colony or the liberties of America”.³⁸

³⁶ 3 August 1775, Minutes of the Committee of Brookhaven, Manor of St George and Patentship of Moriches, 3 August – 21 September 1775, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol405, reproduced at <<http://archives.nypl.org/mss/405>>[accessed 22 December 2016].

³⁷ For an overview of the committee hierarchy, see Flick, *Loyalism in New York*, p. 79; Continental Congress, *Treasurers directed to collect, for Continental Bills, Silver and Gold, to the amount of twenty thousand Pounds, Pennsylvania Currency, for the Army in Canada, Provincial Assemblies or Conventions, and Councils or Committees of Safety, requested to arrest and secure persons whose going at large may endanger the safety of the Colony or the liberties of America...*, 6 October 1775, FAA [S4-V3-p1891].

³⁸ Continental Congress, *Treasurers directed to collect ...* 6 October 1775, FAA I[S4-V3-p1891].

Crowd Culture in New York City

Beyond the “official” infrastructures authorised by the revolutionary government to detect loyalism, there were also unofficial measures in place: “mobs”. New York City formed the centre of political life within the colony. This, combined with mid-century urban improvements, caused its residents to be active participants within the city’s newly-developed public sphere. Engaged with news and events occurring both across the Atlantic and within their own local Assembly, by the 1770s New Yorkers were increasingly politically aware.³⁹ In Britain, one consequence of this politicisation of society was the emergence of extra-parliamentary crowds. Crowds also emerged as a political force within the city of New York.

In their respective analyses of eighteenth-century British political culture, Nicholas Rogers and John Brewer both conclude that by the mid-eighteenth century crowds had become an established part of the popular political landscape.⁴⁰ As studies by George Rudé and, more recently, Katrina Navickas demonstrate, crowds were not composed of the “riff-raff, or the migratory poor” as previously assumed, but drawn from the middling classes of shopkeepers, small masters and journeymen.⁴¹ As such, they served as a mechanism through which the extra-parliamentary nation could display genuine expressions of political sentiment.

According to Rogers and Brewer, eighteenth-century British crowds were legitimised by their “highly ritualised behaviour”: they drew on the European tradition of public celebration and commemoration through oath-taking, parades and mock executions.⁴² In England, political holidays were often marked by violence between local warring factions.⁴³ Similar behaviour can be found in the American colonies: Brendan McConville describes how, in 1764, the

³⁹ D. Copeland, ‘America, 1750-1820’, in H. Barker and S. Burrows (eds), *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 147-54.

⁴⁰ N. Rogers, *Crowds, Culture, And Politics In Georgian Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); N. Rogers, *Whigs And Cities: Popular Politics In The Age Of Walpole And Pitt* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); J. Brewer, *Party Ideology And Popular Politics At The Accession Of George III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

⁴¹ Rudé quoted in Rogers, *Crowds, Culture, And Politics*, p. 8; K. Navickas, *Protest And The Politics Of Space And Place 1789-1848* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016); K. Navickas, *Loyalism And Radicalism In Lancashire, 1798-1815* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁴² Rogers, *Crowds, Culture, And Politics*, p. 10 and p. 275; Brewer, *Party Ideology And Popular Politics*, pp. 186-87.

⁴³ J. Brewer, ‘Theater and Counter-Theater in Georgian Politics: The Mock Elections at Garrat’, *Radical History Review*, 22 (1979-80), pp. 7-11; J. Brewer, ‘The Number 45: A Wilkite Political Symbol’, in S. B. Baxter (ed.), *England’s Rise to Greatness, 1660-1763* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 362-63; K. Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 22.

annual celebration of Guy Fawkes' Night (5 November) was commandeered by local groups in Boston, who appropriated the event for themselves to fight out local tensions.⁴⁴ Similarly, crowds would later tear down and symbolically behead the statue of King George III on New York City's Bowling Green in July 1776, in response to New York's reading of the Declaration of Independence.⁴⁵ The bowling green episode in particular serves as an example of provincial urban extra-parliamentary politics in the American colonies, similar to those documented in Hanoverian England by Kathleen Wilson.⁴⁶

Refocusing our attention back to the loyalist claims, we have already briefly seen how those suspected of loyalism in New York City were occasionally targeted by local crowds or "mobs" before they were formally apprehended by revolutionary authorities. James Hughston, the Long Island merchant whose house and store were burnt down in the middle of the night by a "cruel & lawless Mobe," was not the only one affected in this way.⁴⁷ Before the British forces had arrived in New York, John Hill of Brooklyn – who was later appointed as the Inspector of the Brooklyn Ferry – described being "taken up by the mob and severely beaten", before he fled with his family for protection amongst the British forces at Boston.⁴⁸ William Waddell, a merchant, magistrate and alderman of the City of New York, similarly told the Commissioners that in June 1776 suspected loyalists suffered:

the most cruel and wonton barbarity by the rebel mob by whom they were set on rails and carried around the city exposed in such painful situations to the insults of rebel soldiers and others.⁴⁹

In the same month, Waddell became identified as a target for the mob and the rail was brought to his house. However, he had already fled with his family to their estate at Bloomingdale, leaving the property under the care of an enslaved female domestic servant. Frustrated to find that Waddell had escaped, the mob unleashed their anger upon his servant;

⁴⁴ B. McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p. 1.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 309; H. Hoock, *Empires of the Imagination: Politics, War, and the Arts in the British World, 1750-1850* (London: Profile Books, 2010), pp. 49-53; G. S. Wood, 'A Note on Mobs in the American Revolution', *WMQ*, 23.4 (1966), pp. 635-42.

⁴⁶ Wilson, *The Sense of the People*.

⁴⁷ American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/13.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ According to Thomas Wermuth this punishment was "usually reserved for prostitutes, wife abusers, or other community miscreants". See T. S. Wermuth, "'The women! in this place have risen in a mob': Women Rioters and the American Revolution in the Hudson River Valley", in J. M. Johnson, C. Pryslopski and A. Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), p. 154.

according to Waddell, she was “beat and bruised in a cruel manner that she shortly after died.”⁵⁰

Not only do these examples alert scholars to the existence and activity of popular crowds within New York City, but they also reveal important contemporary ideas concerning loyalism and identity. New York City’s loyalist claimants of all types were consistent in using specific terms and phrases to describe their revolutionary neighbours: in particular, “mobs” and “rebels”. Considered within their contemporary context, this terminology was important.

During the eighteenth century, descriptors such as “crowds” or “the people” implied legitimacy, independent thought, and – although they acted beyond the physical confines of Parliament – crowds in Britain largely followed traditional party lines. According to one 1763 correspondent to the *Gazetteer and London Daily Advertiser*, “the “people” consisted of “those who are able to make any judgement of public affairs,” such as nobility, gentry, lawyers, doctors, clergymen and merchants.⁵¹ This adheres closely with Rudé and Navickas’ definitions of eighteenth-century crowds. With this terminology in mind, returning to the example of New York City surgeon Azor Betts – who was perceived to be able to influence the political persuasions of “the people” – the suggestion is that revolutionaries were wary of his influence amongst New York’s upper and middling classes.⁵²

Conversely, “mob” – the term of choice deliberately used by New York’s loyalist claimants to describe their opponents – suggested a different demographic to Rudé’s and Navickas’s “crowd”. According to Rogers, the word “mob” carried connotations of disreputable status and illegitimate activity, as mobs were often manipulated to advance private interests.⁵³ Brewer similarly found contemporary descriptions of mobs as “canaille”, “bad men, bad husbands, [and] bad fathers” who aimed solely to create confusion and destruction.⁵⁴ Returning again to descriptions reported in London’s *Gazetteer*, “the mob” was not comprised of “the people”.⁵⁵ In Britain, this distinction became important for interpreting the extra-political activities of crowds during numerous national crises of the eighteenth century; these

⁵⁰ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/24.

⁵¹ R.C., Letter to the Printer, *Gazetteer and London Daily Advertiser*, 11 February 1763.

⁵² American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/25; American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

⁵³ Rogers, *Crowds, Culture, And Politics*, p. 10 and p. 20.

⁵⁴ Brewer, *Party Ideology And Popular Politics*, p. 236.

⁵⁵ R.C., Letter to the Printer, *Gazetteer and London Daily Advertiser*, 11 February 1763.

included the food riots of the 1750s, the weavers' riots of the 1760s, and anti-recruitment riots of 1757.⁵⁶

New York City was connected to Britain through regular communications and networks of information exchange. The colonial newspapers – almost entirely printed in New York City – reprinted clippings from the British press, brought into the colony on the latest ships.⁵⁷ Although there may have been a time delay associated with printing British news in the colonies, New Yorkers were aware of happenings within the metropolis and familiar with the terminology being used. This included, for instance, accounts of military force being used to suppress popular rioting in Britain.⁵⁸ Contemporary British linguistic descriptions of mobs and rioters were equally as familiar to those reading the newspaper in New York City as they were to those in other provincial British towns: using the digitised collections of the *Early American Newspapers* database, a search for the word “mob” within items published in New York during the 1760s and 1770s reveals that the term was used regularly in items of both foreign and domestic news.⁵⁹ As we saw in Chapter One, ‘Rabble’ – which had a similar meaning – was used in New York City to discredit Jacob Leisler’s supporters during the 1690s.⁶⁰

There was clearly an appreciation within the city of New York of which members of society constituted “the mob”. Beyond a simple aping of the term from British press clippings, it was used to describe local colonial events without further explanation being required. As we have seen, New York City’s loyalists increasingly adopted the term when making reference to the

⁵⁶ Rogers, *Crowds, Culture, And Politics*, pp. 58-64.

⁵⁷ R. G. Parkinson, ‘Print, Press and the American Revolution’, *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of American History* (Oxford University Press, 2015). Reproduced at <<http://americanhistory.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-9>>[accessed 22 September 2017].

⁵⁸ For more on popular rioting and the Wilkite movement, see J. Sainsbury, ‘The Pro-Americans of London, 1769-1782’, *WMQ*, 35.3 (1978), p. 430; B. Dew, “‘Waving a mouchoir à la Wilkes’: Hume, Radicalism and the North Briton”, *Modern Intellectual History*, 6.2 (2009), pp. 235-60; R. Hammersley, *English Republican Tradition and Eighteenth-Century France: Between the Ancients and the Moderns* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), especially Chapter Six: ‘The Commonwealth Tradition and the Wilkite Controversies’, pp. 100-110; J. Seed, *Dissenting Histories: Religious Division and the Politics of Memory in Eighteenth-Century England* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), especially Chapter Four: ‘Enlightenment, Republicanism and Dissent: William Harris’s Histories’, pp. 99-123.

⁵⁹ A search for the word “mob” in newspapers printed in New York City between 1754 and 1774 conducted using *EAN* [accessed 21 August 2017]. Despite potential limitations with coding and scanning errors during digitisation, the results suggested the term was in common use during the 1750s and 1760s: the years 1754-1763 generated 56 results; while between 1764-1774 there were 422 matches.

⁶⁰ The Humble Address of the Merchants, Traders and Others, 19 May 1690. TNA: CO 5/1113, *Colonial America* [accessed August 2016].

revolutionaries to invoke feelings of violence, public disorder, extra-legal activity and unintelligent thought. Take, for instance, a letter from Boston published in March 1775 in James Rivington's loyalist newspaper, *Rivington's New York Gazetteer*. The letter describes an account of Boston's selectmen assembling for a public meeting in the wake of the events at Lexington and Concord. The author mocks the pretentious actions of the group's "Orator", James Warren, who "put himself into a Demosthenian posture, with a white handkerchief in his right hand, and his left in his breeches, began, and ended *without action*." Warren's oration "was applauded by the mob, but groaned at by the people of understanding ..."; the insinuation therefore, was that "the mob" were less sophisticated, less informed and less genteel than the so-called "people of understanding."⁶¹

Importantly, the intention of this section is not to suggest that there was more "mob" activity in the city of New York than elsewhere within the colony – as we shall see, this was not the case. Instead, this case study aims to stress that New York City's loyalists were unique in the way in which they used the city's so-called revolutionary "mobs" to define their own identities as loyal British subjects. By deliberately using derogatory terms such as "mobs" and "rebels" to describe their political opponents, New York City's loyalists undermined the revolutionaries' credibility by emphasising their social inferiority, their criminality and their violent behaviour. Indeed, "rebel" – the term most commonly used by the loyalists to describe those who modern scholars refer to as "Patriots" – by its very definition implies disobedience, illegitimacy and insurrection.⁶²

Within the memorials considered so far, we have seen that, owing to the politicised nature of public life within the city of New York, a significant portion of loyalist claimants were suspected of loyalism at an early stage of the revolution, often before the war had officially begun. Consequently they became targeted within their communities, whether this was through the newly established revolutionary committees and Provincial Congress, or by locally organised groups who the loyalists later depicted as violent mobs. However, these claimants were not forced into loyalism, as we shall see in the following case studies of Albany and Tryon Counties: their deliberate refusal to engage with the revolutionaries – which, in the visible

⁶¹ *Rivington's New-York Gazetteer*, 16 March 1775.

⁶² According to the OED, 'Patriot' was first used in an American context by Benjamin Franklin in 1773. See B. Franklin to S. Mather, 7 July 1783, Vol. 20, reproduced at <http://franklinpapers.org/franklin/framedVolumes.jsp?vol=20&page=286a> [accessed 18 January 2018].

public sphere of New York City identified these individuals as inimical to the American cause – was an expression of their loyalty. This group of loyalists also enlisted with the British forces as soon as they arrived in New York and remained in military roles until the conclusion of the war.

Passive Loyalists

The next group of loyalist claimants to be considered were more passive in their demonstrations of loyalism. In contrast to the other categories of loyalists identified, these individuals did not provide any tangible or measurable services and activities to advance the British cause. Notably, this group also includes those who claimed to be too elderly or infirm to bear arms in support of the King, but were adamant in their sentiments as true loyalists. Their inclusion is important, as if we only consider those who bore arms as being truly loyal then we deprive those who were over fifty years of age and those who were disabled – occasionally, as a result of prior military service during the Seven Years War – of holding a political opinion.⁶³

Although these loyalists form a small group – of the 66 loyalists considered from the city and county of New York, only 13 (20 per cent) can be described as ‘passive’ – their claims are still deserving of further exploration. What is striking from their testimonies is that, despite not taking any positive action to assist the crown, these claimants strongly considered themselves to be loyal subjects and deserving of compensation as a consequence thereof. In addition, this type of loyalist appears to be a phenomenon confined to New York City: they were particularly concentrated in the city and county of New York and its immediate surrounding environs, or just across the border in neighbouring Westchester County, but not seen in New York’s more rural or frontier regions of Albany or Tryon Counties.

Not only did the activities of ‘passive’ loyalists vary from those of the other types of loyalists, but their memorials and petitions to the loyalist claims commission were also visibly different to loyalists’ claims from other regions. Claims from New York City’s passive loyalists were

⁶³ See for example Samuel Wade: an English-born blacksmith living on Staten Island who came to New York during the Seven Years War with the 48th Regiment of Foot and was lame from a leg wound sustained during the conflict. American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/24; See ‘An Act for Regulating the Militia of the State of New York’, *Laws of the state of New-York, commencing with the first session of the Senate and Assembly, after the Declaration of Independency, and the organization of the new government of the state, anno 1777. By order of the Legislature* (Poughkeepsie: John Holt, 1782), pp. 30-35, which decreed that all able-bodied persons aged sixteen to fifty years must serve in the Militia.

elaborate, descriptive and comparatively much longer than those of loyalists from Tryon or Albany Counties. In contrast, as we shall see, the claims from loyalists resident in New York's more rural regions were typically brief and concise, occasionally listing little more than the loyalist's regiment and year of enlistment. One possible reason for the longer, more complex claims submitted by New York City's loyalists is that they reflected the city's exceptionally high levels of literacy, whereas literacy rates were significantly lower in frontier areas.⁶⁴ Moreover, urban dwellers may also have had more leisure time than rural settlers to develop such skills.⁶⁵ Thus, with an enhanced appreciation of the importance of the written word, New York's loyalists were able to submit persuasive and detailed accounts as they attempted to convince the Commissioners in London that they were deserving of compensation.

However, it may also be possible that those individuals identified as 'passive' loyalists recognised the limitations of their claims. With little quantifiable action available to include within their memorials, these loyalists may have been aware that the written account of their loyalty needed to be persuasive in order for their claims to be successful. Consider the case of Benjamin Booth. A New York City merchant and consignee for the East India Tea Company, English-born Booth declared his unwavering loyalty to Britain in his memorial to the loyalist commission. According to Booth, during the:

trying situation [Revolution] he acquitted himself with so much firmness that it have often been publicly declared in New York that 12 persons of the same spirit and influence united might have prevented all the calamities that have ensued.⁶⁶

However, despite these vocal proclamations and a certificate of loyalty from New Jersey's former Governor (and notorious loyalist) William Franklin, Booth did little to provide practical support for the British cause. Closer consideration of his claim reveals that he retired to his New Jersey estate in early 1776 to avoid the conflict, only returning to New York after the

⁶⁴ L. Andes, 'Literacy's Role in Revolution and Independence: Where have we been, where are we going?', *The International Journal of the Book*, 6.3 (2009), pp. 9-17; E. J. Monaghan, 'Literacy, Instruction and Gender in Colonial New England', *American Quarterly*, 40.1 (1988), pp. 18-41; H. Hodgkins, 'Reading Boone's Writing: Issues in Backcountry Literacy', *Journal of Backcountry Studies*, 6.2 (2011), pp. 1-17; F. W. Grubb, 'Growth of Literacy in Colonial America: Longitudinal Patterns, Economic Models, and the Direction of Future Research', *Social Science History*, 14.4 (1990), pp. 452-54.

⁶⁵ R. D. Brown, *Knowledge Is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700 – 1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 283; J. Schorb, *Reading Prisoners: Literature, Literacy, and the Transformation of American Punishment, 1700-1845* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, & London: Rutgers University Press, 2014).

⁶⁶ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/24.

British had secured control of the city. So far, Booth's actions are not dissimilar to some of those active loyalists considered above; however, where Booth's experience differs is that after returning to New York under British protection, he did not feel compelled to enlist with the British forces or provide any other assistance to the troops. In December 1779, having spent twenty years resident in the colonies, Booth returned to England and left America for good.

Importantly, this variation of loyalism was not confined to New York City's upper classes, as the case of Thomas Ryan demonstrates. Ryan, who had come to New York from Ireland in 1762, worked as a carman transporting merchants' goods around the city in his cart. According to his testimony, he became known as a loyalist when he refused to sign the Articles of Association. As such, he was harassed: his property was plundered, he lost his source of employment and was "obliged to keep out of the way" for his own safety until the British troops arrived. Although Ryan later returned to New York and joined the British forces he never bore arms. In approximately 1779, Ryan too left New York for London and never returned.⁶⁷

Ryan's reference to the Articles of Association and their role in determining his experiences at the hands of New York City's revolutionaries raises an important point about their impact in the city. The Articles of Association were an agreement to boycott British goods. Committees of Observation were established within counties, cities and towns to ensure that individuals signed and adhered to the agreement. As well as promising not to import British or Irish goods into America, those who elected to sign the agreement – or "associate" – also agreed to cease trading with any merchants who refused to sign.⁶⁸ For instance, when residents on Staten Island refused to elect a Committee of Safety to enforce the Association they were threatened with severe economic sanctions by the Committees of Elizabethtown and Woodbridge in New Jersey.⁶⁹ As non-adherents such as Ryan and others found to their detriment, failure to associate became public knowledge: according to Article Eleven of the Association, the names of those who failed to associate, or had associated and subsequently violated the Association, were "to be published in the gazette; to the end, that all such foes

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, AO 12/19.

⁶⁸ Continental Congress, *The Articles of Association*, 20 October 1774, Article Eleven, reproduced at <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/contcong_10-20-74.asp>[accessed 22 September 2017].

⁶⁹ After five months Staten Island conceded, but elected a committee which was almost wholly comprised of Anglicans, with the exception of one member of the Moravian Church and one Dutch Reformed, but included no revolutionary members. Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island*, pp. 34-36.

to the rights of British-America may be publicly known, and universally condemned as the enemies of American liberty.”⁷⁰

In New York City, where trade with Britain dominated the local economy, the Association took on a fundamentally different importance than it would do elsewhere in the colony. Those living in the more rural regions of Tryon and Albany Counties were comparatively unaffected by ideas regarding the pursuit, acquisition and consumption of British imports. Therefore would-be neutrals and loyalists living within these areas of the colony could sign the Association with little consequence to their daily lives. In Albany County, some even took advantage of the remoteness of their location to avoid committing themselves to either side, feigning logistical inability to sign the Association. For instance, in August 1775 the district-level committee at Schenectady responded to a complaint from the county-level committee at Albany that “there are a great Number of Persons in the County who have not yet signed the Association”. According to Schenectady, this was not an issue of disinterest, but was simply a consequence of Albany County being “very extensive, so that there may be many Persons, who have no objection to Sign, and have had no proper opportunity for that purpose.”⁷¹ The situation came to an embarrassing conclusion in the spring of 1776, when the Committee at Schenectady was tasked with recruiting skilled labourers for summer contracts under General Schuyler at Lakes George and Champlain. Under Schuyler’s instructions, only those with proven attachment to the American cause were to be recruited; however, in March 1776 Schuyler accused the Committee of having “betrayed the Confidence Reposed in them” by sending men from Schenectady who had still failed to sign the association.⁷²

In New York City, however, the decision whether to associate or not was potentially life-changing. As the centre of Atlantic trade within the colony, New York City’s residents were highly dependent upon regular British imports, while for the city’s merchants and those in connected industries the trade with Britain provided their livelihoods. Thus, in New York City,

⁷⁰ Continental Congress, *The Articles of Association*, 20 October 1774, Article Eleven reproduced at <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/contcong_10-20-74.asp>[accessed 22 September 2017].

⁷¹ J. Sullivan, (ed.), *Minutes of the Albany Committee of Correspondence 1775-1778* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1923), reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/MinutesOfTheAlbanyCommitteeOfCorrespondence1775-1778Vol1>>[accessed 9 February 2017], p. 211.

⁷² A. Flick (ed.), *Minutes of the Albany Committee of Correspondence 1775-1778, Volume Two. Minutes of the Schenectady Committee 1775-1779, and Index* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1925), reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/minutes1775177802albauoft>>[accessed 9 February 2017], p. 1048 and pp. 1052-53; Sullivan, *Minutes of the Albany Committee* p. 390.

residents were pressured into deciding whether or not to sign the Association – and effectively to adopt a political stance – at a very early stage of the Revolution in a way in which those in other counties were not.

Consideration of the social implications of the Association is important, as it suggests that the distinction between New York City’s loyalists and revolutionaries was more complicated than a simple socio-economic divide. Whereas those who were connected to the traditional establishment became obvious targets for intimidation by New York’s “rebels” and “mobs”, their identification as loyalists was directly connected to their pre-determined allegiances to Britain, rather than a consequence of their elite status. However, there was also recent precedent of crowds targeting individuals who were not elites, but were unpopular for economic and political reasons. Rogers explains that during the English food riots of the 1750s, the main targets for the mob were “principally unpopular dealers and millers” who were suspected of unpatriotic acts such as withholding grain, adulterating flour, or selling British supplies to the enemy.⁷³ In New York City, failure to associate in preference of continuing to import and consume British goods was viewed by American revolutionaries as an equally unpatriotic act, thus identifying such individuals as targets for crowd harassment.

Returning to the accounts of Benjamin Booth and Thomas Ryan, it is notable that both defined their loyalty through their inaction, rather than their action. In contrast to the testimonies of New York City’s ‘active’ loyalists considered above, whose memorials were balanced between their refusal to engage with the revolutionary movement and their military service for the British cause, these ‘passive’ loyalists’ claims were solely dedicated to describing the actions that they had refused to take, rather than any positive action that they took to support the crown.

This pattern is repeated amongst this group of claimants. Leonard Tweed was a boot and shoemaker who had arrived in New York from England in 1766; his wife ran a tavern, inn and eating house. As a known loyalist, Tweed testified that the “Leaders and promoters of the Rebellion” forcibly entered his home one evening in 1775, tarred and feathered him, then carried him “from street to street exhibiting him for the greatest part of the day as a public spectacle in the course of which he received from the populace the most ignominious and cruel treatment.” Despite this treatment, Tweed was never moved to serve with the British

⁷³ Rogers, *Crowds, Culture, And Politics*, p. 68.

forces; he escaped on a ship bound for England shortly after the incident. However, Tweed still felt entitled to claim for compensation from the Commission on the basis that he had “publicly made his attachment [to Britain] known”, and “encouraged his friends to stay loyal.”⁷⁴

A similar example can be found in the claim of William Long. Long, who had arrived in New York from England in 1774, ran a boarding school with his wife “for young ladies of the first families in the province” on Great George Street (off Broadway). Long was pressured into choosing a side at a very early stage of the revolution. According to his claim, by the summer of 1775, “his choices were reduced to either joining the rebels and carrying arms against his sovereign and native county, or risk his all and escape with innocence and unsullied loyalty”. Subsequently Long and his wife chose to flee; first to Elizabethtown in New Jersey in the autumn of 1775, then to the British island of Jamaica in January 1776. Notably, amongst his “reduced” choices, Long’s deposition does not mention the option of carrying arms *for* “his sovereign and native country.”⁷⁵ Unlike those active loyalists who returned to New York after the British occupation to enlist, Long instead chose to remain in Jamaica, where he would eventually lose his property and papers again, this time to a hurricane and earthquake in 1780.

This idea of defining loyalty through the action that individuals do not take, rather than the action which they do take, speaks to the wider historiography of identity theory. Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper define “identity” as the process through which individuals “make sense of themselves, of their activities, of what they share with, and how they differ from, others.”⁷⁶ For this particular group of loyalists, the focus on “how they differ from others” was particularly important for how they viewed their own place within the conflict. Linda Colley explores this idea further in her extensive work on the late-eighteenth century formation of British identity. She argues that “Britishness”, an umbrella concept that sits above local identities, developed primarily as a response to other cultures.⁷⁷ Claiming that “we decide who we are by reference to who and what we are not,” Colley explains that Britons focused on the shared characteristics that united them, rather than those features of regional local identities that divided them.⁷⁸ Applying Colley’s framework to the passive loyalists, they

⁷⁴ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/24.

⁷⁵ American Loyalist Claims Commission: Records. TNA: T 79/70; American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

⁷⁶ R. Brubaker and F. Cooper, ‘Beyond “Identity”’, *Theory and Society*, 29.1 (2000), p. 4.

⁷⁷ L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, 2nd ed. (London: Pimlico, 2003), p. xi and p. 6.

⁷⁸ L. Colley, ‘Britishness and Otherness: An Argument’, *JBS*, 31.4 (1992), p. 311.

identified themselves as loyal simply by projecting themselves in opposition to a shared enemy: the so-called “rebels”, “mobs”, “malcontents”, or “insurgents.” By delegitimizing the actions of their opponents and identifying their internal enemy “as alien, dangerous, and inferior”, loyalists defined themselves against that group and “helped foster a sense of ... common purpose” in the manner that Colley outlined.⁷⁹

Thus, while some of these claims may have been submitted by opportunistic claimants who did little – and, on occasion, nothing at all – to advance the British cause, it is important to consider the claims of New York’s passive loyalists according to contemporary understandings of loyalism. As we have seen, contemporaries viewed loyalism (or “disinterest”) as an attitude or viewpoint, rather than any specific set of actions. Therefore, ‘passive’ loyalists were equally as eligible as their ‘active’ and ‘reluctant’ counterparts to submit a claim.

Reluctant Loyalists

The third group of New York loyalists can be categorized as ‘reluctant’: they appear to have been forced into loyalism by local circumstance. In contrast to the passive loyalists, they did enter military service or provide assistance in non-military supporting roles, but without exhibiting the voluntary displays of loyalism demonstrated by active loyalists. Fuelled by self-interest, reluctant loyalists were of questionable allegiance. They changed sides and even appeared to profit from events during the war. However, regardless of their initial motivations, their later service for the British cause made them eligible to submit a claim to the Loyalist Claims Commission.

To a certain extent, instances of self-interested loyalism can be found elsewhere: under examination, loyalists from across the colony admitted to serving on revolutionary committees and enlisting with the local militia before eventually defecting to the British. However, the nature of New York City as a commercial port and its recent history as a British military headquarters provided unique opportunities for self-interested loyalists. War also provided financial opportunities through privateering, military contracts and maritime work. As Cathy Matson and Gary Nash both identify, one legacy of the colony’s role in earlier eighteenth-century conflicts was that – by the outbreak of the Seven Years War – New York City’s merchants were experienced when it came to capitalising on the economic opportunities presented during times of war. New York’s colonial governor Gerard Beekman

⁷⁹ Colley, *Britons*, p. xiv.

reportedly claimed that the reaction in New York to hearing that “war is declared in England – [was] Universal Joy among the merchants.”⁸⁰

One wartime opportunity for merchants in New York City was to act as contractors, reporting to the British Treasury and furnishing supplies for the British forces. As David Hancock explains, successful contractors were able to make exceptionally large profits. He argues that “in no shorter period could a merchant make a greater amount of money than by executing government contracts in a time of war.” The strategic military location of New York City had put its merchants in prime position to gain from governmental contracts during the Seven Years War. This was later further supported by the establishment of a regular postal service between London and New York.⁸¹ When the British fleet arrived in 1776, the Seven Years War and the artificial economic prosperity which it had triggered in the city of New York remained within living memory.⁸²

Thus, a small group of loyalists attempted to manipulate the war to advance their own interests. Brothers Alexander and Hugh Wallace, New York City merchants who had arrived from Ireland in 1757, provide one such example. In his private capacity, Alexander was demonstrably loyal: not only did he serve as a Company Commander with the New York City Militia, but he had also advanced sums of money to Sir Henry Clinton and Governor William Tryon to pay the British troops in 1776 “when these persons [Clinton and Tryon] were unable to get money from any other house”. This action had led to Alexander being imprisoned for five months in Connecticut.⁸³

Whatever the brothers’ personal allegiances, when it came to their professional interests their practices were more questionable. During the process of the investigation of their claim, the Wallace brothers were summoned before the Loyalist Commission accused of having advanced money to the American Congress; a charge which they denied. When asked his thoughts on the situation, Tryon – one of the witnesses to the brothers’ claim – told the

⁸⁰ Beekman quoted in C. Matson, *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore & London: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), pp. 265-70; Nash, *The Urban Crucible*, pp. 151-56.

⁸¹ D. Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 224.

⁸² Kammen, *Colonial New York*, p. 357; Nash, *The Urban Crucible*, pp. 151-56; T. H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 11.

⁸³ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York) TNA: AO 12/20 for the sole claim of Alexander Wallace, and TNA: AO 12/22 for the joint claim of Hugh & Alexander Wallace.

Commissioners that “the suspicion was strongly that they did so [lend money to Congress]”, but that “it was from an interested motive and not a disaffected one.” As we shall see, this perception of New York’s loyalists being motivated by “interest” was also noted by British Officers. In other words, although the brothers had most likely advanced money to the Americans, they had been motivated to do so by financial gain and the potential to make a profit, rather than through any sense of disloyalty or disaffection to the British cause. According to Tryon’s logic – and, presumably, that of his financially motivated contemporaries in New York City – such action was a defensible excuse for dealing with the enemy. Indeed, Tryon was still convinced of the brothers’ loyalty, to the extent that he would testify in support of their claim before the royal commission.

Benjamin Woolsey Muirson of Suffolk County on Long Island displayed a similar combination of loyal and self-interested activities. American-born Muirson claimed to have “embraced the earliest opportunity of joining his majesty’s troops”: in the summer of 1776 he went on board the British ships harboured at the East End of Long Island to provide intelligence. Subsequently, Muirson was appointed assistant commissary with Sir Henry Clinton’s troops attempting to capture Long Island, before being appointed Lieutenant of Cavalry in Lieutenant Colonel Emerick’s corps in June 1778. Following the disbandment of the regiment in August 1779, Muirson explained to the commissioners that he “was reduced to the necessity of entering into the mercantile line for sustenance”. While Muirson does not provide details of his pre-war occupation, the suggestion is that his time as a commissary taught him the skills necessary to procure and distribute merchandise, and earn an income.⁸⁴

So far, Muirson’s wartime activities to assist the British cause would identify him as an active loyalist, someone who voluntarily and enthusiastically entered military service. However, his loyalty came into question when the Commissioners examined the finer details of his claim. Under his schedule of reported losses, Muirson was attempting to claim for stock which had been plundered by Connecticut rebels; under the restrictions defined by the Commission, such an inclusion was permitted within the claim.⁸⁵ However, the Commissioners were surprised to find that the said merchandise had been plundered while in the hands of known revolutionaries. Upon further questioning, it transpired that these individuals were Muirson’s

⁸⁴ Hancock, *Citizens of the World*, p. 225.

⁸⁵ For further discussion of Connecticut raiding on Long Island, see H. M. Ward, *Between the Lines: Banditti of the American Revolution* (Westport, CT & London: Praeger, 2002), Chapter 3 ‘Long Island Marauders’, pp. 33-49.

business associates and that he had distributed the stock to them for its sale on Long Island. Thus, although Muirson was clearly loyal in his private capacity, when it came to his commercial interests, he evidently showed no moral concerns about selling goods to both loyal and rebel customers.⁸⁶

Others were even more opportunistic in their approach. Barnabas Day, an American-born farmer from Essex County in nearby New Jersey, claimed that he was unable to join the British during the early years of the war, citing “a bad state of health.” Although Day did not intend to serve with the British forces, he still hoped to gain a profit from their proximity: during the winter of 1779, Day left Essex County for New York City with two horses and a wagon loaded with beef valued at £55 (sterling). Day had been planning to sell the beef to the British forces but was apprehended by rebels who confiscated his cargo (which he subsequently claimed for as property lost on account of his loyalty). He was then found guilty of aiding the enemy before a rebel Committee, and forced to head to New York for protection.⁸⁷

Although ethically questionable, these practices were not new. Evidence from court records demonstrates that during the Seven Years War New York City merchants were repeatedly prosecuted for trading with the enemy. Waddel Cunningham and Thomas White, for instance, were charged in 1762 with “illegal correspondence and communications with the French king and his subjects” after supplying them with “provisions and naval stores and other necessities.”⁸⁸ John Keating and William Kennedy were charged with a similar crime; they were accused of exporting “oil, woollen and linen cloth, a great quantity of gold and silver coin” to the French at Port Saint Louis. The court condemned Keating and Kennedy for:

devising and intending unlawfully wickedly and corruptly to aid and assist the enemies of our lord the king and to have keep and maintain an illegal communication and correspondence with the said enemies of our said lord the king.⁸⁹

While British officials in New York viewed trade with the enemy as unpatriotic, opportunistic individuals adopted a different perspective. As Siobhan Talbott demonstrates, such behaviours were endemic during times of war. For instance, during periods of the seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries when Britain was at war with France, trade

⁸⁶ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/30.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, AO 12/32.

⁸⁸ John Tabor Kemp Papers, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

between Scottish and Irish merchants with the French had continued to flourish, despite its prohibition by the English. Her conclusion that, during times of war, “for the merchant classes commercial concerns were often more important than national divisions” is equally applicable to New York City during the American Revolution.⁹⁰ As we have seen, as long as a loyalist considered themselves to be “steadfast” in their allegiance to Britain, their commercial interests were a separate concern. Thus, not only were some loyalists comfortable trading with the enemy, they even attempted to secure financial compensation for losses incurred as a result.

Although these loyalists comprise only a small group their presence is still notable, at least in part because they contributed to some of the negative perceptions of American loyalists that emerged in Britain during the late 1770s and early 1780s. In the British press – both London and provincial – the American war became intrinsically linked to Westminster politics: elements of the Whig faction were anti-war, while the Tories called for its continuation.⁹¹ Military successes and failures were attributed to the personalities and political persuasions of individual leaders; hence, failures were blamed upon the Whig General William Howe and his brother Admiral Richard Lord Howe, while General John Burgoyne – or, “Gentleman Johnny”, as he was popularly referred to by the press – received much more favourable reporting, despite his capitulation to the American forces at Saratoga.⁹² Consequently, loyalist exiles found a mixed reception in England; while some found sympathetic hospitality, others were branded as cowards and “damned American rebels”.⁹³

⁹⁰ S. Talbot, ‘British Commercial Interests on the French Atlantic Coast, c.1560-1713’, *Historical Research*, 85.229 (2012), p. 402; see also S. Talbot, “‘Such unjustifiable practices?’: Irish trade, settlement and society in France, 1688-1715’, *Economic History Review*, 67.2 (2014), pp. 556-577 for an assessment of Irish-Franco migration and trade, and S. Talbot, ‘Beyond “the Antiseptic Realm of Theoretical Economic Models”: New Perspectives on Franco-Scottish Commerce and the Auld Alliance in the Long Seventeenth Century’, *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 31.2 (2011), pp. 149-68 for her conclusion that the Auld Alliance enjoyed between Scotland and France continued after its assumed conclusion in 1560.

⁹¹ J. Sainsbury, ‘The Pro-Americans of London, 1769-1782’, pp. 423-24.

⁹² S. M. Lutnick, ‘The American Victory at Saratoga: A View From the British Press’, *NYH*, 44.2 (1963), pp. 103-27; S. M. Lutnick, *The American Revolution and the British Press, 1775-1783* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1967).

⁹³ Loyalist exile Samuel Curwen, for instance, describes how in Bristol he was “attacked by the virulent tongue of a vixen, who saluted us by the names of ‘damned American rebels,’ etc.”. 17 June 1777. See G. A. Ward, *The Journal and Letters of Samuel Curwen, an American in England, from 1775 to 1783; with an appendix of biographical sketches*, 4th ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1864), p. 154; W. Brown, ‘American Loyalists in Britain’, *History Today*, 19.10 (1969), p. 674; M. Jasanoff, ‘The Other Side of Revolution: Loyalists in the British Empire’ *WMQ*, 65.2 (2008), pp. 211-14; S. M. Lutnick, ‘The Defeat at Yorktown: A View from the British Press’, *Virginia Magazine of History & Biography*, 72.4 (1964), pp. 471-78.

Lieutenant General Sir William Howe had his own opinions on the motivations of the American loyalists. In his public response to Joseph Galloway's criticism of his wartime conduct, Howe proposed that "some [of the American loyalists] are loyal from principle, [but] many from interest." Howe went on to explain the loyalists' "interest" in strikingly similar terms to those outlined above. He claimed that the British army "received assistance from locals [Americans] because they knew they would be paid [in sterling], and had no opinion of the value of continental currency."⁹⁴

General Burgoyne provided a similar assessment of New Yorkers' loyalty when writing to Lord George Germaine:

I find daily reason to doubt the sincerity of the resolution of the professing loyalists. I have about 400, but not half of them armed, who may be depended upon; the rest are trimmers, merely actuated by interest.⁹⁵

Once again, loyalists were suspected by British officials of being motivated more by financial incentives than through any true sense of loyalty to the nation. As we have seen, this variation of loyalty was evidently present in New York City, and – with the British military headquarters based at New York City – the loyalists considered above were potentially some of the individuals with whom Howe and others came into contact.

So far the focus of this case study has been dedicated to the claims of white male loyalists. The final two sections of this study now turn to focus on the claims of two groups which arguably deserve individual attention: New York City's black loyalists and female loyalists.

Black Loyalists

Included within the body of claims from the city and county of New York are three memorials of special importance: the claims of three black loyalists, both free and enslaved. Importantly, these claims appear to be the only memorials of their type which exist for the whole colony of New York; any other references to black New Yorkers within the claims studied refer to slaves only in passing, most commonly listing them amongst items of property lost. This is in contrast to the southern states, where the occurrence of claims submitted by black loyalists

⁹⁴ Howe, quoted in J. Galloway, *A Reply to the Observations of Lieut. Gen. Sir William Howe, on a Pamphlet, Entitled Letters to a Nobleman*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Gregg Press, 1972), p. 16 and pp. 24-25.

⁹⁵ General Burgoyne to Lord Germaine, 20 August 1777, in General J. Burgoyne, *A State of the Expedition from Canada, As Laid Before the House of Commons, by Lieutenant-General Burgoyne, and Verified by Evidence* (London: J. Almon, 1780), Appendix pp. xxiv-xxvi, consulted courtesy of the Earl of Derby, Knowsley Hall.

is comparatively much higher, thus making the claims from the city and county of New York significant.⁹⁶

As we have seen within this and the following case studies, even some of those white loyalist claimants who professed to be steadfast in their allegiance to Britain attempted to delay joining the war for as long as they could. This raises the question, therefore, of what motivated black loyalists – who did not share the same emotional and cultural attachment to Britain as anglicised whites – to enlist with the British troops. In November 1775 the Royal Governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, famously offered freedom to the slaves of American revolutionaries in return for abandoning their masters and enlisting with the British forces.⁹⁷ Despite attempts by the British Army to prevent the enlistment of black soldiers – including Howe’s assessment in March 1777 that all “Negroes, Mollatoes, and other Improper Persons” should be disbanded – black loyalists continued to enlist with the British forces in return for their freedom.⁹⁸

Although slaveholding was not as pervasive in colonial New York as it was in the southern colonies, New Yorkers held slaves: Joyce Goodfriend identifies that slaves had been transported to New York since the 1660s; while Serena Zabin claims that New York’s black population accounted for between 11-15 per cent of the colonial population, the majority of whom were enslaved.⁹⁹ Thus, New York City was home to the largest black community north of the Chesapeake.¹⁰⁰ Meanwhile, a small, but notable, portion of New York’s loyalist claimants (fewer than 10 per cent) sought compensation from the British government for slaves confiscated by revolutionary forces and committees. The distribution of these claims also indicates that slaveholding was not confined to New York City; claims for lost slaves were evenly distributed across the counties of New York, Albany, Westchester, Dutchess and even

⁹⁶ J. Corbitt David, *Dunmore's New World: The Extraordinary Life of a Royal Governor in Revolutionary America - with Jacobites, Counterfeiters, Land Schemes, Shipwrecks, Scalping, Indian Politics, Runaway Slaves, and Two Illegal Royal Weddings* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), p. 137; K. Mason, ‘The American Loyalist Diaspora and the Reconfiguration of the British Atlantic World’, in E. H. Gould and P. S. Onuf (eds), *Empire and Nation: The American Revolution in the Atlantic World* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press), pp. 253-55.

⁹⁷ Corbitt David, *Dunmore's New World*, p. 2.

⁹⁸ Gilbert, *Black Patriots and Loyalists*, p. 116.

⁹⁹ J. D. Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot: Society and Culture in Colonial New York City, 1664-1730* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 8-11; S. Zabin, *Dangerous Economies: Status and Commerce in British New York* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), pp. 6-7.

¹⁰⁰ Zabin, *Dangerous Economies*, pp. 6-7; J. P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), p. 132.

as far north as Tryon.¹⁰¹ According to Francis Cogliano, however, the colonial slave population was concentrated within New York City.¹⁰² At the same time, the city and county of New York was unique in its demographic composition as it included a small but significant free black population.¹⁰³

As mentioned within the introduction to this thesis, the Loyalist Claims Commissioners established four possible criteria which claimants were required to meet in order to be eligible for compensation. Successful loyalist claimants needed to demonstrate that they had lost property within the United States, lost life appointments or official positions held during colonial rule, lost a professional income to which they had been accustomed before 1775 and, in the case of a claim being submitted by an heir, the heir had also to prove their loyalty.¹⁰⁴ In theory, therefore, as long as they met the stipulated criteria, black loyalists were eligible to apply for compensation; although, as we shall see, in practice they often experienced different treatment to their white counterparts.

Consider the claim of John Thompson: a free black from Long Island, who lived with his mother at the outbreak of war.¹⁰⁵ During the war, Thompson acted as Colonel Edmund Fanning's servant, carrying correspondence between Fanning and New York City's mayor, David Matthews.¹⁰⁶ As a result of this activity, Thompson was imprisoned by the American forces. His claim was for the loss of a house and ten acres left to him by his father; he assumed that the Americans had "turned her [his mother] out". Although there is no surviving record of the questions asked by the Commissioners, the white loyalists' oral testimonies largely follow a similar format, indicating a general style of questioning. The inference from Thompson's

¹⁰¹ Thomas Baines argued that the Albany Dutch kept slaves on their plantations owing to the establishment of Dutch slave trading colonies in Africa, see T. Baines, *History of the Commerce and Town of Liverpool, and of the Rise of Manufacturing Industry in the Adjoining Counties* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1852), p. 386.

¹⁰² F. D. Cogliano, *Revolutionary America, 1763-1815: A Political History* (London & New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 14; Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island*, p. 20.

¹⁰³ Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, pp. 8-11; Kammen, *Colonial New York*, p. 180; J. Corbitt David estimated New York City's black population to be 3000 in *Dunmore's New World*, p. 28.

¹⁰⁴ M. B. Norton, *The British-Americans: The Loyalist Exiles in England, 1774-1789* (London: Constable, 1974), p. 201.

¹⁰⁵ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/30.

¹⁰⁶ Instances of the employment of black servants by British officers were relatively common. In England, the comparative rarity of black domestic servants made them curiosities and status symbols for their owners, hence their appeal in North America. See C. Molineux, *Faces of Perfect Ebony: Encountering Atlantic Slavery in Imperial Britain* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), pp. 18-60; D. Dabydeen, 'The Role of Black People in William Hogarth's Criticism of Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Society', in J. S. Gundara and I. Duffield (eds), *Essays on the History of Blacks in Britain: From Roman Times to the Mid-Twentieth Century* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1992), pp. 30-57.

account, however, is that black loyalists were subjected to a different set of questions, suggesting that black loyalists had to justify themselves in a different way to that of their white counterparts.

For instance, the first recorded comment in Thompson's evidence – which is not echoed in any of the other claims considered as part of this study – is that he "says he is a Christian". When assessing the credibility of his claim to lost property, the commissioners noted that "he has nobody who can prove his loss". Although this statement was true, Thompson was not the only individual to fail to provide a witness to support his claim; however, he appears to have been the only claimant to have had this recorded formally. Whether these questions were directly asked, or whether Thompson volunteered this information is unclear, but it is unusual that he is the only individual out of over 400 loyalists sampled to make these declaratory statements.

The claim of David King of New York City suggests a similar theme.¹⁰⁷ King, whose surname was presumably adopted for its deliberate loyalist symbolism, had been enslaved at the outbreak of war. His master was one William Rippon, who allegedly "gave him liberty to do as he pleased during the rebellion". Coincidentally, King was Thompson's counterpart: he was employed by David Matthews to carry letters between the mayor, Fanning and Governor Tyron. After being discovered by the Americans, King left for Rhode Island, where he worked as a shoemaker within the British fort. His claim was for leathers and stock left behind upon the evacuation of New York.

King's account raises important questions about the opportunities available to slaves in the urban centre of New York City compared to those in more rural and upstate areas. As an urban slave, King was skilled; it was through a combination of his skill as a labourer and his proximity to the British forces that he gained employment at the fort and was able to purchase the stock for which he would later claim compensation. The exact circumstances surrounding how King gained his freedom remain unclear, although the suggestion is that he took advantage of the chaos of social upheaval to escape enslavement. King was questioned repeatedly by the Commissioners about the manner through which he gained his liberty, before they eventually concluded that he "admits he has gained his liberty by the war, but says he should have had it long ago if the war had not happened as Mr Rippon promised to give it to him."

¹⁰⁷ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/19.

Consequently, King was asked his monetary value as human chattel in 1775; a statement which was unique to this claim and not repeated elsewhere.

The final example of Benjamin Whitecuff provides an exceptional case of a black loyalist from a revolutionary family and documents the experiences of a juvenile within the British forces. Whitecuff, from Jamaica on Long Island, joined the British at Staten Island in 1775.¹⁰⁸ He was approximately ten years old at the time; his father – described by witnesses as a mulatto – and brother had already taken the American side, leaving Benjamin behind. Such action was not quite as callous as it appears to modern standards: upon leaving to join the continental forces, Whitecuff's father allegedly left him the family farm and accompanying sixty acres, telling him that "he could claim it [the farm] for himself if the British took it." Presumably, the intention was to keep the farm within the family in the event of either an American or a British victory. The Whitecuffs were not unique amongst eighteenth-century families in their attempts.¹⁰⁹

Despite being underage, Whitecuff was employed by Sir Henry Clinton and Sir William Ayscough as a spy. He claimed to have been "at all times very assiduous and successful in the part he undertook". Whilst employed on secret service, Whitecuff was captured and lynched by a party of rebels in New Jersey, before being rescued by a party of British soldiers. Captured again and sent to Boston to be hung, Whitecuff escaped with the assistance of a Liverpool privateer who took him to the island of Tortola, from whence he made his way to England. Whitecuff proceeded to have an extraordinary military career with the British forces, both during the American war and after: he served at both the defence of Mahon [Menorca] and "in the hottest of the siege" at Gibraltar, earning £10 from the Treasury in 1784 and guaranteeing a £4 annual pension by the age of twenty. However, despite Whitecuff's exceptional story and service, the commissioners felt it important to note that "he can't read, his memorial was drawn out by a lawyer". As this thesis considers elsewhere, many white claimants were also unable to read, while even those who could read were not guaranteed

¹⁰⁸ According to Papas this was a common occurrence, with Staten Island serving as a focal point for black loyalists wanting to enlist. Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island*, p.72.

¹⁰⁹ See for instance Ruma Chopra's claim that many loyalists chose sides "to maintain the security of their kin and property, not necessarily out of deep political convictions." R. Chopra, *Choosing Sides: Loyalists in Revolutionary America* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013), p. 3; One of the primary concerns for many exiled loyalist families during the post-war period was ensuring that they could provide for their family's futures. See for example Keith Mason's account of the Scottish-Virginian merchant James Parker, who drew upon Atlantic-wide loyalist acquaintances to secure education and employment for his sons. Mason, 'The American Loyalist Diaspora', pp. 249-50.

to have been able to write. However, this statement is not repeated elsewhere within the body of claims consulted.¹¹⁰

Returning to the question at hand, what can the claims of New York's black loyalists tell us of their motivations for joining the British and the opportunities available to them? Significantly, none of the loyalists considered above provided a clear explanation for why they joined the British; their memorials are mainly a list of their services provided for the British cause. Unlike the claims of many of their white counterparts, they do not talk of their loyalty and allegiance to the British crown. However, this lack of information might be a consequence of contemporary social practice. For instance, with the exception of an occasional reference to the Americans as "the rebels", the black loyalists considered said little else to criticise the conduct of their opposition. This may be reflective of wider social convention in which blacks were unable to pass comment on the actions of whites.¹¹¹

Black loyalists' motivations for joining the British need to be considered within the broader context of black resistance and the struggle for emancipation, which predated the revolutionary crisis. As Sylvia Frey explains, between 1765 and 1785 enslaved populations from across the American colonies typically viewed the American Revolution as an opportunity to secure their freedom: in the southern colonies, for instance, runaway slaves took advantage of the social upheaval to form fugitive maroon communities. Meanwhile, in the northern colonies, black populations – who, according to Frey, were disproportionately urban, American-born and English-speaking – were quick to invoke the rhetoric of the American Revolution to support their own calls for emancipation. As early as 1773, for instance, General Thomas Gage (who was then posted in Boston) received multiple petitions from groups of enslaved persons offering to fight for the British in return for their freedom.¹¹² Their actions, and those of similar locally-organised initiatives in Virginia and Georgia, came long before Dunmore's proclamation made the recruitment of enslaved persons official British policy. Thus, while the promise of freedom may have motivated enslaved persons in New York such as David King, what of the city's free black population? As Frey and Cogliano explain, their options were severely limited: in November 1775 the Continental Congress

¹¹⁰ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/19.

¹¹¹ E. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), p. 318.

¹¹² S. Frey, *Water from the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 50-66.

banned all black persons – both free and enslaved – from entering the American service. Until the ban was relaxed in 1777, therefore, those persons who wanted to defend their free status were left with only one option: the British.¹¹³

As we have seen, the black loyalists considered from New York City appear to have been employed in somewhat different roles from their white counterparts. Scholarship indicates that their experiences were typical: as John Pulis and Todd Braisted explain, black loyalists were largely employed in non-military roles including spies, labourers and musicians. This action freed up white units who could be put to use as soldiers. According to Braisted, even the ‘Black Pioneers’ regiment were unarmed, but employed in construction and provisions.¹¹⁴

The evidence from the city and county of New York therefore, albeit limited, suggests that black loyalists experienced the war in a different way to white colonists. The claims’ usefulness for considering the experiences of the enslaved is limited, as slaves were unlikely to have property and were therefore ineligible to submit a claim. However, as we have seen, the suggestion from the experience of David King indicates that skilled urban slaves, living in close proximity to the British forces, may have had more opportunity to escape enslavement than those enslaved on rural farms located further upstate. Whether slave or free, the opportunities available to black loyalists were restricted as they were considered ineligible for military service. Despite this, as officers’ servants and intelligence carriers, New York City’s black loyalists interacted with the highest levels of the British military command; a privilege which was only enjoyed by a minority of whites.

Female Loyalists

In 2013, Kacy Tillman asked “what is a female loyalist?”¹¹⁵ The answer to that question is beyond the confines of this dissertation; however, the following case studies aim to contribute to the wider discussion of female loyalism by providing an assessment of the motivations and activities of loyalist women in New York – be they wives, mothers, daughters or individual claimants. As we shall see, the opportunities and activities available to women varied

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78; Cogliano, *Revolutionary America*, pp. 186-87.

¹¹⁴ J. W. Pulis, ‘Introduction’, in J. W. Pulis (ed.), *Moving On: Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World* (New York & London: Routledge, 2013), p. xiv; T. W. Braisted, ‘The Black Pioneers and Others: The Military Role of Black Loyalists in the American War for Independence’, in J. W. Pulis (ed.), *Moving On: Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World* (New York & London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 3-12; Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island*, p. 73.

¹¹⁵ K. Tillman, ‘What is a Female Loyalist?’, *Common Place*, 13.4 (2013), reproduced at <<http://www.common-place.org/vol-13/no-04/tillman/>>[accessed 22 September 2017].

according to location; in this respect, loyalist women were not dissimilar to their male counterparts.

Of the loyalist claims sampled as part of this study, 29 of the 424 were submitted by women: 6 of these (21 per cent) were submitted by women living within the city and county of New York, or its immediate environs. Thus, of the 66 claims considered within this case study of New York City, 9 per cent were submitted by female loyalists. This is in contrast to the findings of Mary Beth Norton, who notes that almost 15 per cent of the total body of loyalist claims were submitted by women.¹¹⁶

Joan Hoff Wilson's warning against generalising women as a homogenous group is particularly relevant for the case of New York City's female loyalists, even in a small sample of only six claimants.¹¹⁷ Forming a mixture of claims from widows and single women, there was little consistency between them. Considering widows, for instance, some women were widowed as a result of war, while others had been widowed before the outbreak of revolution. It was often unclear who the loyal party was: some claims were lodged under a widow's name, but referred largely to the activities of their husbands (and, if applicable, sons) as evidence of their loyalty; while others were lodged by male relatives, but referred to the activities of female loyalists. Furthermore, while the claims of white male loyalists generally followed a generic format, the content of women's claims varied considerably. Mary Beth Norton attributes this to women being excluded from social spaces such as coffee-houses where the claims process was discussed, thus denying women access to practical advice regarding the successful completion of compensation claims.¹¹⁸

As we shall see in the following examples, two broad conclusions can be drawn from the claims of New York City's female loyalists. First, the proximity of these women to British soldiers had a great impact on the potential activities and services which they could provide to assist the British war effort. Compared to their counterparts in Albany and Tryon Counties, female loyalists in New York had more and unique opportunities to demonstrate their loyalty.

¹¹⁶ Norton, 'Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War', p. 388. While Norton is reading this information quantitatively from the entire body of 3,225 loyalist claims, this study adopts a qualitative approach for 424 claims. The selection process used for this study may account for this discrepancy.

¹¹⁷ J. Hoff Wilson, 'The Illusion of Change: Women and the American Revolution', in A. F. Young (ed.), *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press), p. 386.

¹¹⁸ Norton, 'Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War', p. 400.

Secondly, in a trend which compares to the way in which New York City's male loyalists described their own attitudes and behaviours, when it came to outlining their loyalty and deservedness for compensation New York City's female loyalists were more vocal and more confident than their rural counterparts in outlining their contributions to the war effort.

The claim of Rachel Wetmore is especially notable, as it shows us the complexity of different roles played simultaneously by a loyalist wife and mother.¹¹⁹ Before the war, Rachel had been married to Benjamin Ogden, a successful house carpenter and joiner from New York City. Her claim initially relates to the activities of her husband and son: Benjamin had served as lieutenant in Montfort Browne's Prince of Wales American regiment, while her eldest son was an ensign with the New York's Volunteers. Rachel describes in detail how her husband was targeted by revolutionaries in 1775, claiming that "being of a bold spirit and a thorough loyalist he [Ogden] was one of the first laid hold on in the city of New York". Since revolutionaries prohibited trade with known loyalists, Rachel claims that, as a suspected loyalist, Benjamin's business suffered greatly. Between July 1775 and February 1776, Benjamin was imprisoned for loyalism.

As Tillman rightly identifies, many women "did not always get to decide their political affiliation for themselves"; instead – and, as we shall see repeatedly within the following examples – many women became loyalists by association, most often through marriage.¹²⁰ However, Elaine Chalus convincingly demonstrates how elite women in Georgian England could be important political actors in their own right, particularly through the hosting of social events.¹²¹ As we shall see momentarily, the latter appears to have been true in Rachel's case. Admittedly, while Rachel and Benjamin Ogden were not elite by the standards of eighteenth-century British high society, by New York City standards they were comparatively prestigious: Benjamin employed twenty journeymen and three apprentices; while Rachel mentions that the couple were wealthy enough for all of their four children to have received a formal education and the couple had savings for their future retirement. They were also well-acquainted with Azor Betts, the physician considered in detail earlier within this chapter; Betts provided an oral testimony in support of Rachel's claim.

¹¹⁹ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/25.

¹²⁰ K. Tillman, 'What is a Female Loyalist?', *Common Place*, 13.4 (2013), reproduced at <<http://www.common-place.org/vol-13/no-04/tillman/>>[accessed 22 September 2017].

¹²¹ E. Chalus, 'Elite Women, Social Politics, and the Political World of Late Eighteenth-Century England', *Historical Journal*, 43.3 (2000), pp. 669-697.

Although she draws heavily on the actions of her husband to demonstrate her deservedness for compensation, Rachel also stresses her own role in supporting the British cause. Until February 1776, while her husband was imprisoned by American forces, Rachel opened her home as an asylum for loyalists from across the colonies who were attempting to reach Governor Tryon, currently on-board the ship *Asia*. Rachel describes how she undertook “active, discreet behaviour” in providing loyalist refugees with lodging and provisions; all of this was conducted independently, drawing upon Rachel’s polite skills of sociability and entertaining. She was proud to have received what she described as “kind encouraging words” from Tryon and Fanning in 1776 who recognised her efforts. Thus, considering her own actions, those of her eldest son and her husband (who was killed in action in August 1780), Rachel concluded that “perhaps no woman in America in equal circumstances has said more, done more, laboured more, and spent more to encourage, comfort and support loyalists.”¹²²

For New York’s loyalist women, however, exile served as a great social leveller in ways which were not apparent from the accounts of male exiles. As we have seen, some loyalists were able to escape to England and rebuild their lives there. Despite her pre-war social prestige, proximity to the British forces and subsequent opportunities for interaction with New York’s elite, Rachel was apparently unable to escape the fate endured by countless female loyalists across the colony. Driven from her home, she eventually settled at the city of Saint John in New Brunswick. Although she was successful in securing a lieutenant’s pension from the British treasury, Rachel explains how she was “induced” to marry Timothy Wetmore – an attorney formerly of New York City – on account of her extreme poverty; in a cruel twist of fate, Wetmore’s property had been confiscated after they had wed, denying her the financial stability for which she had entered the marriage. Thus, she found herself “in a hard country, in an advanced stage of life, far from her native country and numerous friends and relations where she formerly lived much respected.” As we shall see in Tryon and Albany County, many war widows were forced to remarry for economic stability.¹²³ However, few were as vocal as Rachel in expressing their dissatisfaction with both the social convention and their new husbands.

¹²² Elaine Chalus found a similar pattern with respect to women’s requests for patronage to the Duke of Newcastle. See E. Chalus, *Elite Women in English Political Life, c.1754-1790* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 106-56.

¹²³ S. Bielinski, 'The People of Colonial Albany, 1650-1800: The Profile of a Community', in W. Pencak and C. E. Wright (eds), *Authority and Resistance in Early New York* (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1988), p. 7.

Beyond raising loyal sons and hosting esteemed military officials, the joint claim of Lorenda Holmes and Mary Smith reveals some of the more daring opportunities available to loyal women in New York City.¹²⁴ In March 1776, whilst living with the prestigious Walton family in New York City, Lorenda was accused of loyalism by association: the Waltons had previously been identified by the New York Assembly as loyalists, therefore Holmes must have been loyal also. Her reputation was not helped by the actions of her aunt, Mary Smith. Smith, a known loyalist who owned a boarding and lodging house, was openly displeased with having a company of rebel soldiers quartered at her premises.

As a loyal subject, Holmes described to the commissioners how she carried letters to British officers stationed on-board the *Asia* concealed within her petticoat. This in itself was a hazardous activity: while trying to avoid being fired at by revolutionary forces, Holmes sustained an injury reaching the ship. Her reputation was also severely damaged as a consequence and she became known as a “girl of the town”. On land, Holmes carried concealed letters between Eastchester in Westchester County and the city of New York, which advised would-be loyalists of places where they could seek asylum (such as Rachel Wetmore’s home). She also acted as a guide to parties of loyalist men making the journey to join the British at New York.

In November 1776, Holmes was made homeless after the Walton family had been forced – as we have seen with so many other loyalist families from New York – to flee the city. She attempted to move into Smith’s house, only for the soldiers lodged there to turn them both out of the premises; Smith and her son were subsequently imprisoned, charged with collaborating with New York City Mayor David Matthews to poison revolutionary officers. Thus, Holmes made her way to England, where she was eventually joined by Smith in 1783.

According to Norton, women on both sides of the conflict had thought that they would be excluded from the events of war; however they were shocked to find themselves stripped of their property, abused, humiliated and threatened.¹²⁵ Holmes describes what she terms as “brutal” behaviour at the hands of revolutionary soldiers. In one incident at Smith’s lodgings, Holmes describes how she and Smith were accused of poisoning food prepared for the soldiers stationed there; they were subsequently forced by the soldiers to eat the food

¹²⁴ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/30.

¹²⁵ Norton, ‘Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War’, p. 398.

themselves. She was also tortured for serving as a guide to loyalist refugees: in her statement to the Commissioners, Holmes describes how her feet were burned with hot coals “in a most shocking manner”. In a separate incident, while visiting the wife of a known loyalist, Holmes claimed to have been stripped, searched and exposed naked in front of the window by revolutionary committeemen conducting a search of the premises. Such actions not only violated contemporary military etiquette outlined *ius in bello* – which stipulated that those who offered no resistance, including women, children and the elderly or infirm, could not be maltreated – but they were also traumatising for the victims.¹²⁶ As Holmes describes, she “received no wounds or bruises from them [,] only shame and horror of the mind”.

To a certain extent, possibilities for women to demonstrate their loyalty were restricted. However, women in New York City had unique opportunities, compared with their counterparts in Albany and Tryon Counties, to interact with the British military leadership located on their doorstep. As we have seen, some female loyalists took advantage of this and used their ingenuity to assist the British forces.¹²⁷ However, the ways in which New York City’s female claimants understood and expressed their loyalist identity were also representative of wider social conventions within their city. Social practices in New York City created a population of literate women, who were confident recording their own activities and reflections of the conflict. Rachel Wetmore, for instance, was openly critical of the actions of British military leadership towards her husband, apparently fearless of receiving any negative repercussions. As was often the case with white male claimants, New York City’s female claimants stressed their association with known loyalists – including family and friends – as a demonstration of their own political opinions.

Conclusion

The memorials of New York City’s loyalists reveal a great deal about the motivations for remaining loyal and the nature of loyalism there. First and foremost, the city’s wartime role as the British military headquarters created a unique set of opportunities for New York City’s residents to display their loyalism. With the British forces on their doorstep, loyalists were able to enlist with the British forces without leaving their families behind or being forced to

¹²⁶ H. Hoock, ‘*Ius in bello*: Rape and the British Army in the American Revolutionary War’, *Journal of Military Ethics*, 14.1 (2015), pp. 76-77.

¹²⁷ According to Sheryllyne Haggerty, such ingenuity was prevalent amongst women in eighteenth-century port cities. See “‘Miss Fan can turn her han!’: Female Traders in Eighteenth-Century British-American Atlantic Port Cities’, *Atlantic Studies*, 6.1 (2009), pp. 29-42.

make hazardous journeys (as we shall see in the case of the Albany and Tryon Counties). Importantly, these opportunities were not exclusive to white males: as the claims demonstrate, black loyalists and female loyalists living within and around the city of New York also utilised their proximity to the British forces to engage in a unique set of activities to assist the British, often with the benefit of temporarily advancing their own positions.

However, residents of New York City were suspected of loyalism at a much earlier stage of the conflict; indeed, this was often before the arrival of the British troops. The nature of New York City as a highly-developed, anglicised provincial Georgian town provides an explanation for this. By the outbreak of the American Revolution, New York City contained a vibrant public and social sphere. It was also a politicised society: established by Governor Sloughter in 1691 as the political centre of the colony, by 1775 the so-called “Metropolis ... of the Province” also contained the revolutionary government of the newly-declared State of New York, the Provincial Congress.¹²⁸

As in other provincial towns across the Atlantic, from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, New York City’s residents strove to create local reputations within the city’s public sphere. By the outbreak of Revolution however, with the introduction of neighbourhood monitoring and crowd violence, such reputations could have life-changing consequences. Within a compact politicised society, political opinions became the subject of gossip and speculation, especially within institutions such as the coffee-house. As such, suspected loyalists – initially categorised as ‘disaffected’ to the American cause – were identified and targeted at a much earlier stage of the conflict than elsewhere.

Importantly, this preoccupation with visibility and reputation would have curious implications when it came to the self-identification of New York City’s loyalist claimants. As the claims show, for some of the city’s loyalists it was more important for their peers to recognise them as loyalists (and even to suffer community harassment) than it was for them to do anything that fell under modern definitions of loyalism, such as engaging in active military service. Thus,

¹²⁸ W. Smith, *The History of the Province of New-York, from the first discovery to the year M.DCC.XXXII. To which is annexed, a description of the country, with a short Account of the Inhabitants, their Trade, Religious and Political State, and the Constitution of the Courts of Justice in that Colony* (London: Thomas Wilcox, 1757), p. 188; By October 1775, the New York Assembly – New York’s royal government – was forced to meet on-board British warships based in the Hudson River, where Governor Tryon had taken shelter. See for instance, ‘At a Council held on Board the Ship Dutchess of Gordon in the Harbour of the City of New York’, 31 October 1775, Council Minutes, 1668-1783, NYSA, A-1895, Roll 10.

there exists a group of claimants who were adamant in their loyalty to Britain, defining their sentiments solely through their inaction and refusal to engage with the revolutionary movement. Such claims are unique to the city of New York and a result of unique local circumstances.

The early identification of loyalists was also a consequence of the mercantile nature of the city and its economic connections to Britain. New York City contained a higher proportion of merchants and traders than the colony's upstate regions, many of whom had direct relationships with British suppliers. These individuals were forced into making the decision whether or not to adhere to the Articles of Association – and effectively make a political choice – at a much earlier stage of the Revolution than their rural counterparts. In New York City, merchants and those in connected professions could not delay signing in the ways that their fellow colonists in more remote regions could: in contrast to more rural and upstate regions, New York City was relatively small in size, with few places for those who wanted to avoid the conflict to hide – although, as we have seen, many tried to do just that by escaping to their country estates. Thus, suspected loyalists came to be identified through their failure to sign the association and their refusal to boycott British goods.

In terms of the way in which loyalists described themselves, New York City's loyalists were certainly the product of their own society. Male and female alike, New York City's claimants were educated, literate and comfortable in describing their attitudes regarding the war in a way which was not replicated amongst more rural loyalist claimants. When it came to constructing their loyal identities, the city's claimants demonstrated similar ideas to those which were beginning to emerge in Britain to define "Britishness", with loyal British-American subjects defining themselves as civilised, genteel individuals against the inferior "other" of the rebel mob.

Perhaps most importantly, New York City's residents were inhabitants of a Georgian provincial town. This dissertation does not attempt to suggest that New York City's loyalists were not proud American colonists, however they were Atlantic-facing in their economic, political and emotional perspectives and ultimately recognised Britain as the legitimate authority over the American colonies. A final clue to New York City's enhanced connections with Britain might be found within the eventual post-war destinations of loyalist exiles from the city: upon the

Chapter Three: Case Study – The City and County of New York

evacuation of New York, loyalists from New York City were far more likely to resettle in England than their fellow colonists.¹²⁹

¹²⁹ Of the 66 New York City loyalists considered, 23 (35%) settled in England. This is in contrast to 3 of the 107 Albany claimants (3%) and no claimants from Tryon.

Chapter Four:
Case Study – Albany County

Following the British invasion of New York City in the summer of 1776, the geographical focus of the war shifted to the Hudson Highlands. New York's revolutionary Provincial Congress was forced to relocate to White Plains in Westchester County, while upstate New York became one of the most intensely disputed battlegrounds of the American Revolution.¹ The region had historically been identified by officials on both sides of the Atlantic as being of unrivalled strategic importance. At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, the Hudson River was once again identified as the lynchpin to North America: should the British gain control of the Hudson, New England would be isolated from the southern colonies and deprived of essential logistical support, effectively resulting in a British victory.² For this reason, George Washington regarded the region as "the key to America", and American and British military leaders competed to secure control of the region.³

Albany County encapsulates Colin Williams's description of upstate New York as a "no-man's land", facing British invasion on multiple fronts.⁴ To the south was the British military headquarters at New York City, bolstered by pro-British sentiments in neighbouring New Jersey, Long Island and Staten Island.⁵ To the north was the newly-formed state of Vermont, comprised of portions of Charlotte, Gloucester and Cumberland Counties which had been annexed from northeastern New York. In the early 1780s Vermont demonstrated signs of potential political affiliation with Britain; when New York and New England refused to recognise its legitimacy as an independent state, Vermont appealed directly to the crown.⁶

¹ D. C. Barck (ed.), *Minutes of the Committee and of the First Commission for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies in the State of New York, December 11, 1776 - September 23, 1778, Volume One* (New York: New York Society, 1924), p. xii, reproduced at <https://archive.org/details/minutesofcommitt571newy> [accessed 28 October 2017].

² J. S. Tiedemann, *Reluctant Revolutionaries: New York City and the Road to Independence, 1773-1776* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 4; T. S. Wermuth and J. M. Johnson, 'The American Revolution in the Hudson River Valley: An Overview', in J. M. Johnson, C. Pryslopski and A. Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), p.1; M. B. Norton and D. W. Blight (eds), *A People and A Nation: A History of the United States* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 1998), pp. 159-60.

³ Washington quoted in Wermuth and Johnson, 'The American Revolution in the Hudson River Valley', p. 4.

⁴ C. Williams, 'New York State's Committees in the American Revolution', *HRVR*, 28.1 (2011), p. 35.

⁵ A. C. Flick, *Loyalism in New York during the American Revolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1901), pp. 87-89; W. Brown, *The King's Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1966), p. 81.

⁶ E. Countryman, "'Out of the Bounds of the Law": Northern Land Rioters in the Eighteenth Century', in A. F. Young (ed.), *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism*

Beyond Vermont was Canada. Although the French threat had been removed at the conclusion of the Seven Years War, it had now been replaced by the threat of British and loyalist forces. Meanwhile, the population of Montreal remained overwhelmingly French Catholic; this continued to be a cause of long-standing suspicion amongst the Protestant New Yorkers.⁷ Finally, to the far west beyond the troublesome county of Tryon were the Iroquois confederacy, all of whom – with the exception of the Oneidas and Tuscaroras – actively supported the British by 1779.⁸ Thus, as Thomas S. Wermuth and James M. Johnson summarise, “the nexus of the conflict was New York’s Hudson River Valley, the cockpit of the war for both sides.”⁹

While recent scholarship has focused upon the American Revolution within the Hudson River Valley region, none of these studies have yet provided an in-depth assessment of the development of personal allegiances.¹⁰ In response, this chapter forms a case study of loyalism in Albany County, arguing that Albany’s political climate complicated wartime hostilities and the formation of personal allegiances. John Shy, describing the American Revolution as a civil war, reminds scholars to consider events on “a level where the scale is human, where people have names and personalities, events the concreteness and complexity of real life, and ultimate consequences are as hazy as the future itself.”¹¹ Similarly, Paul Smith claims that the revolution was “too large an event for most persons to comprehend in its entirety”; instead, he argues that colonists “perceived [it] in terms of immediate, commonplace issues.”¹² An appreciation of this complexity is critical for understanding the

(DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976), pp. 40-42 and p. 57; R. B. Klopott, ‘Civil war in Schaghticoke: A Footnote to the Revolution in Upstate New York’, in J. M. Johnson, C. Pryslopski and A. Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2013), p. 219.

⁷ B. McConville, *The King’s Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p. 288.

⁸ A. Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 2007), p. 92; R. W. Venables, “‘Faithful Allies of the King’: The Crown’s Haudenosaunee Allies in the Revolutionary Struggle for New York’, in J. S. Tiedemann, E. R. Fingerhut and R. W. Venables (eds), *The Other Loyalists: Ordinary People, Royalism, and the Revolution in the Middle Colonies, 1763-1787* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), p. 131.

⁹ Wermuth and Johnson, ‘The American Revolution in the Hudson River Valley’, p. 1.

¹⁰ For more on the Revolution in upstate New York, see J. S. Tiedemann and E. R. Fingerhut (eds), *The Other New York: The American Revolution Beyond New York City, 1763-1787* (Albany: SUNY University Press, 2005) and J. M. Johnson, C. Pryslopski and A. Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013).

¹¹ J. Shy, ‘The Loyalist Problem in the Lower Hudson Valley: The British Perspective’, in R. A. East and J. Judd (eds), *The Loyalist Americans: A Focus on Greater New York* (Tarrytown, NY: Sleepy Hollow Restorations, 1975), pp. 3-4.

¹² P. H. Smith, ‘The American Loyalists: Notes on Their Organization and Numerical Strength,’ *WMQ*, 25.2 (1968), p. 270.

development of loyalism in Albany County, where the Revolution was transplanted into the middle of an already-fractured society with its own historic divisions.¹³

Social Tensions in Albany County

One particular source of social tension was Albany's manorial estates. During the mid-eighteenth century, landlord-tenant relations became unsettled as tenants resented what they perceived to be restrictive terms and obligations placed upon them by their landlords. Some manorial contracts, for instance, were in place for ninety-nine years, passing obligations from tenants to landlords onto subsequent generations.¹⁴ Others stipulated that a portion of the profits from the sale of any improvements made to the farms were to be paid to the landlord. Although Sung Bok Kim argues that many tenant-landlord obligations "were neither oppressive, nor unfair, nor arbitrary" in practice, he does concede that restrictions regarding the sale of leases limited tenants' mobility and increased landlords' control.¹⁵

Allan Kulikoff also identifies the manorial system as a catalyst of social unrest, as tenants – often migrants from New England rather than the descendants of Dutch settlers – attempted to secure long-term leases or freeholds for themselves.¹⁶ When the patent system which underpinned the land rights to New York's manorial estates came under question during the 1760s, unhappy tenant sentiments over-spilled into violent rioting across the Hudson Highlands.¹⁷ As the court records kept by New York's Attorney General John Tabor Kempe demonstrate, on the manorial estates of Albany, Dutchess and Westchester Counties tenants took the law into their own hands.

Take Philipsburg Manor in Westchester County as a demonstrative example. During the 1750s and 1760s as part of a larger legal dispute regarding tenancies, the landlords Frederick Philipse and his son-in-law Beverley Robinson began forcing their tenants to sign shorter leases. Those

¹³ R. M. Calhoun, 'Introduction', in R. M. Calhoun, T. M. Barnes and R. S. Davis (eds), *Tory Insurgents: The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays*. Revised and Expanded Edition (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010), p. xvi.

¹⁴ Williams, 'New York State's Committees', p. 32.

¹⁵ S. B. Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York: Manorial Society, 1664-1775* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), pp. 221-25 and p. 234.

¹⁶ A. Kulikoff, 'The American Revolution, Capitalism, and the Formation of the Yeoman Classes', in A. F. Young (ed.), *Beyond the American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993), pp. 87-91.

¹⁷ Countryman, "'Out of the Bounds of the Law'", pp. 40-45.

who refused faced eviction.¹⁸ In an incident in 1765, Beverley Robinson evicted some of these tenants and replaced them with new tenants, who had agreed to the shorter leases. This action was hugely unpopular amongst Robinson's remaining tenants: although the farmers did not own their lots, multiple members of the same family would typically remain on the same tract of land for generations and they were recognised by tenants as their permanent homes.

The unhappy tenants gathered at a local tavern to prepare a petition to put before Robinson, calling for the evicted tenants to be reinstated. However, a militant portion of the tenants formed themselves into a crowd, electing one William Prendergrast as their leader. The crowd spent the night forcibly turning the new tenants out of their lots and re-instating those families who had been evicted. Any tenants who refused to co-operate with Prendergrast's men were threatened with being dispossessed themselves. The tenants actively participated in this: groups of over 200 men were reported to have assembled at individual farms across Westchester County and driven the occupants out "in a riotous manner."¹⁹ Importantly, similar events occurred across the manorial estates of Westchester, Dutchess and Albany Counties, and persisted into the late spring of 1766. Occasionally, rioting also included the same participants, suggesting a co-ordinated movement. When their fellow statesmen in New York City began protesting against the Stamp Act, the rioting tenant farmers attempted to take advantage of the revolutionary syncretism by aligning themselves with the Sons of Liberty.²⁰ A party of 300 farmers even marched south to New York City to officially join the cause. However, New York's Sons of Liberty refused to co-operate with the tenant farmers, fearing a replication of the violence displayed in the countryside. Eventually, the farmers' riots were suppressed by British forces.²¹

Upon the outbreak of revolution, therefore, those with memories of the recent upheaval saw the imperial crisis as an opportunity to resolve these historic grievances. Studies by Edward Countryman, Staughton Lynd and Kim agree that landlord-tenant relations were influential in forming political opinions during the Revolutionary War. Within these "counties of unrest" –

¹⁸ For more on the dispute, see T. J. Humphrey, 'Crowd and Court: Rough Music and Popular Justice in Colonial New York', in W. Pencak, M. Dennis and S. P. Newman (eds), *Riot and Revelry in Early America* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), pp. 115-17.

¹⁹ John Tabor Kempe Papers, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS.

²⁰ Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York*, pp. 388-94; Kulikoff, 'The American Revolution', pp. 91-94.

²¹ Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York*, p. 394.

as Countryman describes them – where tenants were content they tended to take their landlord’s political stance, regardless of whether this was loyalist or revolutionary. However, if the tenants saw their landlords as enemies, the tenants would back the opposing side. Countryman in particular argues that accusations of loyalism were particularly concentrated in the counties of Westchester, Dutchess and Tyron, where tenants accused their landlords of loyalism.²² Such patterns were equally true in Albany County. In her study of the wartime allegiances – both loyalist and revolutionary – of Albany’s Dutch population, Alice Kenney similarly identifies the county’s manorial estates as particular regions where residents chose sides rather than attempting to remain neutral.²³ In light of these conclusions, a cluster of Albany’s loyalist claimants (27 per cent) who were resident on Rensselaerswyck Manor takes on a new significance. Thus, the unrest of the American Revolution added an additional dimension to historic animosities; as Robert Calhoon argues, “the militarization of American life after 1775 exacerbated local feuds”.²⁴

This chapter considers the claims of 107 loyalists from Albany County, making Albany’s loyalists the largest single group of claimants studied. This may simply be a reflection of the method chosen to select the claims. However, the number of claims from Albany are comparable with those from Tryon County (99 claims), where the revolution was also a bitterly contested civil war, albeit with different protagonists. Therefore, the volume of claims from Albany is potentially a reflection of the intense local animosities within that region and the relentless pursuit of suspected loyalists by revolutionary committees in upstate New York.

The activities and behaviours of Albany’s loyalist claimants varied considerably from each other; however, they predominantly fell under one of two categories: ‘active’ or ‘reluctant’. ‘Passive’ loyalists are remarkably few in number – accounting for only four individuals – and as such are not explored in depth within this chapter. Only one ‘passive’ Albany loyalist – Richard Cartwright, formerly a legal official from the city of Albany – displayed behaviour comparable with those passive loyalists witnessed in New York City, claiming that “his well known attachment to the King's Government soon attracted the jealousy of the Revolutionists

²² Countryman, “‘Out of the Bounds of the Law’”, p. 58; E. Countryman, *People in Revolution: The American Revolution and Political Society in New York, 1760-1790* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1989), p. 110, p. 120 and p. 215; S. Lynd, ‘Who Should Rule at Home? Dutchess County, New York, in the American Revolution’, *WMQ*, 18.3 (1961), pp. 344-347; Kulikoff, ‘American Revolution’, pp. 96-97.

²³ A. Kenney, ‘The Albany Dutch: Loyalists and Patriots’, *NYH*, 42.4 (1961), p. 341.

²⁴ Calhoon, ‘Introduction’, p. xv.

yet he continued on his said residence under many hardships".²⁵ The remainder were passive by default on account of old age and disability, including Jacob Best Snr, who claimed to be too elderly to enlist, and Ann Gordon, who had been severely wounded during the Seven Years War.²⁶ Once again, the claims of Albany's female loyalists are considered as an individual group, deserving of special consideration.

In addition to the evidence provided before the Loyalist Claims Commission, therefore, this case study also draws upon the minutes of Albany's revolutionary Committees of Correspondence and the minutes of Albany's Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies. As the war progressed, a new political infrastructure was introduced into Albany County that primarily filled the vacuum left by the collapse of royal government. These official bodies were increasingly responsible for detecting and apprehending suspected loyalists; as we shall see, their actions had significant social ramifications. The minutes of these committees provide a detailed record of the treatment of suspected loyalists within Albany County. They have been cross-referenced against the testimonies of Albany's loyalist claimants and help to provide a fuller account of the wartime experience in revolutionary Albany.

This chapter argues that loyalism in Albany County was not only a product of local circumstance but, crucially, that it was the product of a different set of local circumstances to those present in New York City or Tryon County. In Albany County the imperial crisis interacted with and often exacerbated pre-existing local tensions, causing them to take on a new significance and providing an alternative outlet for their resolution.²⁷ As such, loyalism in Albany County was often less concerned with ideological matters and more a reflection of the enhanced importance of community within rural and parochial societies.

The Albany Dutch: A Note on Methodology

Before considering Albany's loyalist claimants in detail, an important comment must be made regarding Albany's ethnic composition. By the outbreak of the American Revolution, Albany County and the wider region of the Hudson Highlands remained predominantly Dutch in character, language and appearance. This continued into the earliest years of the American

²⁵ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/28.

²⁶ American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11; American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/30.

²⁷ Calhoun, 'Introduction', p. xvi.

Republic.²⁸ With this in mind, it raises methodological questions concerning how Albany's Dutch loyalists can be identified within the source material. When Albany's loyalists stated their nationality before the Loyalist Claims Commissioners, none of the claimants identified themselves as Dutch. Instead, three in every four claimants described themselves as American-born or "natives of America", with the remainder being natives of Scotland, Ireland, Germany, or England. This is perhaps unsurprising. Although there is no surviving record of the questions asked by the Commissioners, the pattern of answers given by loyalist claimants suggests that individuals were asked their birthplace, rather than their ethnicity.²⁹ As descendants of Dutch settlers, rather than settlers themselves, the Albany Dutch were natives of America and not the Netherlands. Therefore, a claimant's response that they were a "native of America" was accurate, but potentially obscures more than it reveals.

Kenney provides a possible solution in her study of the wartime activities of Albany's Dutch population. Noting that the Albany Dutch were active participants on both sides of the conflict, Kenney argues that, when it came to determining revolutionary allegiances, local concerns were more influential than ethnicity. Thus, her argument follows, proximity and opposition to the Johnson family in neighbouring Tryon County encouraged Schenectady's Dutch population to become revolutionaries; rural isolation from the mercantile and political pressures of the impending revolution and conflict with Yankee settlers produced Dutch loyalists in Kinderhook; while the loyalist stance of antagonistic British newcomers to the city of Albany fuelled rebellion amongst the Dutch there.³⁰ Although Kenney does not make direct reference to this, her findings suggest a high level of assimilation between American-born descendants of the earlier Dutch colonists and more recent British immigrants, as allegiances were formed based upon local political concerns rather than ethnic divisions.

Kenney's methodology is partly based upon the occurrence of Dutch names (indicated by the prefix "Van" or "Ten") in both Loyalist and Patriot militia records. Although arguably simplistic,

²⁸ See J. M. Murrin and D. S. Silverman, 'The Quest for America: Reflections on Distinctiveness, Pluralism, and Public Life,' review of J. Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution Before 1776* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 33.2 (2002), pp. 235-246; E. M. Covart, "'Dam'd Paving" Yankees and Dutch New Yorkers: The Post-Revolution New England Migration and the Creation of American Identity in the Upper Hudson River Valley, 1783-1820', *HRVR*, 29.1 (2012), pp. 2-25; M. Kammen, *Colonial New York: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 128-60.

²⁹ This is especially suggestive from the answer given by Francis Pemart. Pemart was unable to inform the commissioners where he was a native of, having been born at sea, raised in France, but settled in New York aged six. American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/26.

³⁰ Kenney, 'The Albany Dutch', pp. 331-50.

her approach is useful for analysing the loyalist claims. As expected, Dutch surnames appear amongst Albany's loyalist claimants, thus echoing Kenney's conclusions that a portion of the Albany Dutch were loyalists. Four claimants from Albany had surnames beginning with "Van", while other instances of Dutch surnames include Cuyler, Shermerhoorn, Cruiseler [Crysler] and Snyder.³¹ The actual number of Dutch claimants may be potentially even higher as intermarriage, the possible deliberate Anglicisation of Dutch names, or even the Loyalist Commissioners' errors in recording the spelling of Dutch surnames may have distorted the data.³²

An additional contemporary source provides further insight into the revolutionary allegiances of Albany's Dutch residents. In October 1779, the State of New York passed "An Act for the Forfeiture and Sale of the Estates of Persons who have adhered to the Enemies of this State". Under this law, commissioners were appointed to confiscate the lands of those who "have voluntarily been adherent to the said King [of Great-Britain]" and records were kept accordingly.³³ An application of Kenney's methodology to the list of loyalists whose properties were confiscated similarly reveals repeated instances of Dutch surnames amongst those from Albany County, including seventeen individuals with surnames beginning with the prefix "Van".³⁴ Many of the same names – Dutch and otherwise – appear in both the list of confiscated properties and within the records of the Loyalist Claims Commission, such as Peter Van Alstyne of Kinderhook. Others appear in only one of the sources. As outlined in the Introduction to this dissertation, however, not all loyalists left the United States at the end of the war and even fewer were eligible to submit a claim to the Loyalist Commissioners, which may account for this difference. With these contextual factors in mind, the remainder of this chapter now turns to an analysis of the testimonies of Albany County's loyalists.

³¹ Conrad Van Dusen, *American Loyalists Claims, Series I* (New York). TNA: AO 12/31; McGregor Van Every, *Ibid.*, AO 12/32; Peter Van Alstyne, *Ibid.*, AO 12/33; and Roelph Vandecan, *Ibid.*, AO 12/33.

³² Etienne deLancy, for instance, was anglicised to 'Stephen deLancey' upon his arrival in the colonies. See D. A. Story, *The deLanceys: A Romance of a Great Family, With Notes on these Allied Families who Remained Loyal to the British Crown During the Revolutionary War* (Canada: Thomas Nelson & Sons Limited, 1931), p. v; Paula Nicholson, meanwhile, cites the more recent example of Jewish families choosing to Anglicise their surnames to protect their commercial interests. See P. Nicholson, *Genealogy, Psychology and Identity: Tales From a Family Tree* (London: Routledge, 2017), pp.76-87.

³³ New York Legislature, *Laws of the state of New-York, commencing with the first session of the Senate and Assembly, after the Declaration of Independency, and the organization of the new government of the state, anno 1777. By order of the Legislature* (Poughkeepsie: John Holt, 1782), pp. 85-91.

³⁴ List of Loyalists Against Whom Judgments Were Given Under the Confiscation Act, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol 2211.

Active Loyalists

Of the 107 loyalists considered from Albany County, 49 (46 per cent) can be considered as 'active' loyalists. One of the clearest demonstrations of loyalism – and one of the most regularly considered in loyalist studies – was military service.³⁵ This distinct group of claimants demonstrated their political allegiance to Britain through tangible and measurable activities, usually as soldiers but also through supporting military roles. According to their testimonies, these 'active' loyalists joined the British forces voluntarily, either immediately upon the outbreak of war or shortly after. In Albany County, this occurred between 1776 and 1777; for those loyalists whose start dates are known, they overwhelmingly (93 per cent) enrolled with the British forces during these two years.³⁶ This is in contrast to both New York City and Tryon County, where suspected loyalists were identified as early as 1775. This in itself is reflective of the importance of local contexts in shaping the nature of loyalism: in New York City, economic and commercial interests influenced the decision of whether or not to 'Associate' and join the revolutionary cause, while political allegiances became common knowledge within the city's public sphere; whereas in Tryon County, the pro- and anti-Johnson allegiances that would harden into ideological factions were pre-determined long before the outbreak of war. In Albany County, in contrast, the problem of choosing sides only became an immediate issue after the official outbreak of hostilities and the commencement of war within the Hudson River Valley region.

Turning our attention first to those who served as soldiers, although there were some exceptions, loyalists from Albany County typically joined one of three regiments: Major Jessup's Corps of Loyal Rangers, Major James Rogers' King's Rangers, or the Engineer's Department. Within designated army regiments, Albany's loyalists occupied a range of clearly-defined frontline roles within the military hierarchy, including private soldiers, corporals, sergeants, lieutenants and captains.

For some, the army provided an opportunity for social advancement. Take Hugh Munro, for instance, a trader from the Kayaderosseras Patent who would be appointed as a Captain

³⁵ See for example the particularly narrow definitions advanced by Paul H. Smith and Philip Ranlet who only consider those who openly fought alongside the British to be truly loyal. Smith, 'The American Loyalists', pp. 259-77; P. H. Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats: A Study in British Revolutionary Policy* (Williamsburg, VA: University of North Carolina Press, 1964); P. Ranlet, *The New York Loyalists*, 2nd ed. (Lanham: University Press of America, 2002).

³⁶ 40 of the 49 active loyalists provided their dates of enrolment with the British forces. 37 of these enrolled in either 1776 or 1777.

within Jessup's Rangers.³⁷ Compared to Albany's other loyalists of the same rank – who included a Justice of the Peace, a former committeeman, and one of Major Jessup's brothers – Munro was from a different socio-economic background: he had come to America from Scotland in 1756 as a sergeant during the Seven Years War.³⁸ After that war's conclusion in 1763, he permanently settled in America with the financial backing of Isaac Lowe, a merchant from the city of New York. Munro was not wealthy: when he appeared before the Loyalist Claims Commission in 1787, he remained indebted to Lowe by £400 (sterling) and the value of a mortgage. Despite his background, however, Munro progressed through the military leadership; after initially serving as a captain, he was later appointed the commander of a company of his own men.

In addition to naming the regiment with which they served, some loyalist claimants also mentioned the place where they first joined the British forces. Of those known locations for Albany's loyalists, these included Canada (the exact location unnamed by loyalist claimants), Skenesborough and Saratoga. These joining points are predictable as either British strongholds and forts or the location of major battles. However, it is notable that only three of the Albany loyalists claim to have made the journey to New York City to join the British forces at their military headquarters. This was in spite of Albany being closer to New York City than it was to Canada; in 1788, the journey from Albany to New York would have taken six days travelling by stagecoach.³⁹ Conversely, the journey from Albany to Canada was much more formidable: despite the existence of a postal road which connected Albany to the Canadian towns of Montreal, Trois Rivieres and Quebec, there does not appear to have been

³⁷ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/26.

³⁸ See the claim of Jonathan Jones, American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/13; Joseph Anderson, American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11. Anderson served on the Albany Committee of Correspondence until July 1775. See J. Sullivan (ed.), *Minutes of the Albany Committee of Correspondence 1775-1778, Volume One* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1923), reproduced at <https://archive.org/details/MinutesOfTheAlbanyCommitteeOfCorrespondence1775-1778Vol1> [accessed 28 October 2017], and A. Flick (ed.), *Minutes of the Albany Committee of Correspondence 1775-1778, Volume Two. Minutes of the Schenectady Committee 1775-1779, and Index* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1925), reproduced at <https://archive.org/details/minutes1775177802albauoft> [accessed 28 October 2017]; Joseph Jessup, American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/31.

³⁹ The distance from New York to Albany was 165 miles, while the distance from Albany to Lake Champlain was a further 203 miles. See *Gaine's New-York Pocket Almanack for the Year 1775* (New York: Hugh Gaine, 1774), p. 67 and *Rivington's Gentleman and Lady's Pocket Almanack for the Year 1775* (New York: James Rivington, 1774), p. 67-68; for details of stagecoaches from New York, see *Gaine's New-York Pocket Almanack, for the Year 1788* (New York: Hugh Gaine, 1777) *Gaine's New-York Pocket Almanack, for the Year 1788* (New York: Hugh Gaine, 1777), John Moore Diaries 1788-1815, Manuscripts Collection, AAS.

an established stagecoach service until the early 1800s.⁴⁰ As late as 1835, a canal journey from Albany to Toronto (via Oswego) would still take three full days, compared to the fourteen hours that it would take to reach Albany from New York.⁴¹

The preference for Albany's loyalists to travel to Canada, despite the arduous journey, suggests that would-be soldiers perceived it to be easier to head north and enlist across the border. There may even have been an established loyalist trail to Canada, as evidence taken from the depositions of loyalist claimants in neighbouring Charlotte County suggests. Charlotte County's loyalists frequently described providing assistance to loyalists *en route*, and were more often engaged as guides or provided lodging and shelter to loyalists heading towards Canada than performing strictly military roles.⁴² Travelling south towards New York, meanwhile, would have involved travelling through hostile rebel strongholds and hotly-disputed territories in Ulster, Orange, Dutchess and Westchester Counties.⁴³

The concentration of individuals from the same region within a small number of regiments – as was particularly the case in Albany County – is partly a consequence of how provincial fighting units were formed. An individual would be granted an officers' commission on the understanding that he would raise a specified number of men, whom he would typically recruit from his own district to form a regiment.⁴⁴ However, a characteristic of the Albany

⁴⁰ Nova Scotia did not develop a stagecoach network until 1816, while New Brunswick's was introduced as late as the 1830s. See W. Eugene Goodrich, *The Stagecoach Era in Dorchester*, reproduced by the Westmoreland Historical Society at <http://keillorhousemuseum.com/website/wp-content/uploads/Stagecoach_Era_Dorchester.pdf> [accessed 11 April 2018].

⁴¹ In 1835, the journey from Albany to Oswego took two days travelling by canal, plus an additional 24 hours by train to Toronto. See J. Murray, *The Emigrant and Traveller's Guide To and Through Canada, By the Way of the River St. Lawrence, As Well As By Way of the United States of America: With Some Friendly Advice on Embarkation; The Detailed Cost of Travelling on Each Route, and Much Other Useful Information to the Settler* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., Cornhill, 1835), reproduced at <https://archive.org/details/cihm_21494> [accessed 3 April 2018], pp. 54-56.

⁴² 26 loyalist claimants were identified as being 'active' in non-military supporting roles. Loyalists from Charlotte County were overrepresented in this group, accounting for 31% (8 individuals) of the claimants. In comparison, loyalists from Charlotte County only accounted for 12% of those engaged in military service (11 individuals). Charlotte County's loyalists were mainly employed in scouting parties, carrying dispatches, secret service and assisting loyalists heading to Canada. Indeed, Charlotte's proximity to Canada and its location on New York's northernmost frontier is likely to have influenced its residents' wartime roles.

⁴³ For a discussion of political allegiance by county, see Countryman, *People in Revolution*, pp. 104-110; Ranlet, *New York Loyalists*, pp. 120-36 and pp. 137-50; Kammen, *Colonial New York*, p. 365; J. S. Tiedemann, 'Patriots by Default: Queens County, New York, and the British Army, 1776-1783', *WMQ*, 43.1 (1986), p. 37.

⁴⁴ Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*, pp. 63-65; There is little indication that New York's loyalists purchased their commissions, as was common practice in England. For more on commissions, see A.

claims suggests that family, as well as community, also played an important role in determining loyalist allegiances. It was not uncommon for loyalists from this region to join the British as a family unit, rather than as individuals; almost one in four Albany loyalists mentioned serving with their fathers, brothers and sons (or sons-in-law, for those who only had daughters). This was especially prevalent amongst loyalists living in the districts of Saratoga, Hoosick, Stillwater, Pownall, and Spencertown. This figure is in contrast to New York City, where only 8 individuals (12 per cent) made mention of loyalist family members. Such patterns of behaviour are indicative of the relative importance of the patriarchal *huysgezin* (household) amongst the rural Dutch communities of Albany County compared to the more anglicised region of New York City. As Susanah Shaw Romney explains, the *huysgezin* acted as a single political unit, with the master of the *huysgezin* – typically the eldest male – defining the entire family’s political allegiances; this included the allegiances of adult sons who remained resident on the family lands.⁴⁵ In New York City, in contrast, we have seen how political allegiances were more often a product of individual choice.

The example of the Best family from Hoosick – a small district located adjacent to Rensselaerswyck Manor – is particularly instructive.⁴⁶ Hermanus Best, along with his brothers Conrad and Jacob – who was described by Hermanus as being “always steadily loyal” – left Hoosick in 1777 to join Burgoyne’s forces.⁴⁷ After Burgoyne’s capitulation at Saratoga, Conrad re-enlisted as a lieutenant with Jessup’s Corps of Loyal Rangers and Jacob went to Canada to join Sir John Johnson’s Kings Royal Regiment; it is unclear what action (if any) Hermanus took after Saratoga. Their father, Jacob Senior, was too elderly to serve himself but made reference to a further two sons – five sons in total – who had also joined the British forces as evidence of his own loyalty. Importantly, despite Jacob Senior being unable to join either side, as the father of five loyalist soldiers he was also deemed to be a loyalist by his community. As such, his property was confiscated by American revolutionaries.

The collective actions of family members such as these lent themselves to the submission of joint claims. In this instance, Hermanus – presumably as the head of the household in light of

P. C. Bruce, *The Purchase System in the British Army, 1660-1871* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1980).

⁴⁵ S. Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), p. 6.

⁴⁶ In 1790, Hoosick’s population stood at 2270, making it one of Albany’s smallest districts. 1790 United States Federal Census, reproduced at <www.ancestrylibrary.com> [accessed 6 February 2017].

⁴⁷ For Hermanus and Jacob Senior, see American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11; for Conrad and Jacob, see American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/31.

the death of his brothers and on account his father's advanced age – appears to have submitted claims on behalf of the whole the family, including any widows and children. All four claims – those of Hermanus, Jacob, Conrad and Jacob Senior – were submitted to the commissioners under Hermanus's name and filed collectively as "the memorial of Hermanus Best". However, instead of using his petition to the Loyalist Commissioners to discuss his own actions, Hermanus dedicates his testimony to describing the actions of his family members; for instance, he uses his opening sentence to outline that "the late Conrad Best, Brother of your Memorialist in the year 1777 joined his Majesty's Forces." Drawing heavily upon the fact that multiple members of his family had served with the British as evidence of the family's collective loyalty and worthiness for compensation, Hermanus' actions display important parallels between the loyalist claims process and established contemporary British practices concerning requests for patronage.⁴⁸

The Ferguson family of Canon's Neck similarly submitted a joint claim.⁴⁹ Brothers Israel, Richard and Farrington had all served in Major James Rogers' regiment, the King's Rangers. Israel, the eldest (who, the claim notes, "is authorized by all the Family to receive what money may be allowed for their Losses") had joined at Skenesborough in 1777 and was a lieutenant. Richard joined in 1778 – aged approximately fourteen – and served as an ensign. Once the youngest brother, Farrington, turned fourteen he also joined the Rangers in 1779. Notably, Richard and Farrington were officially underage; according to New York law only those men aged sixteen and older were permitted to enter militia duty.⁵⁰ If Israel is to be believed, however, his brothers would have enlisted at the same time as himself, had they not been prevented from doing so by their youth.

In contrast to the Bests, however, the Ferguson brothers' attempt to prove their loyalty is primarily based upon their own actions. The Ferguson brothers did not employ the language of petition within their claim – perhaps through youth, unfamiliarity with the process, or a reflection of their literacy levels – but instead opted for simple, unemotive and, at times, almost transactional language to describe their wartime activities. For instance:

⁴⁸ E. Chalus, *Elite Women in English Political Life, c.1754-1790* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 106-32.

⁴⁹ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/29.

⁵⁰ 'An Act for Regulating the Militia of the State of New-York', 3 April 1778, New York Legislature, *Laws of the state of New-York*, pp. 30-35.

Israel joined the British at Skenesborough in 1777. Richard joined in 1778, then very young. Farrington joined in 1779, then an infant. All served till the end of the war. Now live at the Bay of Quinty.

However, their chosen witnesses were much more comfortable drawing upon common practices of patronage – in particular, stressing the services provided by the boys' father to demonstrate the loyalist character of the entire Ferguson family – to ensure that the brothers received a fair settlement.⁵¹ The Ferguson brothers had made no mention of their father's wartime activities, beyond stating that Mr Ferguson had left Albany for Canada in 1778. Their first witness, Lieutenant Philip Lousing, however, elaborated on their father's activities. According Lousing, Mr Ferguson was "employed in carrying Dispatches of Consequence, [and] giving an account of the Rebel Army to Canada in the year 1776". Lousing went on to describe the family's collective loyalty, claiming that "they were a very loyal family", while their second witness – Lieutenant Walter Sutherland – testified that he "knew all the three Brothers and the Father – the whole Family were loyal [and] the Brothers all served".

The experiences of the Fergusons' mother and sister, meanwhile, allude to the war-time experiences of the female members of the families of known loyalists, which will be considered in further detail later within this chapter. According to Israel, after he joined the British forces, his mother, sisters and one of his brothers were confined to the Tory jail. Thus, with the adult male members of the family being identified as loyalists, female and younger relatives were viewed by the revolutionary officials as loyalists by association. Israel says little more about his mother's experiences, except to note that she also came to Canada upon her release. However, the minutes of Albany's Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Loyalist Conspiracies – who were responsible for the apprehension and imprisonment of the disaffected – refer to the release on bail of one "Rachel Farguson" in September 1779. Rachel, who by this point had been confined for "some time", had been charged with "harbouring & entertaining a Number of Tories."⁵² The likelihood is that Rachel was Israel's mother.

Not all of Albany's active loyalists were soldiers; a smaller group provided essential services to the British forces from the immediate outbreak of war until its conclusion, though not in a

⁵¹ Chalus, *Elite Women*, pp. 122-23.

⁵² V. H. Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners for detecting and defeating Conspiracies in the State of New York, Albany County Sessions, 1778-1791, Volume One: 1778-1779* (Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon Company, 1909), p. 411, reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/cu31924088942523>> [accessed 29 October 2017].

strictly military capacity. As the following examples demonstrate, some of these men were skilled individuals whose abilities were more valuably employed away from the battlefield, while others were elderly or otherwise unfit for active duty. Occasionally they were both, but were still motivated to assist the war effort in any way that they could.

Take, for instance, John Macomb.⁵³ Originally from Northern Ireland, by the outbreak of Revolution Macomb enjoyed significant status as a member of Albany's political and social elite. As both a Justice of the Peace and Assistant Judge at the Court of Common Pleas, Macomb was a representative of the British imperial administration, thus making his loyalist allegiance arguably predictable. He was also a successful merchant, and had been a clerk for a prominent New York City mercantile house before settling in Albany.⁵⁴ Aged almost sixty upon the outbreak of war, Macomb was too elderly to enlist with the British forces.⁵⁵ Instead, in 1777 he was appointed as paymaster for the British and loyalist troops; a role he continued in until 1786, when he left Canada for England. This was most likely a reflection of Macomb's skills and status: as a representative of the British legal system, Macomb would have been regarded as trustworthy and respectable, while his commercial acumen demonstrated his competence for handling money. The role may also have been awarded in recognition of Macomb's prior demonstrations of allegiance: in 1775, he had embarked on a recruitment campaign with his son-in-law, Lieutenant Francis Pfister, a German engineer who had served with the British during the Seven Years War.⁵⁶ Together, they raised over 500 men and became targets for Albany's revolutionary committee.⁵⁷

This group also included individuals of more humble origins, such as Benoney Smith, a blacksmith from Saratoga.⁵⁸ In 1777, when he joined Burgoyne's forces, Smith was likely to have been of a similar age to Macomb: he claimed to have served as a soldier between 1736 and 1750 and again during the Seven Years War. Again, stressing the loyalty of his family unit, Smith noted that he had two adult sons who had served with the British as soldiers during the

⁵³ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/30.

⁵⁴ For more on John Macomb see S. Bielinski, 'John Macomb', *CASHP*, <<https://exhibitions.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/m/jomacomb.html>>[accessed 28 October 2017]; J. F. Meany, 'Merchant and Redcoat: The papers of John Gordon Macomb, July 1757 to June 1760' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Fordham University, 1990).

⁵⁵ The maximum age for enlistment was fifty. See 'An Act for Regulating the Militia of the State of New-York', 3 April 1778, New York Legislature, *Laws of the state of New-York*, pp. 30-35.

⁵⁶ S. Bielinski, 'Francis Pfister', *CASHP*, <<https://exhibitions.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/p/frpf.html>>[accessed 28 October 2017].

⁵⁷ Sullivan (ed.), *Minutes of the Albany Committee*, p.481, p. 484, p. 486, p. 489 and p. 531.

⁵⁸ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/27.

Revolutionary War. Instead of becoming a soldier himself, Smith was employed by the British army as a blacksmith.

John Wheaton, a carpenter from Schenectady, was another skilled craftsman who described a similar experience.⁵⁹ In contrast to Smith and Macomb considered above, there is no evidence of Wheaton being at an advanced stage of life. What is more likely is that the military leadership recognised the potential utility of his skills. When he joined the British forces in 1777, Wheaton was initially appointed as an artificer with Colonel McAlpin's Corps of American Volunteers. He continued the war in engineering – rather than frontline – roles until 1783, including employment in the King's Works at Lake George, Ticonderoga and Canada.

Of course, not all of these supporting roles were performed strictly within the confines of the armed forces. Some of Albany's active loyalists were moved to perform a range of non-military services to assist the British cause without joining a regiment. The memorial of William Brisbon of Palmerstown outlines the potential activities that could be conducted by loyalists wanting to support British and loyalist troops without leaving their own homes: Brisbon opened his home to scouting parties, soldiers and loyalists passing through Albany's countryside, providing them with lodging and provisions. He also ventured into Albany's mountains and woods to assist those concealed there. Eventually, these actions led to Brisbon being imprisoned within Albany's Tory gaol in 1779 and the confiscation of his family's property.⁶⁰

One final group of active loyalists deserve special consideration. Included amongst the total body of New York's loyalist claimants (424 claims), there are a small group of 22 individuals who demonstrated a particular zeal for the British cause. Having joined the British forces, these loyalists were subsequently captured and imprisoned by American forces while in active service. This in itself is not uncommon. However, what is unusual is that upon their release (or escape), rather than returning to their homes or to the British lines for protection, these individuals enlisted with the British for a second – or even a third – time. Significantly, 36 per cent (8 individuals) of this small group of loyalists were from Albany County.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, AO 12/28.

⁶⁰ American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

Consider, for instance, John Brisband, a farmer from Saratoga as an example of this unusually active type of loyalist.⁶¹ In 1777, he enlisted with Jessup's Loyal Rangers and was based at Fort Miller. In July 1777, he was captured by rebel forces and confined on board the American prison ship at Esopus Creek until October. Upon his release, Brisband re-joined the British forces and went with them to New York City, where he was employed in gathering lumber for the artillery. Disbanded from that position in December 1779, he joined Colonel Isaac Hatfield's company of foot, with whom he served until November 1782. When that regiment was disbanded, Brisband re-enlisted a fourth time, this time with James DeLancey.

As Brisband's claim indicates, the reasons for re-enlistment amongst this group are often unclear. Their actions could be an indication of their devotion to the British cause, or they were possibly motivated by more practical reasons; for instance, the financial advantages of being a paid soldier rather than an unpaid refugee.⁶² For some returning home may simply not have been an option: confiscation of property, intense animosities within communities and the persecution of neighbour by neighbour meant that there may not have been a recognisable home to which to return. The overrepresentation of this type of loyalist from Albany County is likely to be reflective of the local dynamics and social tensions with which this chapter opened.

As the loyalists considered above demonstrate, the wartime activities of Albany's active loyalists are perhaps the most straightforward to explain. Motivated by political ideology, emotional attachment to Britain, or even a sense of adventure, many voluntarily left their homes to join the British forces – sometimes alone, often with family members – with whom they were employed in a range of positions to advance the British military effort.⁶³ Most of these were employed as frontline soldiers, however others turned their business acumen, status and influence to British ends, while yet others who possessed particularly useful skills were placed in supporting roles where their abilities were most valuable. Those who were too

⁶¹ *Ibid*, AO 13/11; American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/23.

⁶² R. Holmes, *Redcoat: The British Soldier in the Age of Horse and Musket* (London: Harper Collins, 2001), p. 413.

⁶³ Recent studies of soldiers' diaries suggest that young men fighting on both sides of the conflict were encouraged to enlist owing to the lack of opportunities at home and perceived adventure of war. See P. Mead, "'Adventures, Dangers, and Sufferings': The Betrayal of Private Joseph Plumb Martin, Continental Soldier", in A. F. Young, G. B. Nash and R. Raphael (eds), *Revolutionary Founders: Rebels, Radicals, and Reformers in the Making of the Nation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), pp. 117-34; W. Sullivan, 'Soldier of '76: The Revolutionary War Service of a Connecticut Private in the Campaign for New York', *HRVR*, 28.1 (2011), pp. 77-101; Autobiography of Stephen Jarvis, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS.

elderly to serve themselves could send sons, engage in non-military roles – abilities permitting – within the camp, or simply open their homes to scouting parties and soldiers in need of shelter and provisions.

Reluctant Loyalists

In contrast to those active loyalists who voluntarily joined the British forces upon the outbreak of war, ‘reluctant’ loyalists were slower to display their support for the British cause. Albany’s ‘reluctant’ loyalists overwhelmingly joined British and loyalist forces after 1777 – a year which had immense local political and social consequences. Although ‘reluctant’ loyalists stressed their unfaltering allegiance and quoted their records of military service within their compensation claims, they constitute those who John Eardley Wilmot described as claimants who “had not been early in the part they had taken”.⁶⁴ Significantly, reluctant loyalists were especially overrepresented in Albany County compared to their distribution amongst claimants from New York and Tryon Counties: of the 107 loyalists considered from Albany County, 42 individuals (39 per cent) can be described as reluctant. This overrepresentation suggests that local factors in Albany played an important role in shaping the behaviour of this group of loyalists.

Closer examination of the claims of Albany’s reluctant loyalists reveals that these individuals typically followed one of two patterns. First, there were a small group of claimants – ten individuals – who initially appear to be equally loyal to their active counterparts. They provided essential military support for the British and, critically, their decision to enlist appears to have been made voluntarily; they do not mention imprisonment or maltreatment by revolutionaries as a factor influencing their decision to enlist. However, what sets them apart from the active loyalists are their attempts to stay home and remain neutral for as long as possible, before eventually being compelled to take a stance.

Guisbert Sharp from Kinderhook fell under this description.⁶⁵ Although claiming to be of “avowed loyal principle” to Britain within his claim, upon the outbreak of war Sharp was not motivated to join the British forces. He had already signed the Articles of Association (the boycott of British imports and exports) by this point, however he explained that this was a

⁶⁴ J. E. Wilmot, *Historical View of the Commission for Enquiring into the Losses, Services, and Claims of the American Loyalists, At the Close of the War Between Great Britain and her Colonies, in 1783*, New Edition (Boston, MA: Gregg Press, 1972), p. 51.

⁶⁵ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/33.

pragmatic measure; he had only signed it as the majority of his parish had also done so. Delaying his decision to join the British for as long as possible, Sharp hoped to simply “keep out of their [the rebels’] way”. As pressure to join the rebel forces increased this even included secreting himself within the woods to avoid detection. By 1777, however, Sharp was unable to avoid the conflict for any longer. As we shall see, the year 1777 marked an important change in how the newly-formed State of New York approached the detection and apprehension of suspected loyalists. Sharp enlisted with the British troops based at Saratoga, where he was awarded a lieutenant’s commission with Major Jessup’s Corps of Loyal Rangers.

The second group of reluctant loyalists – and the most prominent, accounting for 24 per cent (26 individuals) of the 107 claimants from Albany County – are arguably the most complex of all the loyalist claimants considered. What is distinctive about the experiences of these particular loyalists is that – according to their own testimonies – they only joined the British forces after being persecuted for suspected loyalism, often after attempting to “remain quiet” at home. These loyalists may have held genuinely loyal sentiments privately, but there is no prior evidence for these sentiments and no indication that they were ever acted upon. It was only after they were mistreated by their neighbours that that these loyalists took a decisive stance one way or another. The suggestion is, therefore, that this group of claimants were forced into loyalism by local circumstance.

Structures to Detect and Defeat Loyalism

In October 1774, the Continental Congress called for the establishment of Committees of Correspondence to monitor adherence to the Articles of Association. Accordingly, between 1775 and 1778, Albany County established its own hierarchical system of Committees of Observation and Correspondence. Each district managed its own local affairs and reported into the county-level committee based at the city of Albany.⁶⁶

However, the instructions from Congress were vague: Article Eleven of the Association decreed that Committees were to be formed, but failed to provide specific guidelines regarding their powers and operation. According to T. H. Breen, this vagueness enabled local committees to shape the terms of their own activities in response to local requirements and to extend their authority beyond the powers defined in the initial proceedings.⁶⁷ In Albany

⁶⁶ For an overview of the committee hierarchy see Flick, *Loyalism in New York*, p. 79.

⁶⁷ T. H. Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010), p. 169.

County, for instance, the Committee took on a dual role: it performed municipal and administrative functions previously undertaken by the former royal government; it also quickly evolved from simply enforcing the association to detecting and prosecuting those who were suspected to be inimical to the American cause.

Importantly, the introduction of the Committee structure alone was not sufficient to produce substantial social change. Indeed, before the British invasion of New York, the surviving minutes of Albany County's various Committees of Correspondence indicate that they faced a constant struggle for legitimacy. In June 1775, for instance, the Committee at Albany was faced with a petition from the inhabitants of Cambridge and Quashakoke, who alleged that the Committee-men were little more than "Rebels and Traitors".⁶⁸ George Ramsey, meanwhile, a resident of Schenectady, was accused of tarring and feathering several of the Committee-men's doors.⁶⁹

Meanwhile, the constant refusal of Schenectady's population to undertake military duties – despite being fined – led the Committee to appeal to Albany for assistance, claiming that "we are at a Loss to know what should be Done with those people."⁷⁰ An entry from Albany's Committee of Correspondence from June 1776 reveals the extent of these frustrations felt by the Committee-men. The minutes note:

that Any person or persons, denying or disobeying the Authority or orders of any Committee, that Such Committee Shall have full power, and Authority to impose Such fines or other punishments as to them Shall Seem Adequate to the Crime [~~but not to extend to Life or Limb~~].⁷¹

The change to the original text is significant. While corporal punishment had previously been determined too excessive a penalty for disobedience, a shift in opinion by June 1776 now deemed it appropriate.

The accounts of Albany's loyalists paint a similar picture: at best, they indicate that many had little faith in the Committee system, while others considered it to be illegal. Former Justices of the Peace John Macomb and Jonathan Jones, along with Albany's Mayor Abraham Curler, described the revolutionary committees as "the usurped government" or "the usurping

⁶⁸ Sullivan (ed.), *Minutes of the Albany Committee*, pp. 114-15.

⁶⁹ Flick (ed.), *Minutes of the Schenectady Committee*, p. 1029.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 1093-94.

⁷¹ Sullivan (ed.), *Minutes of the Albany Committee*, p. 450. Strikethrough in original.

power.”⁷² Of course, their opinions may be a reflection of their pre-war status; these individuals had all been formerly associated with the colonial establishment and had lost their positions upon the collapse of royal government. However, such perspectives were not confined to Albany’s former political elite. Hugh Munro, discussed above, and Peter Eselestine, a tenant farmer from Livingston Manor, both referred to Albany’s Committees as “rebel meetings.”⁷³ Alexander Campbell, a Justice of the Peace, Magistrate, shopkeeper and tavern-keeper from Schoharie perhaps articulated it best, describing how “a number of people of bad character formed themselves into a committee and examined all persons who had anything to allege against him.”⁷⁴

As the war progressed, however, the authority and influence of Albany’s revolutionary governments increased. The early Committees of Correspondence and their later successors evolved into effective institutions for identifying and prosecuting those suspected of being disaffected to the American cause. Indeed, the claims reveal multiple instances of Albany’s loyalists being subject to investigation by the committees; 33 per cent (35 individuals) of the 107 claimants considered within this case study have corresponding references within the minutes of Albany’s Committee of Correspondence, Schenectady’s Committee of Correspondence or Albany’s Commission for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies. Therefore, to understand how Albany’s Committee system worked against individuals who had shown no prior affiliation with the British cause, we have to understand more about the legislative changes which took place in the state of New York.

In April 1777, New York’s Provincial Congress officially declared its separation from Great Britain and confirmed the Committee system as the official form of government. According to the new state constitution, the hierarchy of committees and congresses had been introduced as a temporary measure in response to the collapse of authority of the royal government. This system “was intended to expire on a Reconciliation with Great-Britain, which was then apprehended would soon take place, but is now considered as remote and uncertain.”⁷⁵ By reaffirming the Committees’ authority as a legislative body, the Provincial Congress also

⁷² American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/13 and 12/30; American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/13.

⁷³ American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/12; American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/26.

⁷⁴ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/27.

⁷⁵ New York Provincial Congress, *Resolves - 31 May 1776* (New York: John Holt, 1776); *The Constitution of New York*, 20 April 1777, reproduced at <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/ny01.asp>[accessed 29 October 2017].

sanctioned their activities when it came to the detection and apprehension of suspected loyalists. The timing of these changes was significant: 1777 was the same year that many 'reluctant' loyalists were targeted by their neighbours, summoned before Albany's committees and eventually forced to leave for the British lines.

New York's loyalist problem was deemed so severe that in February 1778 the state assembly introduced a new structure for detecting loyalism: the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies.⁷⁶ Under the terms of the act, twenty commissioners were empowered to summon suspected loyalists and their papers, administer oaths of allegiance to the state of New York and confine those who they considered to be inimical to the American cause.⁷⁷ The roles and responsibilities of the Commissioners were loosely based upon the activities of earlier commissions for detecting and defeating conspiracies based in New York City, Fishkill and Kingston. These earlier commissions, operating between 1776 and 1777, had been primarily tasked with the apprehension and processing of loyalist prisoners.⁷⁸

In contrast to these earlier structures, however, the new Commissioners for detecting and defeating loyalist conspiracies operated on a much larger scale. While the earlier Committees were often short-lived, Albany's Commission for Detecting Conspiracies met on an almost daily basis between April 1778 and September 1781. Furthermore, the Commissioners were not operating in isolation, but appeared to be part of a network; in addition to the Commissioners appointed to serve Albany County, evidence from the Commissioners' minutes refers to the existence of similar commissions based at Poughkeepsie, Tryon County and Charlotte County.⁷⁹ In Albany, the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies eventually adopted many of the roles and responsibilities fulfilled by the former Committee of Correspondence, which ceased to meet after April 1778.

⁷⁶ New York Legislature, *Laws of the state of New-York*, pp. 6-7.

⁷⁷ The act originally made provision for ten commissioners, however an amendment was passed on 3 April 1778 which increased their number to twenty. See 'An Act for increasing the Number of Commissioners for detecting and defeating Conspiracies, within this State', New York Legislature, *Laws of the state of New-York*, pp. 29-30.

⁷⁸ For more on the histories of earlier committees, see Barck (ed.), *Minutes of the Committee and of the First Commission for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies*, especially pp. xi-xix; The committee at New York sent loyalist prisoners to New England, including Worcester, Massachusetts. See United States Revolution Collection, 1754-1928, Manuscript Collections, AAS, Box 2 Folder 20.

⁷⁹ See references to Poughkeepsie Board and Commissioners from Tryon and Charlotte Counties in V. H. Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners for detecting and defeating Conspiracies in the State of New York, Albany County Sessions, 1778-1791, Volume Three: Analytical Index* (Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon Company, 1910), reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/detectingdefeating03paltrich>> [accessed 29 October 2017].

One crucial change to the law rendered the position of Albany's reluctant loyalists even more precarious: in July 1778, New York's Assembly directly outlawed neutrality. According to the law "more effectually to prevent the Mischiefs, arising from the Influence and Example of Persons of equivocal and suspected Characters", all neutral and equivocal persons were to be administered the oath of allegiance by the Commissioners for Detecting Conspiracies.⁸⁰ Those who refused were identified as disinterested in the American cause and, under the terms of the new law, enemies of the state. Importantly, such changes to the law had a greater impact upon loyalists in Albany County than in New York City; Albany was subject to the proceedings of the revolutionary government, while loyalists in New York City were protected from legislative changes by the British occupation. In Albany, therefore, as the war progressed, those who attempted to maintain neutrality often risked greater punishments than those who accepted the oath, including property seizures and expulsion from the state, notwithstanding the punishments or "molestations" that their local community might inflict upon them.⁸¹

It was within this context that residents of Albany County began to appear before the Committee of Correspondence – sometimes voluntarily and sometimes coerced – to provide the names of members of their communities as being of suspected character or inimical to the American cause. In a society where neutrality equated to loyalism, individuals were identified and targeted by their communities as suspected loyalists. Indeed, examination of the minutes of Albany's Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies reveals that accusations of loyalism were often made on the basis of hearsay and flimsy evidence. The simplicity of its operation made the commission open to corruption: a vengeful individual had only to notify the commissioners of a neighbour who was potentially disaffected and the suspected person was brought before the commission for questioning. Thus, there are repeated instances of individuals being brought before the commission on groundless allegations; they were questioned, no evidence was found to convict them and they were released without charge. As New York's state historian, Victor Hugo Palsits, explains in his introduction to the minutes:

it was of course the duty of every true citizen of the State to reveal the identity of disloyalty in any form. When persons refused to reveal information which was requested of them, they were themselves sent to prison. Under these circumstances it was not

⁸⁰ New York Legislature, *Laws of the state of New-York*, p. 43.

⁸¹ Countryman, *People in Revolution*, p. 130.

unusual that suspicious persons construed Dame Rumor to the damnation of their neighbours, and that revengeful spirits were afforded an outlet.⁸²

In the absence of coffee-houses and the eighteenth-century venues of sociability present in New York, Albany's taverns formed the centre of social and political life.⁸³ During the Revolution, they became especially complex spaces when it came to the detection of loyalist conspiracies. Albany's revolutionary government was particularly sensitive to the well-established potential for taverns to mobilise political activity; the farmers' riots of the 1760s served as a recent reminder of such events.⁸⁴ According to Beat Kümin and B. Ann Tlusty, although the tavern was a semi-public environment, meetings in private rooms could be viewed as secretive or threatening.⁸⁵ Thus, both the Albany Committee of Correspondence and the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Loyalist Conspiracies were cautious about the types of activities hosted by taverns, especially their potential to serve as meeting places for those inimical to the American cause.

Officials were particularly concerned about the perceived political influence which tavern-keepers might exert amongst their clientèle. With taverns forming a focal point within small communities, tavern-keepers enjoyed a certain level of status. The danger, therefore, was that loyalist tavern-keepers might use their social position to shape the views of their customers and even dissuade them from performing militia duty. In February 1777 Albany's Committee of Correspondence directly expressed such concerns about the political allegiances of tavern-keepers, claiming that:

Great Inconveniencies have arisen in the City and County of Albany, occasioned by the great number of Persons keeping Tavern and Tipling Houses many of whom are disaffected to the measures pursued for the establishment of American Freedom and there is reason to apprehend they have influenced many Soldiers to quit the service.⁸⁶

⁸² Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners, Volume One*, pp. 41-42.

⁸³ B. L. Carp, *Rebels Rising: Cities and the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 63-68. Although Carp focuses upon events in New York City, his assessment of the politicised nature of the tavern remains equally of use to interpreting events in Albany County.

⁸⁴ However, paranoia about the potential for taverns to host such activities was almost universal across New York. In both 1712 and 1741 New York City's black residents were suspected of using taverns as meeting places to conspire to burn down the city. See A. Gilbert, *Black Patriots and Loyalists: Fighting for Emancipation in the War for Independence* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2012), pp. 2-4; J. Lepore, *New York Burning: Liberty, Slavery, and Conspiracy in Eighteenth-Century Manhattan* (New York: Vintage, 2006).

⁸⁵ B. Kümin and B. A. Tlusty, 'Introduction', in B. Kümin and B. A. Tlusty (eds) *The World of the Tavern: Public Houses in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p. 9.

⁸⁶ Sullivan (ed.), *Minutes of the Albany Committee*, p. 691.

With this in mind, the Committee introduced a series of measures designed to regulate tavern-keepers and to prevent further “ill Consequences.”

One way in which taverns were regulated was through a licensing system. Beginning in February 1777, Albany’s committees introduced a series of resolutions of increasing intensity to ensure that only those in favour of the American cause could run taverns. Prospective tavern-keepers needed to take the oath of allegiance before they were granted a license; those who attempted to open a tavern without a licence were fined fifty pounds.⁸⁷ Evidence from Schenectady’s committee indicates that this legislation was also enforced at district level.⁸⁸ Notably, Albany led the way in regulating its tavern-keepers, indicating the perceived severity of the issue; it would take a further two years before the state of New York would officially introduce a similar law.⁸⁹

Despite measures put in place to ensure the ‘suitability’ of tavern-keepers, they remained particular targets for Albany’s Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Loyalist Conspiracies. For instance, in November 1778 the Commissioners received a petition claiming that “Aron Hammond ... is a Person disaffected to the Cause of America and praying that he may not be permitted any longer to keep a Tavern.”⁹⁰ Meanwhile, when Henry Simpson was apprehended for being “of a Suspicious Character” it was noted that “as a Tavern Keeper it is necessary he should be laid under restrictions”.⁹¹ The terminology used in the accounts of tavern-keepers’ arrests reflects the commissioners’ suspicion of their potential for hosting loyalist activities and meetings. This includes the records relating to Simeon Smith of Pitts

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 691. In March 1777, it was further ‘Resolved That a Committee be appointed to send for an examine all such Persons in this City who keep Tavern or Tipling Houses, and that they tender to such Person or Persons the Oath of Allegiance and that they give to such Person or Persons as they shall think proper a Certificate requesting the Chairman to grant a Licence.’ See Sullivan, *Minutes of the Albany Committee of Correspondence*, p. 706.

⁸⁸ Flick (ed.), *Minutes of the Schenectady Committee*, p. 1090.

⁸⁹ See ‘An Act to lay a Duty of Excise on strong Liquors, to appropriate the Monies arising therefrom, and for the better Regulation of Inns and Taverns, within this State’, 2 March 1779, New York Legislature, *Laws of the state of New-York*, pp. 54-6. See also ‘An Act to regulate Inns and Taverns, within this State,’ 21 February 1780, New York Legislature, *Laws of the state of New-York*, pp. 104-105.

⁹⁰ Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners, Volume One*, p. 279. Notably, there was also a petition in support of Hammond submitted at the same time.

⁹¹ V. H. Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners for detecting and defeating Conspiracies in the State of New York, Albany County Sessions, 1778-1791, Volume Two: 1780-1781* (Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon Company, 1909), pp. 443-44, reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/detectingdefecting02paltrich>> [accessed 29 October 2017].

Town, who allegedly “entertains disaffected persons; drink’s King George’s health and speaks disrespectfully of the authority of this State.”⁹²

Despite taverns’ potential danger for facilitating gatherings of loyalist conspirators, revolutionary officials also recognised their potential for gathering information on those disaffected to the American cause. For instance, one incredibly simple way to identify suspected loyalists was to listen for those who toasted the King’s health. Of course, allegations of such behaviour were often based upon flimsy evidence and fragmentary conversations overheard in alcohol-fuelled environments. As such, they were open to abuse and malignant false accusations. However, despite its apparently trivial nature, the charge was serious. Toasting was a common and popular eighteenth-century custom on both sides of the Atlantic, through which individuals could declare their political allegiances, national pride or loyalty to a particular cause.⁹³ However, toasts could also be subversive or disloyal; during the Jacobite rebellion, for instance, Jacobites were known to toasting the Pretender’s health, rather than that of the Hanoverians.⁹⁴ In the context of the American Revolution, toasting the King’s health became synonymous with loyalism. Consequently, the Commissioners’ minutes demonstrate repeated instances of suspected loyalists being apprehended, questioned and imprisoned on the basis of such allegations.

Thus, Nicholas Van Valkenburgh, a yeoman from Schodack, was apprehended in June 1780 based upon information provided by Major Jacob Schermerhorn.⁹⁵ Under the charge, Van Valkenburgh was accused of “drinking the King’s Health and damning every one that opposed the King’s Laws.”⁹⁶ Similarly, farmer Robert Martin was imprisoned in April 1779 after Continental Officer George White informed the commissioners that Martin “is a person

⁹² Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners, Volume Two*, p. 694.

⁹³ See for instance R. Coleman, *The Loyal Britons Pocket Companion, Consisting of National Songs, Loyal Toasts and Sentiments, Sonnets to be Used Before and After an Engagement with the Enemy: With a Variety of Other Pieces, For the Use of the Army and Navy, and Recommended to the Gentlemen Volunteers and Valiant Seamen, Throughout the United British Empire* (London: Hartnell, 1805)

⁹⁴ P. Kléber Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People, 1688-1788* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 230; Macinnes, ‘Jacobitism in Scotland’, p. 230.

⁹⁵ Major Jacob Schermerhoorn was with the 4th Regiment of the Albany County Militia, see State Comptroller, *New York in the Revolution as Colony and State, Volume One* (Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon Company, 1904), p. 104, reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/newyorkrevolution01statrich>> [accessed 28 October 2017].

⁹⁶ Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners, Volume Two*, p. 442.

disaffected to the American Cause and that he has drank the King's Health."⁹⁷ Martin was eventually bailed by militia Colonel Killian Van Rensselaer – the youngest brother of Johannes Van Rensselaer, who was director Rensselaerswyck's east district and likely to have been Martin's landlord – to relieve the suffering of his wife and children left behind on the farm.⁹⁸ Whether or not the Van Rensselaers truly believed that Martin was a supporter of American liberty is not necessarily important; however – with the farmers' riots in recent memory – the suggestion is that the Van Rensselaers sought Martin's release to avoid being forced into taking the unpopular decision of evicting his wife. Local concerns appear to have taken precedent over ideological matters, even for a family as influential as the Van Rensselaers.

Upon first glance, it appears that many of these accusations reached the commissioners' attention via military officials. However, this is potentially inaccurate and reflects a limitation of the source material. When describing how the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies obtained their intelligence, the minutes are vague; they usually provide the name of the individual who brought a matter to their attention, but no further detail regarding the origins of the initial allegation. What is more likely, therefore, is that local residents voiced their concerns about their disaffected neighbours to revolutionary officials, who were then obliged to report such intelligence to the Commission. In this way, a rumour could travel anonymously from a concerned citizen (or malignant neighbour) to the revolutionary leadership. Furthermore, the status of those military officials would have enhanced their credibility as informers to the board, giving the accusation more weight and potentially securing a conviction.

An enhanced understanding of Albany's fragmented society and especially of the changing political context within the county impacts our interpretation of the claims of Albany's reluctant loyalists in a number of ways. The evidence suggests that many of those who joined the British from 1777 onwards may not necessarily have been loyalists at the beginning of the

⁹⁷ For more on White, see Williams, 'New York State's Committees', p. 45; Palsits, *Minutes of the Commissioners, Volume One*, p. 325.

⁹⁸ For more on the Van Rensselaers, see S. Bielinski, 'Hendrick Van Rensselaer', *CASHP*, <<http://exhibitions.nysm.nysed.gov//albany/bios/vr/hvr5053.html>>[accessed 3 January 2018]; Bielinski, 'John Van Rensselaer', *CASHP*, <<http://exhibitions.nysm.nysed.gov//albany/bios/vr/jovr5127.html>>[accessed 3 January 2018]; Bielinski, 'Kilian Van Rensselaer', *CASHP*, <<http://exhibitions.nysm.nysed.gov//albany/bios/vr/kvr5131.html>>[accessed 3 January 2018]; No further biographical information is provided for Martin, however the Van Rensselaers' involvement in his release suggest that he was likely to have been a tenant at Rensselaerswyck Manor.

conflict, but were neutral at best. Consider, for instance, the account of Benjamin Frelick. A farmer who lived near to the city of Albany, he joined Butler's Rangers in 1778. Importantly, Frelick cited the treatment that he received from his local community as his eventual motivation for enlisting: as a suspected loyalist, he claimed to have "suffered terribly". Eventually, Frelick and his family were driven from their farm and fled to the British for protection, with whom he served until 1784.⁹⁹

Similarly, George Charters of Claverack appears to have made no attempts to join or assist the British before October 1777.¹⁰⁰ However, within his petition to the Loyalist Commissioners, he claims that "before he joined the King's Troops [he] was in close confinement". Charters later testified in person that he had been confined within Albany's Tory gaol in April 1777, however he did not elaborate upon the reasons for his identification as a suspected loyalist and his subsequent arrest. Upon his release, potentially recognising that he was unable to return home, Charters went straight to join the King's troops.

John Lane, an Irish-born farmer from Ballstown, also made no claims to loyalty before 1777.¹⁰¹ He even engaged in occasional militia duty with local revolutionary forces. However, like others who described serving with the rebel militia or signing the association as a pragmatic measure to ensure their own safety, Lane dismissed this action as being of little importance and of having no impact upon his loyalist allegiance, testifying that "he never joined the Rebels". Nevertheless, Lane was allegedly identified by his neighbours as a suspected loyalist. He claimed that in August 1777 he was "driven from his Property on account of his Loyalty to His Majesty and attachment to the British Government", after which he joined Major William McAlpin's corps at Fort Miller. The exact circumstances regarding Lane's expulsion from the community are unclear; he does not elaborate upon them, nor do the Commissioners do not request further details. As such, it is unclear whether Lane truly professed loyalist sentiments to his neighbours, or whether they simply took advantage of the upheaval of revolution to oust him from his (allegedly) "comfortable house" at Balls Town.

Reluctant loyalists such as those considered above were not in favour of rebellion and generally refused to associate themselves with those adherents of independence. Meanwhile,

⁹⁹ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/28; American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/12.

¹⁰⁰ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/28.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, AO 12/27.

they were not enthusiastic to defend the British cause through the use of arms either. Instead, these individuals preferred to remain neutral, hoping to “keep out of the way” or avoid the conflict entirely until events were resolved. In upstate New York, as neutrality became equated to loyalism, those who were brought before revolutionary committees for being equivocal to the American cause were forced into making an excruciating decision: take an oath of allegiance to the American state, which would effectively renounce any former association with Britain; or refuse and become branded as Tories by default, thus risking incurring the wrath of their local communities and potentially being forced to abandon their homes, livelihoods and families to join the British troops. Thus, the evidence from Albany County suggests that for many loyalism was adopted as a *de facto* response.

The experience of John Amory provides an excellent example of such a response. Appearing before the Royal Commissioners in 1787, Amory’s widow, Nelly Molloy, explained that her husband had become “obnoxious” – a term regularly used by claimants as a demonstration of their known loyalty amongst their peers – to the rebel committees as a suspected loyalist during the fall of 1776.¹⁰² At this point, a party of men were sent to apprehend Amory and he was forced to flee to the woods for shelter. After laying low during the winter, in the spring of 1777 Amory joined Burgoyne as a lieutenant with a volunteer corps of loyalists. Unable to return home for the remainder of the war for his own safety, he continued in a range of military roles in both Canada and New York City. This included employment in the Public Departments, the army boat yard and Comptroller for the Quarter Master General. According to his widow, she attributed the hardships of war to Amory’s premature death in 1780; Nelly claimed that his passing was “hastened in the prime of his life by his sufferings in the royal cause”.¹⁰³

¹⁰² For more “obnoxious” loyalists, see the claims of Charity French (TNA: AO12/35 & TNA: AO 13/12), the children of Mary Brant and Sir William Johnson (TNA: AO 12/22 & TNA: AO 13/11), William Fairfield (TNA: AO 12/28 & TNA: AO 13/12), Alexander White (TNA: AO 12/29), Benjamin Woolsey Muirson (TNA: AO 12/30), Charles Ward Apthorp (TNA: AO 13/11), David King (TNA: AO 12/19), Frederick Brautigam (Bridegroom) (TNA: AO 12/22), John Thompson (TNA: AO 12/22), Robert Gordon (TNA: AO 12/27), Isaac Hatfield Jr (TNA: AO 12/23 & TNA: AO 13/11), Michael Nealer (TNA: AO12/24), Peter Eselestine (TNA: AO 13/12), Samuel Wade (TNA: AO 12/24), Lorenda Holmes & Mary Smith (TNA: AO 12/30), Mary McAlpin (TNA: AO 12/21), Samuel Tilley (TNA: AO 12/25) and Thomas Hughes (TNA: AO 12/21).

¹⁰³ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/26.

Female Loyalists

As Nelly Molly's evidence alludes to, the decision to remain loyal could have major implications for the rest of a loyalist's family. Considering the example of the Ferguson family, for instance, we have already glimpsed how female members of the household were impacted considerably by the decision taken by a father, son or brother to join the British troops. The final section of this chapter focuses exclusively on the revolutionary experiences of Albany's female loyalists, as told in their own words.

One distinguishing feature of Albany's female loyalist claimants is their low number: of the 107 claims considered from Albany County, only 7 (fewer than 7 per cent) were submitted by women. This is lower than the proportion of female loyalist claimants in New York City and significantly fewer than Mary Beth Norton's estimate that 15 per cent of all claimants were women.¹⁰⁴

In a striking contrast to New York City's female claimants, Albany's female loyalists were a comparatively homogeneous group: almost all of the claimants had been widowed as a direct consequence of the war, their husbands having been killed in active duty. Claims from this group were typically lodged under the widow's own name, but the case they made for financial compensation was based upon the activities of their late husbands. Occasionally, loyalist widows referred to sons who had also served with the British troops. The only exception to this pattern was the claim of Elizabeth Schermerhoorn, from Rensselaerswyck Manor; her claim was originally submitted by her husband, William, but upon his death in June 1787 Elizabeth took up the claim on his behalf.

Female claimants had differing experiences of the claims process depending upon whether or not they had adult sons. Isobel Fraser from Hoosick District, for instance, lodged a claim which related to the activities of her late husband, Simon Fraser. However, Isobel was not called upon to give testimony; this was provided instead by her eldest son, William. Although William Fraser's exact age is not provided, he was likely to have been of legal age; according to Isobel's claim, William had joined Sir John Johnson's regiment in 1777. As such, he was appointed as proxy for his mother.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ M. B. Norton, 'Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War: The Case of the Loyalists', *WMQ*, 33. 3 (1976), p. 388.

¹⁰⁵ Chalus, *Elite Women*, p. 146.

Elizabeth Hogle, from Cambridge District, had the opposite experience.¹⁰⁶ Like Isobel Fraser, Hogle similarly lodged a claim in her own name, relating to the loyal service of her husband John. However, Elizabeth was required to appear in person to provide evidence and was even referred to by the commissioners as “the claimant.” Although Elizabeth had three surviving sons – who were required to provide secondary evidence before the commissioners – they were all aged nineteen years and under, thus qualifying them as minors and therefore unable to assume responsibility for the claim, act as proxy for their mother, or accept any subsequent financial reward.¹⁰⁷ Similar examples can be found in the claims of Elizabeth Schermerhoorn and Mary McAlpin. Once again, although there are no records of the questions asked by the loyalist commissioners, the evidence provided by both women suggests that they were asked to provide the ages of their eldest sons; Elizabeth’s eldest was twelve and Mary’s son James “will be 21 years of age in May next”.¹⁰⁸

This preference for adult sons to take overall responsibility for their fathers’ claims is reflected in the claim of Henry James Jessup and his seven sisters. Unlike the widows who claimed for their late husbands’ estates, the Jessup sisters claimed for their share of the Jessupsborough Patent which had been left to them by their grandfather. Henry – son of the aforementioned Lieutenant Colonel Ebenezer Jessup of the Loyal Rangers – was only thirteen when the Revolution began and would have been twenty-four years old when he appeared before the Loyalist Claims Commission in 1786. He was also ignorant of many of the details regarding his inheritance; his memorial reveals that he was heavily reliant on information provided by his father and uncle. However, as the only adult male, convention dictated that the claim was lodged in his name and he alone was to take responsibility for it and for any settlement that would eventually be rewarded; his sisters were not called upon to give evidence.¹⁰⁹

However, the practice of adult males assuming responsibility for the claim may occasionally have worked to a widow’s advantage – provided that the son had access to his father’s papers or sufficient knowledge of the financial details of the estate. As Norton highlights, not only were Albany’s female claimants not as well-versed as their male counterparts in the techniques required to submit a successful claim, they were also at a significant disadvantage

¹⁰⁶ The spelling of ‘Hogle’, ‘Hogal’ and ‘Hogill’ varies between British and American sources. The American spelling of ‘Hogle’ has been adopted for continuity.

¹⁰⁷ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/27; American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/13.

¹⁰⁸ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/28 and AO 12/21.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, AO 12/21.

when it came to describing the exact amounts that they were entitled to claim.¹¹⁰ In order to determine the appropriate amount of compensation, the loyalist commissioners required that claimants provided accurate valuations of property lost as a consequence of their (or their husband's) loyalty. According to Norton, loyalist widows – who were usually testifying without the assistance of their late husbands' deeds and papers – were either forced to provide this information to the best of their knowledge or were reliant upon information that could be provided by male relatives. Because women were typically excluded from the financial aspects of managing the family estate, this knowledge was often severely limited. This was especially true for women in rural communities. As Norton argues, although female claimants might be able to recall details which were important to the everyday operation of the farm – such as what the land was used for, the types of crop grown, items held in storage, or the numbers of tools and livestock – they were unable to give precise information relating to acreage or the values of property. As such, women typically received smaller amounts of compensation than men.

Albany's female loyalists adhere closely to Norton's findings. Consider the evidence provided by Mary McAlpin, the widow of Major William McAlpin. Although she provided a detailed inventory of the estate within her initial memorial, the suggestion is that her claim was drawn up with the assistance of her late husband's associates; Mary's claim was unusual in the high number of supporting letters and testimonies that she had gathered from her late husband's acquaintances. Under closer examination by the commissioners, Mary's knowledge of the estate appears to have been limited. For instance, when asked about the value of 6,000 acres of land that she had claimed for on the banks of the White River, although she knew the land had been granted to her husband by Governor Tryon, the commissioners noted that "she is ignorant of what Expense". When asked about a separate farm located near Whillachs College, Mary was also "ignorant of the number of Acres". A comment made by Mary suggests that her knowledge was based on hearsay or information provided by her late husband's acquaintances: the minutes report that "*From what she has heard she believes them to be worth £10 an acre.*"¹¹¹ Mary was much more knowledgeable discussing the specifics of the family home, describing in detail the timber structures, household furniture, and the types and quantity of livestock held. However, she had no knowledge of how much Major McAlpin

¹¹⁰ Norton, 'Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War', pp. 388-94.

¹¹¹ Emphasis my own.

had paid for the land; instead, the minutes note that “the valuation [of the estate] is of her own making”.¹¹²

Mary Swords’ claim indicates a similar situation. Mary explained to the commissioners that almost all of her husband’s papers had been destroyed in a fire at New York City. Thus, she was able to produce grants to prove ownership for some of the lands, but when the grants were destroyed or missing, she was able to provide little information. For instance, when asked about a claim for 2,000 acres in Albany County, according to her own testimony, “she does not know whether it was actually granted”. Just like Mary McAlpin, however, Mary Swords was confident in describing the family home; she provided great detail regarding the layout of her house, items of personal furniture, livestock and farming equipment. These examples thus confirm Norton’s conclusions regarding the gendered division of household responsibilities in colonial America. In rural Albany, men typically controlled the financial and legal aspects of running the farm, while women were responsible for the home and its possessions.¹¹³

Compared to female loyalists in New York City, opportunities for Albany’s loyalist women to support the royal cause were severely limited. The indication from the claims is that – owing to a range of factors including Albany’s geographical landscape, the strength of revolutionary Committees and proximity to British forces – female loyalists in Albany could not engage with the war effort in the same way as their counterparts in Manhattan. The conclusion, therefore, is that location was more important than gender when it came to determining the wartime activities of female loyalists in the colony of New York.

That said, opportunities for women to support the British cause did exist in Albany County. Returning to the claim of Mary McAlpin, her account of her wartime activities indicates the possible services which could be performed by loyal women. While her husband William was with the British forces, Mary and her family remained upon the family estate at Saratoga. As we have already seen, Saratoga was a common joining point for loyalist soldiers and experienced a steady traffic of potential recruits. In her critique of the traditional narrative of women’s roles during the American Revolution, Linda Kerber describes American forests “as peopled as those of the Brothers Grimm, in which instead of orphaned children and witches

¹¹² American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/21.

¹¹³ A similar point is made by Sara T. Damiano, see A. Taylor, ‘Expand or Die: The Revolution’s New Empire’, p. 622.

we have lone women hastening breathlessly on errands of mercy or information.”¹¹⁴ Although somewhat fanciful, this description is not entirely inaccurate for Albany’s wilderness: McAlpin describes how her husband was forced to “secret himself in the hollow of a tree”, while she would later venture into the woods to provide parties of loyalists with provisions and advance money to loyalist prisoners to secure their release.¹¹⁵

Despite Kerber’s cynicism, the assistance provided by Mary McAlpin and women like her was important. Male claimants described the charity and essential support that they received from loyalist women as they attempted to reach the British lines. Such actions were not entirely dissimilar – although, somewhat less glamorous – to those of New York City’s gentlewomen who opened their homes to entertain British officers. Indeed, they equate to the services provided by some of Albany’s ‘active’ male loyalists considered above, such as William Brisbon who provided shelter, provisions and directions to parties of loyalists.

Such activities were also hazardous and the possibilities of being caught were real. As the wife of a known loyalist, McAlpin’s home was subject to repeated raids by rebel forces, who she claimed “destroy[ed] what they could not consume”. It is unclear whether she was ever caught providing loyalists with provisions – although she was almost certainly suspected of it – and eventually McAlpin was removed from her estate. She recounts how a party came to her home with blackened faces, stripped the house and took the remaining family members prisoner. Held in “a Cold Hut in Stillwater with no conveniences”, Mary was pressurised into using her influence to encourage her husband to return home from the British lines; she refused to comply with the request.

McAlpin’s treatment by revolutionary forces also confirms something which this chapter has alluded to, but not yet fully discussed. Thinking back to Kacy Tillman’s conclusion that loyalist women were usually considered to be extensions of their husbands’ political beliefs, not only does this assessment deny women agency, but the testimonies of Albany’s female loyalists indicate that the situation was not that simple; as we have seen, women could be active loyalists in their own right, albeit sharing their husband’s political beliefs.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless,

¹¹⁴ L. K. Kerber, “‘History Can Do It No Justice’: Women and the Reinterpretation of the American Revolution’ in R. Hoffman and P. J. Albert (eds), *Women in the Age of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia & United States Capitol Historical Society, 1989), p. 7.

¹¹⁵ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/21.

¹¹⁶ K. Tillman, ‘What is a Female Loyalist?’, *Common Place*, 13.4 (2013), reproduced at <<http://www.common-place.org/vol-13/no-04/tillman/>>[accessed 22 September 2017].

contemporary ideas regarding the familial nature of politics meant that once the male members of the family took the decision to remain loyal, the female members of the family were automatically assumed to be loyal too. This was especially true in the case of the Ferguson Family of Canon's Neck. In these circumstances, women often suffered a disproportionate burden of the punishment; when male loyalists left for British lines their wives and daughters were confined to the family farm, faced with the entire brunt of their community's anger. Albany's female loyalists describe being driven from their homes, stripped of their personal effects and forced to flee for protection. Elizabeth Schermerhorn, for instance, describes how – after her husband William left their farm at Rensselaerswyck Manor to join the British – she and her young family were “driven from her place and all these Things [horses, livestock, crops and farming utensils] were destroyed or plundered by the rebels”.¹¹⁷ Much of this activity was coordinated by Albany's Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies, who reported the occurrence of such activities within their minutes.

One curious anomaly indicates that a small number of women even benefited from the upheaval of revolution by gaining increased autonomy for themselves. However, this was less to do with the women in question, but reflective of the enhanced influence of the local community within Albany County. Elizabeth Hogle's husband, John, had joined the British forces in Canada in 1776, but was killed at the Battle of Bennington in 1777.¹¹⁸ Empowered by a law which allowed the families of loyalists to be sent behind enemy lines, in October 1780 the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies attempted to banish Hogle from the state.¹¹⁹ She appeared before the board and pleaded to be allowed to remain at home. Such a stance was not uncommon: Joan Hoff Wilson argues that many loyalist wives opposed leaving their homes for fear of losing their personal relationships with their communities.¹²⁰ Elizabeth was supported in her plea by her neighbours, who certified that “since the going away of her Husband said Elizabeth Hogle behaved herself in a becoming manner.”¹²¹ She was

¹¹⁷ Elizabeth's eldest son John was only twelve when she gave evidence in 1788, thus making her responsible for the family's claim. American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/28.

¹¹⁸ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/27; American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/13; John Hogle's estate is included on the list of confiscated properties. See List of Loyalists Against Whom Judgments Were Given Under the Confiscation Act, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol 2211.

¹¹⁹ 'An Act for the Removal of the Families of Persons who have joined the Enemy', 1 July 1780, New York Legislature, *Laws of the state of New-York*, pp. 143-44.

¹²⁰ J. Hoff Wilson, 'The Illusion of Change: Women and the American Revolution', in A. F. Young (ed.), *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976), p. 425.

¹²¹ Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners, Volume Two*, p. 540.

permitted to stay. Significantly, Elizabeth's good behaviour – and its acknowledgement by the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies – testifies to the fact that Elizabeth was not a loyalist. When she later appeared before the Loyalist Commissioners to request compensation, she again did not claim to be loyal, making no reference to her own loyalty. In both instances, it was the political persuasion of her husband which was deemed important; she was allowed to remain in Albany as long as she was not perceived to be a danger to the American cause. Thus, Elizabeth may have been apolitical and suffered as a consequence of John's beliefs. Alternatively, she may have successfully used the system to exert her own autonomy, claiming compensation from the British on behalf of her husband while simultaneously drawing upon her own actions and character to be permitted to remain within the United States.

One final characteristic of the claims suggests that eighteenth-century ideas regarding gender influenced the behaviour of Albany's female loyalists. As Norton argues, female claimants were intensely aware of their femininity and employed different phrases from men to support the validity of their claims. Women, she argues, were more likely to use their claims to talk about the mental and emotional distresses of war.¹²² This was certainly true for Albany's female claimants, such as Mary Swords, who used her claim to described being "compelled to quit her Habitation, leaving every thing but her wearing apparel behind her, after which her furniture was destroyed and her house much damaged by parties of Indians in the British Army".¹²³ Testifying in person, Swords claimed that her livestock and other personal property had been taken "for the use of General Burgoyne's Army." Others used their claims to express how the war had contributed to the destruction and disruption of their homes, livelihoods and families. They had a right to be angry. Nelly Molloy blamed her husband's untimely death on "his sufferings in the royal cause", while Mary McAlpin similarly blamed her husband's death on the trauma of war. After the capitulation of General Burgoyne, Major McAlpin's "constitution was so broken he never recovered". Mary testified that she was "overwhelmed and in inconceivable distress" when he died five months later, leaving her a widow with two underage children. Meanwhile, Elizabeth Hogle's family was also shattered by the war. Although she was permitted to remain in Albany, she was unable to raise her five sons

¹²² Norton, 'Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War', pp. 403-06; Kathleen DuVal makes a similar claim. See K. DuVal, *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution* (New York: Random House, 2015), p. 280.

¹²³ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/20.

singlehandedly; the boys were split between family members, both in the United States and at the new settlements in Canada.

In Albany County – as we have seen in New York City – women’s decisions to remain loyal were not necessarily of their own making. For Albany’s female loyalists the decision to remain loyal was a family decision, most often made for them by their husbands and adult sons. As rural wives and mothers, their priority was to keep the family together and to keep their estates in operation. This is evident from the way in which female claimants outlined their emotional and financial distresses and the disruption to their family units as a result of the war. Interestingly, when faced with the possibility of exile and further disruption to the family unit, some women – like Elizabeth Hogle – even rejected loyalism in favour of passivity; an option which notably, due the gendered nature of politics in the eighteenth-century British-Atlantic, was only available to women. Meanwhile, although opportunities for female loyalists to support the British cause were more limited in Albany County than they were in New York City, those who wanted to help were resourceful. While the countryside served as a thoroughfare for troops attempting to reach the sites of major battles, Albany’s loyal women provided practical and essential support – comparable to that of some of Albany’s male claimants – to loyalist soldiers in need of shelter and provisions.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that loyalists in Albany County tended to fall within one of two categories. The first group – accounting for slightly fewer than half of the claimants – were active loyalists. They enthusiastically supported the British cause in a range of military and supporting roles from the initial outbreak of the Revolution. The second group – slightly smaller, forming approximately 40 per cent of the claimants – were more reluctant in their loyalism. These individuals were forced into adopting loyalism in response to local circumstances, usually following pressure and maltreatment by their rebellious neighbours. As we have seen, regardless of which category Albany’s loyalists fell into, their actions were heavily influenced by their local environments, in particular the pressures exerted within their small communities.

In Albany County, the decision to remain loyal was a collective decision and typically had major implications for a loyalist’s close friends and family. Albany’s loyalists often joined the British troops alongside their brothers and sons. For some, younger siblings would enlist at a later

date, while elderly members of the family pointed to the service of their sons as extensions of their own political opinions. The existence of joint claims submitted on behalf of whole families are further testament to the importance of family in determining political allegiances. In addition, although claimants rarely mention it in these terms, many more would have served alongside their neighbours and friends. The clustering of groups of loyalists hailing from the same townships and serving within a small number of select regiments provides further evidence of this.

Although women may have been excluded from the decision to remain loyal, they suffered the consequences of these decisions. As wives, daughters and sisters of loyalist soldiers, they were equally considered to be loyal themselves. In the absence of their male relatives, women were often left to face the full extent of their community's hostility. Importantly, as the claims of loyalist widows demonstrate, female loyalty was almost exclusively defined through the actions of their male relatives and not as a result of their own political convictions. In stark contrast to female loyalists in New York City, there were no claims submitted by single women who felt moved to assist the British troops by their own convictions. That said, loyal women in Albany could and did find ways to assist British soldiers, while continuing to keep the family estate in operation.

For those male loyalists who were more reluctant to choose a side, meanwhile, the same community pressures played a key role in their eventual decision to remain loyal; albeit in a much more negative way. Upon the outbreak of Revolution, Albany County was a fractured and divided society. For instance, there were clear tensions between the elite landholding families and their tenant farmers. Meanwhile, social grievances also existed beyond the boundaries of the manorial estates. Many of the same families that had dominated Albany society in the late seventeenth century – including the Livingstons and the Van Rensselaers – continued to do so by the late eighteenth century, while the nature of rural life often resulted in historical family animosities being inherited by subsequent generations.

It was within this context, therefore, that Albany's Committees of Correspondence and the later Commission for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies provided a platform through which communities could ensure that all of their neighbours shared the collective mind-set. With full backing from New York's Provincial Congress, these structures enabled communities to scrutinise the actions of their neighbours and force those who they considered to be of

suspected allegiances into taking a political stance. At best, this simply consisted of identifying those who were neutral or disaffected. At worst, the committees were manipulated by vengeful neighbours as an outlet for resolving pre-existing social tensions.

The heightened status of the community within Albany is a consequence of how this region of the colony developed. We have already seen how the development of the New York City region produced colonists who were Atlantic-facing in their perspectives. They were individualistic, preoccupied with distinguishing themselves as different and distinctive from their neighbours. With ready access to print culture and political debates within the city's coffee-house, political allegiances were determined upon the latest information from both sides of the Atlantic. As such, loyalism was an individual decision, with members of the same family often being divided in their political affiliations. Albany, in contrast, was more remote, rural and parochial. Its residents were not the 'Citizens of the World' found in Atlantic-facing cities along the eastern seaboard; instead, for many families, their main priorities were the survival of their families and the cultivation of their farms.¹²⁴ As Richard Brown notes, for America's rural poor there was little opportunity – or occasion – for reading beyond the Bible.¹²⁵ Thus, although the county's taverns provided a focus for political and social life, beyond the city of Albany – which had experienced only limited urban improvement during the mid-eighteenth century – the nature of political conversation was inevitably less informed than that of their fellow colonists in Manhattan. As such, especially within Albany's more rural regions, the community was of greater relative importance. Within this context, individuals made the decision to join the British forces (or not) based upon the actions and opinions of those they trusted, such as friends, family and neighbours, and deliberately pitted themselves against those they distrusted and despised.

Thus, loyalism in Albany was a product of local circumstances. Within the midst of a fractured and divided parochial society, colonists were forced to choose sides in an ideological conflict which initially had little bearing upon their everyday lives. As such, historic tensions and battle-lines were brought forward into the context of the revolution and sides were adopted primarily according to pre-existing social divisions. Therefore, this chapter concludes that in

¹²⁴ D. Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

¹²⁵ R. D. Brown, *Knowledge Is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700 – 1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 283.

Chapter Four: Case Study – Albany County

many cases, loyalism in Albany County reflected traditional community tensions more than contemporary ideological beliefs.

Chapter Five:
Case Study – Tryon County

Tryon County, located towards New York's northwesternmost corner, had a different experience of the American Revolution to New York City and Albany County, both socially and chronologically. Tryon was a new county. It had only been established as recently as 1772, having formerly been part of Albany County.¹ Like much of Albany, Tryon was rural, containing large expanses of land which were yet to be improved, and home to a comparatively small population; Robert Venables estimates that only 5,000 colonists lived in Tryon County in 1775.² In contrast to Albany, however, Tryon lacked an urban centre. Its closest resemblance to a town was Johnstown – the seat of Johnson Hall, the family home of Sir William Johnson – which had an estimated population of 1000 inhabitants.³

Not only was Tryon County the least developed (at least, by European standards) of the three regions studied within this thesis, it also formed New York's frontier. Its northern border was shared with British-controlled Canada, bordering the province of Quebec and extending as far west as Niagara, while its western border was shared with the Iroquois confederacy. Such circumstances led to the development of a backcountry society with a local character which differed significantly from New York's more urban centres. As Gregory Nobles explains, "backcountry culture [was] distinct from – and generally in conflict with – that of the eastern seaboard." According to Nobles, the nature of frontier environments facilitated a level of cultural exchange that was not replicated in coastal towns, as colonists lived with, traded with and otherwise interacted with Native American populations.⁴ William Hart agrees, describing the frontier as "a place in perpetual flux and its inhabitants as cultural borrowers who could

¹ *Atlas of Historical County Boundaries*, Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture, The Newberry Library, reproduced at <<https://www.nypl.org/collections/articles-databases/atlas-historical-county-boundaries>>[accessed 4 November 2016]; A. Taylor, 'Agrarian Independence: Northern Land Rioters after the Revolution', in A. F. Young (ed.), *Beyond The American Revolution: Explorations In The History Of American Radicalism* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993), p. 232.

² These are the numbers of white colonists, numbers of Native Americans were potentially much higher. See R. W. Venables. 'Tryon County', in J. S. Tiedemann and E. R. Fingerhut (eds), *The Other New York: The American Revolution Beyond New York City, 1763-1787* (Albany: SUNY University Press, 2005), p. 183.

³ According to Venables, 20% of Tryon's white population were tenant farmers upon the Johnson estate. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁴ G. H. Nobles, 'Breaking into the Backcountry: New Approaches to the Early American Frontier, 1750–1800', *WMQ*, 46.4 (1989), pp. 643-6.

defy established categories of ethnicity and status”.⁵ In Tryon County, proximity to the Iroquois nations and their interactions with the Johnson family had a major impact on the development of the region, and would shape the activities of Tryon’s inhabitants during the Revolution.

In addition to being a new county, Tryon’s population were largely recent arrivals to New York. Scottish Highlanders were a group of particular importance: of the 99 loyalists considered within this chapter, almost 1 in 3 (32 per cent) identified themselves as natives of Scotland. Almost all of them had arrived in New York between 1773 and 1775, usually as tenant farmers on the lands of Sir William Johnson. This ethnic dimension to Tryon’s unique brand of loyalism is significant. Although scholars have commented on the ferocity and notoriety of Scottish loyalism which was present in other backcountry regions, as yet no study has investigated this phenomenon within its New York context.⁶ With this in mind, this chapter interrogates Venables’ claim that Tryon’s loyalists were typically formed from newcomers to the region who were closely affiliated with the Johnson family.⁷ While it confirms aspects of his conclusions, it challenges Venable’s depiction of “newcomers” as being primarily royal officials, colonial administrators and recent migrants from elsewhere within the colony. Instead, this chapter explores the phenomenon of Scottish loyalism amongst recent migrants upon the New York frontier. It proposes that Tryon’s Scottish migrants were not necessarily loyal solely on account of their “newcomer” status and their connections to the Johnson family, as Venables suggests, but that their loyalty may have been influenced by their ethnic composition.

Tryon’s loyalists have received limited scholarly attention on two counts. First, when references are made to Tryon County in the historiography, they are most often within histories of Albany County.⁸ Secondly, such works typically focus upon the activities of Sir

⁵ Hart quoted in T. A. Midtrød, ‘The Flemish Bastard and the Former Indians: Métis and Identity in Seventeenth-Century New York’, *American Indian Quarterly*, 34.1 (2010), p. 85.

⁶ R. Hoffman, T. W. Tate, and P. J. Albert (eds), *An Uncivil War: The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia & United States Capitol Historical Society, 1985).

⁷ Venables, ‘Tryon County’, p. 180.

⁸ See for instance D. P. Brennan, ‘Open to all Parties: Alexander and James Robertson, Albany printers, 1771-77’, in J. M. Johnson, C. Pryslopski and A. Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2013), pp. 125-34. This refers to Sir William Johnson as a patron of printing in Albany, not in Tryon.

William Johnson, rather than on Tryon's wider population.⁹ Thus, what little scholarship exists of Tryon County remains confined to small-scale case studies, including Venables' chapter in the edited collection *The Other New York*. Although Venables provides an important overview of the wartime divisions – both loyalist and revolutionary – within the county, there is much more to be done concerning the development of personal allegiances amongst Tryon's different settler groups. In contrast to previous approaches, therefore, this chapter explores motivations for remaining loyal within Tryon County, situating Tryon loyalism within the wider narrative of the development of New York loyalism. Although it argues that the Johnson family were an important factor in shaping Tryon loyalism, it does so by focusing upon the experiences of Tryon's 'ordinary' settlers – or, as J. Franklin Jameson described them, "the plain people".¹⁰

This chapter forms a close reading of 99 compensation claims submitted to the Loyalist Claims Commission by residents of Tryon County. Through an assessment of their ethnicities, places of residence and their wartime activities, it questions how loyalism in Tryon County was shaped in response to local circumstances; in particular, it explores how ethnicity and social tensions between the Johnson family and their opponents influenced the development of loyalism. As we shall see, these pre-existing tensions prompted the Revolutionary War to break out earlier in Tryon than in New York's other counties. Information from the claims are supplemented by the minutes of Tryon's Committee of Safety, which – although brief – are one of the few surviving sources of their kind from colonial New York.¹¹

As with their counterparts in Albany, Tryon's loyalists can largely be categorised as either 'active' or 'reluctant'. Only 4 individuals were considered to be 'passive'; these claimants were typically men who were unable to fight due to old age or infirmity.¹² As such, their claims are not explored in further detail. One distinguishing feature of the claims from Tryon is their relative simplicity. When compared to the claims submitted by loyalists from New York City

⁹ F. O'Toole, *White Savage: William Johnson and the Invention of America* (London: Faber & Faber, 2006).

¹⁰ J. F. Jameson, *The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement*, 3rd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 18.

¹¹ The minutes from Tryon's Committee of Safety are brief, fragmentary and assumed to be incomplete: aside from an initial meeting in August 1774 to establish the Committee, the minutes cover only the period between May and November 1775; The only known surviving Committee minutes are from Albany, Schenectady, Livingston Manor, Tryon and Brookhaven (Long Island).

¹² These were John Glassford Senior (TNA: AO 12/29), John Waite (TNA: AO 12/26), Philip Camer (TNA: AO 12/31) and William Shewman (TNA: AO 12/33).

and Albany County, the claims from Tryon are typically shorter and concise. Usually consisting of a one-page memorial, they include brief statements such as “came to Canada in 1776, and served with him [Sir John Johnson] all the war”, before listing a schedule of the claimant’s estimated losses.¹³ As such, the claims from Tryon rarely contain the elaborate and descriptive accounts of a claimant’s motivation for remaining loyal that we have seen elsewhere, particularly in the city of New York.

There are various possible reasons for this difference. It may simply reflect the claimants’ belief that their record of military service in itself provided sufficient evidence of loyalty without the need for further elaboration. Notably, Tryon’s loyalists reported sending their claims to London via their commanding officers. This was an important contrast to loyalist claimants from Albany – who sent their claims via agents – and New York City – who sent theirs individually or with friends. The suggestion, therefore, is that the completion and submission of claims by Tryon’s loyalists was a collective process organised centrally within fighting units. However, the brevity of their claims may be a consequence of the perceived difference in literacy levels between Tryon and New York’s other counties. Although literacy is notoriously difficult to gauge, there is a scholarly consensus that literacy rates were generally lower in rural – and especially frontier and backcountry – communities than they were in urban centres. This was true in both Britain and the American colonies.¹⁴ Whatever the reason, one immediate consequence of the relative brevity of the claims from Tryon county is that 17 claims (17 per cent) contained insufficient detail to enable analysis. As such, they could not be placed within a category of either ‘active’, ‘reluctant’, or ‘passive’. Nevertheless, any demographic information included within these claims has been captured in the discussion below to help identify broader trends.

¹³ See the claim of Donald Grant Senior, American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/31. Some claims are even shorter, providing details of only the regiment that the individual served with and the year of their enlistment.

¹⁴ See for instance F. W. Grubb, ‘Growth of Literacy in Colonial America: Longitudinal Patterns, Economic Models, and the Direction of Future Research’, *Social Science History*, 14.4 (1990), pp. 452-54; L. Andes, ‘Literacy’s Role in Revolution and Independence: Where have we been, where are we going?’, *The International Journal of the Book*, 6.3 (2009), p. 11; E. J. Monaghan, ‘Literacy, Instruction and Gender in Colonial New England’, *American Quarterly*, 40.1 (1988), p. 27; H. Hodgkins, ‘Reading Boone’s Writing: Issues in Backcountry Literacy’, *Journal of Backcountry Studies*, 6.2 (2011), pp. 2-14; R. D. Brown, *Knowledge Is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700 – 1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 283; W. B. Stephens, ‘Literacy in England, Scotland, and Wales, 1500-1900’, *History of Education Quarterly*, 30.4 (1990), p. 550 and p. 563.

By the outbreak of the American Revolution, Tryon County was socially, culturally and ethnically distinctive from the rest of the colony. As such, loyalists who were resident upon New York's western frontier experienced the war in a fundamentally different way than their counterparts in New York City or Albany County. Through an assessment of their claims, this chapter argues that two main factors influenced Tryon's loyalists' allegiance to Britain: the role of the Johnson family and the importance of ethnicity. Ultimately, this chapter concludes that in Tryon County the decision to remain loyal was the by-product of a deeply-rooted civil war which pre-dated the outbreak of the Revolution; those associated with Johnson remained loyal, while his opponents adopted the American cause.¹⁵

Context: The Johnsons

Sir William Johnson, considered by Alan Taylor as "the most famous and powerful colonist on the American frontier of the British Empire," came to New York in 1738. Aged approximately twenty-three, Johnson was responsible for managing the 14,000 acre estate of his maternal uncle, Sir Peter Warren, in New York's Mohawk Valley.¹⁶ Johnson's own background is unclear.¹⁷ Born in County Meath in Ireland, Johnson's mother was from a Roman Catholic family; members of the Warren family in Britain were reportedly present at the Battle of Culloden during the Jacobite rebellion of 1745.¹⁸ However, as career opportunities for Catholics were limited within the British Empire, Johnson followed his uncle's lead and converted to Protestantism to improve his prospects.¹⁹ Perhaps partially in response to this, later American popular memory would depict Johnson as not being a 'true' Irishman.²⁰

¹⁵ Venables, 'Tryon County', p. 180; E. Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 187-88 and p. 212.

¹⁶ A. Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 2007), p. 3; M. Kammen, *Colonial New York: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 310-11; Rev. W. W. Ellsworth, 'Sir William Johnson as a Patron of the Arts and Letters, and as a Pioneer in Religion', Unpublished Lists and Monographs Submitted to the State Historian, NYSA, A4195-80.

¹⁷ David Dobson refers to Sir William Johnson as 'Scotch-Irish', see D. Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607-1785* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), p. 139.

¹⁸ F. Jennings, 'Sir William Johnson', *ANB*; D. K. Richter, 'Sir William Johnson, First Baronet (1715?-1774)', *DNB*; O'Toole, *White Savage*, pp. 19-32.

¹⁹ Jennings, 'Sir William Johnson'; J. Gwyn, 'Sir Peter Warren, (1703/4-1752)', *DNB*; O'Toole states that although there is no formal record of the conversion it is referred to within letters between Sir Peter Warren and Sir William Johnson's brother, who Warren encouraged to follow a similar path. See O'Toole, *White Savage*, pp. 36-38.

²⁰ See for instance N. M. Curtis, *Old Tiger, the Patriot: or, the Heroine of the Mohawk. A Tale of Patriot Devotion and Tory Treachery* (New York: Beadle and Company, Publishers, 1870), pp. 7-12, in which one of the main protagonists – the "brave" and "fiery" Irishman Patrick McArran – says of Sir William Johnson, "They say Billy's an Irishman like meself, but by me blissed breeches, I don't belave a word of it" and "they say he's [Sir William Johnson] an Irishman, but by the powers of the quart pot, I belave it'd a divilish lie, tould to mortify me country-men!"

From his home at Johnson Hall – described by Daniel Richter as “a grand residence in modified Georgian style”– Johnson developed and expanded the estate, attracting tenant farmers, constructing trading posts and establishing schools and churches.²¹ During the 1760s and 1770s, large numbers of Scottish Highlanders migrated to the Johnstown estate. Their ethnicity would become a source of tension with Tryon’s older settler families.²² The expansion of Johnson’s estate and its growing population would eventually lead to Tryon being annexed from Albany County in 1772.²³ Thus, by the time of his unexpected death in 1774, Johnson’s estate had expanded to cover 400 square miles, while Venables estimates that as many as 20 per cent of all of Tryon’s white colonists were his tenants.²⁴

Johnson’s political legacy, however, emerged from his role as Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Northern Department and the relationship that he developed with the Iroquois, in particular the neighbouring Mohawks.²⁵ Indeed, Johnson Hall was constructed in 1763 not only as the family seat, but as a more convenient location for Sir William to host Anglo-Iroquois conferences which, until that point, had previously taken place in the city of Albany.²⁶ The alliance between Johnson and the Mohawks was strengthened by his relationship with his so-called “housekeeper”, Mary (aka Molly) Brant. Molly was from a prestigious Mohawk family and the sister of Thayendanegea, also known as Joseph Brant. Following the death of Johnson’s first wife in 1759, Johnson fathered a further eight children with Molly, all of whom were acknowledged and provided for in his will.²⁷

²¹ For more on Sir William Johnson see Unpublished Lists and Monographs Submitted to the State Historian, NYS, A4195-80. These unpublished chapters are taken from a manuscript based on Johnson’s papers, which were destroyed in the State Capitol fire of 1911.

²² Richter, ‘Sir William Johnson’.

²³ Legislators deemed Albany “more extensive than all the other Counties of this Colony taken together, and ... the Inhabitants thereof are already very numerous and continue to increase”. See ‘An Act to Divide the County of Albany into Three Counties’, 12 March 1772, *The colonial laws of New York from the year 1664 to the Revolution: including the charters to the Duke of York, the commissions and instructions to colonial governors, the Duke’s laws, the laws of the Dongan and Leisler Assemblies, the charters of Albany and New York and the acts of the colonial legislatures from 1691 to 1775 inclusive, Volume V* (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1894), pp. 319-22, reproduced at <<https://archive.org/stream/coloniallawsnew01nygoog#page/n326/mode/2up>> [accessed 26 November 2017].

²⁴ Taylor, *Divided Ground*, p. 4; Richter ‘Sir William Johnson’; Dobson, *Scottish Emigration*, pp. 139-40; Venables, ‘Tryon County’, p. 183.

²⁵ Johnson’s relationship with the Mohawks was so entrenched that on occasion it caused division between the Six Nations. See Council Held at Albany City Hall, 19 June 1754, New York Colony Council Minutes, 1665-1754, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol 2166, in which the Mohawks claim that the remaining five nations “blamed [the Mohawks] for things behind our backs which we do not deserve”, including acting as informants to Johnson.

²⁶ Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, p. 164.

²⁷ Johnson’s marriage to Catherine Weisenberg, a German runaway servant, was never formalised but, according to both Richter and O’Toole, Johnson referred to her as his wife during her lifetime.

Joseph Brant, meanwhile, developed his own trans-Atlantic reputation. Following an eighteenth-century trend in which Native American embassies visited Britain, in 1775 Brant was received at London where he was exhibited as an example of a loyal native American subject.²⁸ Such visits were not only used to emphasise Britain's cultural superiority over conquered native populations, but they also demonstrated that indigenous peoples could be regarded as loyal subjects of the Empire.²⁹ During the American Revolution, Brant would later become infamous as a Loyalist soldier.³⁰

Following Sir William's death in 1774, the Johnson family continued to play a leading role in the administration of Tryon County: his son from his first marriage, Sir John Johnson, inherited his estate, while his nephew and son-in-law Guy Johnson became his successor in the Indian Department.³¹ However, tensions increased between the Johnsons and Tryon's Committee of Safety, which was led by the county's older families. During 1775, hostilities intensified so much that Sir John Johnson and Guy Johnson began the process of arming their tenants into a protective military force. In Tryon County, the American Revolution and the decision to remain loyal took place against this peculiar backdrop.

Active Loyalists

Of the 99 claimants from Tryon County, 44 (44 per cent) can be categorised as 'active' loyalists. Conforming most closely to the traditional historiographical definition of loyalism, these individuals provided measurable and practical support for the British cause through military service. In contrast to their counterparts in Albany County and New York City, the experiences of Tryon's active loyalists were unusually homogeneous: they overwhelmingly (42 individuals, or 95 per cent) enlisted with loyalist forces as soldiers, either immediately upon

See Richter, 'Sir William Johnson' and O'Toole, *White Savage*, pp. 44-47; for Johnson and Brant's children, see Jennings, 'Sir William Johnson', Richter, 'Sir William Johnson'. See also the claim of Molly Brant's "infant children" for land in Tryon, American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/22 and American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

²⁸ M. Jasanoff, 'The Other Side of Revolution: Loyalists in the British Empire', *WMQ*, 65.2 (2008), pp. 205-32; W. L. Stone, *Life of Joseph Brant – Thayendanega: Including the Border Wars of the American Revolution, and Sketches of the Indian Campaigns of Generals Harmer, St. Clair, and Wayne. Volume I* (New York: Alexander V. Blake, 1838), pp. 147-74, reproduced at <<https://archive.org/stream/lifeofjosephbran01ston#page/146/mode/2up/search/london>> [accessed 26 November 2017].

²⁹ T. Bickham, "'A Conviction of the Reality of Things": Material Culture, North American Indians and Empire in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 39.1 (2005), pp. 29-47.

³⁰ R. S. Allen, 'Molly Brant', *ANB*.

³¹ Jennings, 'Sir William Johnson'; P. Ranlet, 'John Johnson', *ANB* (2004); Guy Johnson was Sir William's intended successor, having served as Sir William's personal secretary and his deputy in proceedings with the native Americans.

the outbreak of war or shortly after. Thus, in contrast to loyalists in Albany County who used their proximity to the British forces to engage in an assortment of active but non-military roles, options in Tryon were more limited; only one claimant, John Cameron, claimed to have spent the war years in a non-military role, serving the British as a spy from his farm in Johnstown.³²

Importantly, fighting broke out in Tryon County as early as 1775. This was in contrast to New York City and Albany County where the actual outbreak of war would not occur until the arrival of British forces in 1776. The earlier start to the war in Tryon was largely a consequence of animosities between Sir John Johnson and the Committee of Safety; however, it meant that Tryon's loyalists were forced to choose sides at an earlier date. As such, some of Tryon's active loyalist claimants describe serving with the Johnsons from 1775.

The joint claim of William Fraser Senior and his sons, Captain William Fraser and Captain Thomas Fraser, is illustrative. Originally from Scotland, the Frasers had settled in New York during the 1760s. Thomas lived at Johnstown, while William and their father lived at Ballstown, just over the border in Albany County. In 1775, William left Ballstown to join Colonel Guy Johnson, who he claimed had raised a body of men "for the purpose of quelling the Rebellion." His brother Thomas, meanwhile, was with another party of men under the command of Sir John Johnson. When Sir John capitulated to General Philip Schuyler in January 1776 – and was forced to flee to Canada – Thomas's party were taken prisoner.³³

Alexander Cameron described a similar experience. Originally from Scotland but later a tenant at Johnstown, Cameron described how he was chosen by Guy Johnson to join his military unit in 1775 to guard against the "repeated abuses offered him [Johnson] by the adherents of congress". After Guy Johnson escaped to Fort Stanwix, Cameron continued in his service with the Johnsons, this time acting as one of Sir John's guards at Johnson Hall. Cameron would later serve the remainder of the war with John Johnson's regiment, the King's Royal Regiment of New York.³⁴

³² American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11; American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/31.

³³ Ranlet, 'John Johnson'; American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/29; American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/12.

³⁴ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/26.

Further evidence of the comparatively homogeneous experience of Tryon's loyalists can be found in the pattern of regiments joined by loyalist claimants. Of the 44 active loyalists identified, 31 named the regiment with which they served. The overwhelming majority of these claimants (84 per cent, or 26 out of 31 individuals) stated that they had served with Sir John Johnson's King's Royal Regiment of New York, either in the First or Second Battalion. The evidence also suggests that Johnson's regiment was the only option for loyalists in Tryon County; aside from the King's Royals, there are no clear patterns of Tryon's loyalists serving with any other regiments. This is in contrast to Albany County where, as we have seen, loyalist soldiers had a range of potential units to choose from. As such, Tryon's loyalists typically travelled north to join Sir John Johnson in Canada. Alternatively, would-be recruits headed west to enlist at Fort Stanwix in Iroquois country.³⁵ Thus, Tryon's loyalists were not required to make the extensive journeys in order to enlist that we have seen elsewhere; notably, only three loyalists journeyed beyond Tryon or Canada to join the British forces.³⁶

The evidence from the claims cited thus far indicates that an individual's relationship with Sir John Johnson played an essential role in determining their revolutionary allegiance and their wartime activities, which supports the historiographical consensus that Tryon's loyalists often had prior affiliations with the Johnson family. In particular, loyalism was especially high amongst Sir John Johnson's tenants. Of the 44 active loyalists identified from Tryon, 23 (52 per cent) described themselves as residents from Johnstown, Johnsons Bush and the Kingsborough Patent; all of which formed part of the Johnson family estate.³⁷ The motivating factors behind what appears to be an intense personal allegiance to Sir John Johnson are unclear; indeed, one limitation of the source material is that, owing to the brevity of the Tryon claims, none of the loyalist claimants describe any particular allegiance to the Johnsons.

However, their loyalty may in part be explained by their ethnicity. Closer examination of Tryon's active loyalists reveals an unusual demographic characteristic: of the 44 active loyalists, almost half (44 per cent, or 20 individuals) described themselves as natives of Scotland. Perhaps even more notable, almost all of those 20 Scottish loyalists (85 per cent, or 17 individuals) were Sir John Johnson's tenants. This over-representation of Scottish loyalists

³⁵ Located in modern-day Rome, Oneida County.

³⁶ The only exceptions are Alexander White, who was released from Albany's Tory jail and enlisted at Albany; Joseph Chew (secretary for Indian Affairs) who joined at Staten Island; and James McPherson, who joined at New York City.

³⁷ Taylor, *Divided Ground*, p. 4; Richter 'Sir William Johnson'.

living on the Johnson patents is significant, suggestive of a connection between the claimants' ethnicity and their loyalist allegiance. The phenomenon of Scottish loyalism – which was not confined to the New York frontier – is deserving of further interrogation and will be considered later within this chapter. As we shall explore in further detail, the likelihood is that these Scottish loyalists were Highlanders. Both Cameron and Fraser, for instance, were Highland surnames.³⁸ As such, their loyalty may have been motivated by traditional ideas of clanship.

In addition to loyalism being determined by allegiance to the Johnsons, it was also a family decision. Just as we have seen in Albany County, family pressure played an important role in determining loyalist allegiances in Tryon. More than one in four active loyalists (27 per cent) mentioned serving with fathers, sons and brothers. This includes individuals such as Donald McGillis, a Scottish tenant from the Johnson Patent. McGillis joined Sir John Johnson's regiment in 1777 as a sergeant, while five of his sons would also serve with the British troops.³⁹ Daniel Foyke, meanwhile – a native of Germany and tenant on the Johnson Patent – recalled a similar experience. He travelled to Canada with his two sons, where they all enlisted with Sir John Johnson's regiment.⁴⁰ This pattern of behaviour is in stark contrast to New York City where the decision to remain loyal was a matter of individual choice, but similar to behaviour seen in Albany County. The implication, therefore, is that the heightened role of the family in determining political allegiances was a characteristic of rural communities in colonial New York.

Although Sir John's tenant families undoubtedly formed an important basis of loyalist support, Tryon's active loyalists also hailed from beyond the confines of the Johnson estate.⁴¹ This included a group of loyalists who lived on Tryon's western frontier, close to the Iroquois Confederacy. While the Iroquois had initially maintained neutrality during the initial stages of the war, by 1779 the British had actively begun to recruit Native American forces. The Revolution would later prove irreparably divisive for the Six Nations; with the exception of the Oneidas and the Tuscaroras, all of the other nations sided with the British after 1779 and the

³⁸ C. S. Sims, *The Origin and Signification of Scottish Surnames: with a Vocabulary of Christian Names* (Albany, NY: J. Munsell, 1862), digitised for Adam Matthew Digital's *Migration to New Worlds* database, <<http://www.migration.amdigital.co.uk>>

³⁹ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/29.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, AO 12/31.

⁴¹ 15 of the 44 active loyalists (34%) were not from the Johnson patents, a further 6 claimants did not state their pre-war residences (14%).

Confederacy effectively collapsed.⁴² The reasons behind the decision of the Iroquois in New York to ally themselves with Britain are deserving of their own investigation beyond the confines of this study, however they can in part be attributed to the understanding that had developed between the Iroquois and the British since the late seventeenth century.⁴³ The close relationship that had developed between Sir William Johnson and the Mohawks in Tryon County strengthened these pre-existing ties and may also have played a role in determining the Mohawks' wartime allegiance. For our purposes, the claims from Tryon include a small group of loyalists whose wartime activities were shaped by their proximity to and relationship with New York's Native American populations.

Lewis Clement, for instance, from Tripes Hill near to the Mohawk River, served under Guy Johnson in the Indian Department from 1775. His three sons – Joseph, John and James – would all join between 1777 and 1780. Joseph, the eldest, was an officer.⁴⁴ Importantly, Tryon's Committee of Safety perceived the Indian Department – led by Guy Johnson – as an extension of the Johnson family's political influence. As tensions intensified between Johnson and the Committee, they accused the Johnsons of plotting to use Native American forces to slaughter Tryon's residents. According to the testimony of Lodwick Putman before the Committee in August 1775, Lewis Clement was reported to have revealed this plan, stating that:

Is it not a pity, that I being a Man of a good Estate must go and leave the same for the sake of these d___d Fondas, but I shall soon make up a good Number of Indians, and return with them to destroy and ruin such people all here about, but you, (meaning said Potman) have nothing to fear, because you abide in a safe place, which (being near Johnstown) shall not then be hurted.⁴⁵

⁴² Taylor, *The Divided Ground*, p. 92; R. W. Venables, "'Faithful Allies of the King": The Crown's Haudenosaunee Allies in the Revolutionary Struggle for New York', in J. S. Tiedemann, E. R. Fingerhut and R. W. Venables (eds), *The Other Loyalists: Ordinary People, Royalism, and the Revolution in the Middle Colonies, 1763-1787* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), p. 131.

⁴³ For more on the historic diplomatic relations between the Iroquois and the English relations, see J. Parmenter, 'After the Mourning Wars: The Iroquois as Allies in Colonial North American Campaigns, 1676-1760', *WMQ*, 64.1 (2007), pp. 39-76; D. Richter, 'War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience', *WMQ*, 40.4 (1983), pp. 528-59; and D. P. MacLeod, *The Canadian Iroquois and the Seven Years' War* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2012).

⁴⁴ American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

⁴⁵ S. Ludlow Frey (ed.), *The Minute Book of the Committee of Safety of Tryon County, The Old New York Frontier* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1905), pp. 58-59, reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/minutebookofcomm00tryo>> [accessed 26 November 2017].

In light of such evidence, the Indian Department and its members were particular targets for Tryon's Committee of Safety. Putman's reference to the Fondas is notable: as we shall see, they were one of Tryon County's leading revolutionary families.

A further four loyalists from Tryon described serving with Colonel John Butler's Rangers, a loyalist militia which was largely recruited from central and northern New York. Butler's Rangers gained notoriety for their recruitment of Native American soldiers and developed a reputation for savagery.⁴⁶ This was particularly the case after the unit's involvement in the 'Cherry Valley Massacre', when British and Iroquois forces decimated the village of Cherry Valley – including the deaths of unarmed women and children – in November 1778. Writing in her journal in 1780, Hannah Lawrence Schieffelin, the wife of British officer Jacob Schieffelin, accused Native American forces of harbouring "a secret determination of destroying every family which they had reason to suppose favoured the cause of their enemies." Perhaps influenced by the opinions of her acquaintances, which included British officers keen to distance themselves from the affair, Schieffelin claimed that Walter Butler, John Butler's son and the commanding officer at Cherry Valley, had been overcome "with horror and regret at the unforeseen consequences of this fatal expedition" but was unable "to restrain the fury of the savages."⁴⁷

Once again, the decision to enlist with either Butler's Rangers or the Indian Department was a family decision. Consider the example of Adam Young, a storekeeper and Indian trader from the Mohawk Valley. Three of his sons served alongside him in Butler's Rangers, while a fourth served in the Indian Department.⁴⁸ Lewis Mabic, meanwhile, a farmer from the Mohawk Valley also served with Butler's Rangers. Mabic's uncle and cousins were the aforementioned Clements of Tripes Hill, who were with the Indian Department.⁴⁹

The Clements, Young and Mabic were all residents of Tryon's Mohawk District, suggesting a link between their proximity to the Iroquois border and their decision to join these regiments. Loyalists living within this area of Tryon County had a flexibility of choice which was not seen

⁴⁶ W. S. Wallace, *The United Empire Loyalists; A Chronicle of the Great Migration* (Toronto: Glasgow, Brook & Company, 1922), pp. 34-37.

⁴⁷ Papers of Hannah Lawrence Schieffelin, ca.1774-1818, Schieffelin Family Papers 1756-1907, Manuscripts and Archives Division, NYPL, MssCol 2690; M. Hayward, 'Hannah Lawrence Schieffelin and Women's Experiences in Revolutionary America', *New York Public Library Blog*, 29 July 2016 <<https://www.nypl.org/blog/2016/07/29/hannah-lawrence-schieffelin>> [accessed 4 November 2016].

⁴⁸ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/28.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, AO 12/28.

elsewhere: they had the option of serving with either Sir John Johnson in the King's Royals, or serving with Guy Johnson in the Indian Department. These loyalists were an ethnically and culturally distinct group to those Scottish loyalists who were tenants on Sir John Johnson's estate. Indeed, their French surnames suggest that they may have even been Métis: people of mixed native and European ancestry, particularly found within New France, the Great Lakes region and New York's western frontier.⁵⁰ As such, these individuals had different motivations for remaining loyal, which were likely to have been a consequence of Sir William Johnson's lasting political legacy within the Mohawk region. Nevertheless, they remained steadfast in their allegiance to the Johnsons, through the figure of Guy Johnson.

Loyalism and Highland Scots

As we have seen, Scottish loyalists were overrepresented amongst the claimants from Tryon County. Crucially, these Scottish loyalists were also overwhelmingly recent migrants to the colony: of the thirty Scottish loyalists identified, 26 (87 per cent) had arrived in New York between 1773 and 1775. The remainder had migrated to America during the mid-1760s or earlier.⁵¹ Importantly, this group of loyalists are referred to only as "natives of Scotland". However, demographic evidence from their claims – considered in light of recent scholarship on the Scottish Highlands in this period – strongly suggests that these loyalists were likely to have been Highlanders. For instance, an application of the methodology that was used to identify Dutch loyalists in Albany to Tryon's loyalist claimants indicates that many were Highland, rather than Lowland, Scots.⁵² Ten Scottish claimants from Tryon had surnames which were prefixed with "Mc" (meaning "son of" in Scots Gaelic), while other Highland surnames included Cameron, Chisholm, Ferguson, Grant, Fraser, Murchison, Anderson, Urquhart and Agnew.⁵³

⁵⁰ L. Eldersveld Murphy, *A Gathering of Rivers: Indians, Métis, and Mining in the Western Great Lakes, 1737-1832* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), pp. xvii; T. A. Midtrød, 'The Flemish Bastard and the Former Indians', pp. 85-108; J. Brown and T. Schenck, 'Métis, Mestizo and Mixed Blood', in P. J. Deloria and N. Salisbury (eds), *A Companion to American Indian History* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 322-33.

⁵¹ Two arrived during the 1760s, one during the 1740s, while John Glassford Senior described settling in America 'many years ago as a boy'.

⁵² G. F. Black, *The Surnames of Scotland, Their Origin, Meaning and History* (New York: New York Public Library & Readex Books, 1962), reproduced at <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001598191> [Accessed 8 April 2018]

⁵³ John McDonel (TNA: AO 12/31), Alexander McDonell (TNA: AO 12/28-29), Katherine McGruer (TNA: AO 12/29), Donald McGillis (TNA: AO 12/29), Isobel McBain (TNA: AO 12/28), James McPherson (TNA: AO 12/29), John McKay (TNA: AO 12/27), John McVey (TNA: T 79/70), Malcolm McMartin (TNA: AO 12/31), William McLeod (TNA: AO 12/31).

The patterns of Scottish migration to New York captured within the loyalist claims correlates with the findings of wider historiographical research. David Dobson for instance, in his study of Scottish migration to the American colonies, argues that “only a trickle” of Scots travelled to America before 1650. By the 1770s, however, this number had increased to up to 10,000 per year.⁵⁴ Dobson identifies the years between 1760 and 1775 as a period of “intense immigration and settlement” in New York, especially in the Mohawk Valley region.⁵⁵ Reasons for migration to New York from Scotland were twofold. First, there were soldiers from Highland regiments who had served in America during the Seven Years War. During the campaign, the British army had undertaken extensive recruitment of Highland soldiers to serve in the American colonies.⁵⁶ This was in part owing to the contemporary perception amongst British military officials that Highlanders made better soldiers: according to Richard Holmes, they were considered to be “less spoiled and more hardy than British [English] soldiers”.⁵⁷ William Pitt the Elder shared similar sentiments, describing Highlanders as “a hardy and intrepid race of men”, while Lord Barrington described Scottish soldiers as “more hardy and less mutinous” than their English counterparts.⁵⁸ Although Matthew Dziennik debunks this perception as simple professionalism on the soldiers’ part, rather than any ethnic attribute, the stereotype endured.⁵⁹ Thus, regiments such as Loudoun’s Highland Regiment, Colonel Simon Fraser’s Highlanders (the “78th”) and the Black Watch were purposefully sent to America to defend the colonies against French invasion.⁶⁰ Following the war’s conclusion, many of these soldiers settled within the American colonies. Dobson describes how the British actively encouraged disbanded soldiers to settle within troublesome and underpopulated regions such as Tryon and the southern backcountry.⁶¹ Indeed, contemporary practice was to award land within these regions to officers in return for their service. Officers could either settle upon these lands themselves or open them up to tenants. In the Mohawk Valley, Sir

⁵⁴ Dobson, *Scottish Emigration*, p. 4.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

⁵⁶ Matthew Dziennik claims that between the 1750s and 1780s there were at least nineteen infantry regiments raised in the highlands, containing an estimated total of 18,000-22,000 men (or one in eight of the eligible male population). See M. Dziennik, *The Fatal Land: War, Empire, and the Highland Soldier in British America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), p. 5.

⁵⁷ Colonel William Stewart, quoted in R. Holmes, *Redcoat: The British Soldier in the Age of Horse and Musket* (London: Harper Collins, 2001), p. 57.

⁵⁸ Both quoted in L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London: Pimlico, 1992), p. 103 and p. 120.

⁵⁹ See Dziennik, *The Fatal Land*, especially Chapter Two: ‘Spirited Martialists: The Highlander as Military Laborer’, pp. 58-95.

⁶⁰ A. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1996), p. 216; O’Toole, *White Savage*, p. 308.

⁶¹ Dobson, *Scottish Emigration*, pp. 89-90; T. M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire: The Origins of the Global Diaspora* (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 131; Dziennik, *The Fatal Land*, p. 131.

William Johnson was granted an additional 20,000 acres in return for his service during the Seven Years War, which he subsequently leased to new migrants and tenant farmers.⁶² One of these new tenants included Hugh Fraser, who had served as a Lieutenant with the 78th during the Seven Years War.⁶³

The second group of Scottish settlers migrated to New York for different reasons. Between 1760 and 1775, large numbers of Scots migrated to the American colonies in response to declining living standards at home, downward social mobility and the repression of traditional ways of life.⁶⁴ This was especially true of Highlanders, who had been the targets of increased British intervention and administration during the second half of the eighteenth century.⁶⁵ According to Allan Macinnes, this action amounted to no less than “systematic state terrorism”; he argues that it was cultural alienation at best and, at worst, ethnic cleansing.⁶⁶ In addition to these strong “push” factors, Dziennik argues that Highlanders were also influenced by the favourable accounts of life in American colonies which were depicted by Highland soldiers returning from the Seven Years War.⁶⁷ Bernard Bailyn estimates that 40,000 Scots migrated to the American colonies during this period, many of whom he claims were desperately poor Highlanders in search of a better life.⁶⁸

In contrast to Lowlanders who typically migrated to America as skilled individuals and settled within ports and cities along the Eastern seaboard, Highlanders largely migrated *en masse* as families and settled within frontier regions.⁶⁹ Described by Ned Landsman as “ordinary” Scots,

⁶² Dobson, *Scottish Emigration*, pp. 139-40.

⁶³ O’Toole, *White Savage*, p. 308; American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/19.

⁶⁴ Macinnes, *Clanship*, p. 232.

⁶⁵ Britain’s changing attitude to Scotland – in particular, the Highlands – was a consequence of the Jacobite rebellion of 1745. Scotland was singled out for its role in the rebellion. This was especially true of the Highlands, where clans were reputed to have provided much of the military and popular support for the Stuart cause.

⁶⁶ According to Macinnes, traditional townships were broken down, legislation was introduced which banned cultural practices such as the wearing of Highland dress and the playing of bagpipes, while crops, livestock and property were deliberately destroyed to cause clearance or death. See *Clanship*, pp. 211-19; Devine, *Scotland’s Empire*, p. 119; B. Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings In Britain, 1689-1746* (London: Eyre Meuthuen, 1980), p. 262.

⁶⁷ Dziennik, *The Fatal Land*, pp. 158-59.

⁶⁸ Bailyn quoted in Colley, *Britons*, p. 140.

⁶⁹ B. P. Lenman, 'From the Union of 1707 to the Franchise Reform Act of 1832', in R. A. Houston & W. J. Knox, *The New Penguin History Of Scotland: From The Earliest Times To The Present Day* (London: Penguin, 2001), p. 284; Dobson, *Scottish Emigration*, pp. 9-7; For more on the differences between Highland and Lowland Scots, see L. Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness: An Argument', *JBS*, 31.4 (1992), pp. 309-329; R. A. Houston, *Scottish Literacy and the Scottish Identity: Illiteracy and Society in Scotland and Northern England, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985);

this group included farmers, artisans and their families.⁷⁰ Frontier regions such as Tryon County allowed the cultural space for Highlanders to establish concentrated ethnic enclaves in which they could retain traditional social structures.⁷¹ According to Tom Devine, formal organisations – including the ‘United Company of Farmers’ in Perth and Stirling and the ‘Scots-American Company of Farmers’ – were even established in Scotland which sent agents to New York to purchase sufficient acreages of land to enable whole communities of farmers to migrate and re-settle intact.⁷² Similar actions were taken to attract Highlanders to the Mohawk Valley: Fintan O’Toole notes several attempts by Johnson to recruit Highland settlers. Hugh Fraser, along with others from the 78th, returned to Scotland for this purpose. They later returned to New York in 1773 with a party of over 400 men, women and children.⁷³ Crucial for our interpretation of the testimonies from this group, Tryon’s Scottish loyalists fell within this latter category of migrants. Only one claimant – Tryon’s notoriously unpopular Sheriff, Alexander White – described being a former soldier who settled in the region following the Seven Years War.⁷⁴

The intention of this case study is not to propose that all of Tryon’s loyalists were Scots, as many were not. Indeed, of the 99 loyalists from Tryon, only 30 (30 per cent) were Scottish; the remainder identified themselves as natives of America, England, Germany, Britain and Ireland. There was even one Mohawk.⁷⁵ What is significant, however, is that of these thirty Scottish loyalists, 20 of them are known to have lived on Sir John Johnson’s lands, and seventeen of them can also be described as ‘active’ loyalists.

The phenomenon of Scottish loyalism – particularly prominent in backcountry and frontier regions – is a recurring characteristic within the historiography of the American Revolution.⁷⁶

M. Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), pp. 112-116.

⁷⁰ N. C. Landsman, ‘Nation, Migration, and the Province in the First British Empire: Scotland and the Americas, 1600-1800’, *AHR*, 104.2 (1999), pp. 474-75.

⁷¹ Landsman, ‘Nation, Migration, and the Province in the First British Empire’, pp. 474-75.

⁷² Devine, *Scotland’s Empire*, p. 116.

⁷³ O’Toole, *White Savage*, pp. 307-08. O’Toole argues that Johnson’s efforts were motivated by “the possibility of recreating a kind of nostalgic Gaelic chieftaincy in the Mohawk valley” (p. 308): a sentiment that this dissertation does not share.

⁷⁴ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO, 12/29. White was also Irish, rather than Scottish.

⁷⁵ A detailed breakdown is as follows: fifteen individuals identified themselves as natives of America, six were native to England (all of whom had settled in New York during the 1770s), thirteen were natives of Germany, one identified themselves as a native of Britain, eight were natives of Ireland, one was Mohawk, and for twenty three their place of birth is unknown.

⁷⁶ Lenman, ‘From the Union of 1707’, p. 284; Devine, *Scotland’s Empire*, pp. 183-86.

Jeffrey Crow, for instance, argues that loyalism in North Carolina was particularly concentrated within the colony's backcountry. This rural frontier region – not dissimilar to the rural frontiers of Tryon county – was largely populated by Scottish Highlanders who lived as poor or middling farmers.⁷⁷ Edward Cashin, meanwhile, also identifies Scots as ardent loyalists in backcountry Georgia. According to Cashin, Scots were so unpopular on account of their notorious loyalism that all natives of Scotland were barred from entering the state after the Revolution.⁷⁸ Noting that Scots in America were overwhelmingly loyalists, Linda Colley suggests that Scottish loyalism may have been a consequence of increased efforts to integrate Scots into the Empire in the aftermath of the '45.⁷⁹ However, if the individual claimants considered within this study include those who were forced to migrate in response to Parliament-led clearance policies, her assessment becomes problematic for understanding Scottish loyalism in Tryon. Nevertheless, when interpreted within the broader historiography of Scottish loyalism, the claims of Tryon's loyalists are especially intriguing.

Where the Tryon claimants' brand of Scottish loyalism differs from their counterparts in the southern backcountry is the central role played by the Johnsons. In contrast to the southern colonies, where Scottish migrants lived as independent farmers, a significant portion of Tryon's Scots were tenants on Sir William Johnson's estate. At the outbreak of Revolution, the Johnsons served as figureheads for loyalism in Tryon County; loyalists from across the county enlisted with Sir John Johnson's regiment and followed him into battle. This was especially true of Johnson's tenants. This behaviour is in stark contrast to Albany County where, as Chapter Four explores, tenants often deliberately adopted the opposing ideological stance to their landlords. The evidence, therefore, is highly suggestive of a connection between ethnicity, the relationship with Sir John Johnson and the decision to remain loyal.

Indeed, the social structure at Johnstown spoke directly to traditional ideas of Highland clanship. Macinnes defines clanship as "a socio-economic as well as a political entity, activated by personal obligations and mutual service between the chiefs and gentry who composed the

⁷⁷ J. J. Crow, 'Liberty Men and Loyalists: Disorder and Disaffection in the North Carolina Backcountry', in R. Hoffman, T. W. Tate and P. J. Albert (eds), *An Uncivil War: The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia & United States Capitol Historical Society, 1985), pp. 125-78.

⁷⁸ E. J. Cashin, "'But Brothers, It Is Our Land We Are Talking About": Winners and Losers in the Georgia Backcountry', in R. Hoffman, T. W. Tate and P. J. Albert (eds), *An Uncivil War: The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia & United States Capitol Historical Society, 1985), p. 274.

⁷⁹ Colley, *Britons*, p. 140.

clan elite and their clansmen”.⁸⁰ The clan remained loyal to their chief, who provided protection.⁸¹ Clanship was also based upon the hereditary principle of kinship: chieftainship was inherited by the sons of clan chiefs, ensuring genealogical continuity.⁸² Although clanship was largely based upon kinship and family connections, this was not exclusively the case; allegiances were made between dominant clan-families and satellite families when required in order to strengthen the overall unit.⁸³ In Tryon County, Sir William Johnson adopted elements of the traditional role of clan chief. In practical terms, he offered land to those who had been driven out of Scotland during the clearing process. Access to land enabled settlers to establish farms and ethnic communities. Johnson’s patronage also provided protection from significant hostile, Scotophobic elements of Tryon’s colonial population. Notably, in another significant parallel with clanship, the tenants’ allegiance was to the Johnson family rather than to Sir William alone. After his death the tenants’ allegiance transferred to Sir John Johnson, thus replicating the hereditary element of clanship.

While the Scottish tenants’ loyalty to Johnson may have been influenced by traditional ideas of clanship, local political beliefs about the Scots may also have played an important role in shaping their wartime allegiances. The 1760s and 1770s witnessed a period of intense Scotophobia, both in England and the American colonies, which revived earlier memories of Jacobitism and may have impacted the way in which Tryon’s Scottish settlers were viewed by their neighbours.⁸⁴ In England, anti-Scottish sentiment erupted in the years following 1762, when John Stuart, the Third Earl of Bute, became George III’s Prime Minister and great favourite. Scottish, Tory and a Stuart, Bute was notoriously unpopular, accused of goading the young King into curtailing English liberties and restricting the rights of Parliament. John Wilkes, the MP for Aylesbury, was especially vocal in promoting his own brand of Scotophobia.⁸⁵ Using his radical and “virulently anti-Scottish” paper, the *North Briton*, Wilkes criticised Bute’s administration, arguing that the number of Scottish ministers in Parliament amounted to a

⁸⁰ Macinnes, *Clanship*, p. ix.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 188; A. Macinnes, ‘Jacobitism in Scotland: Episodic Cause or National Movement?’, *The Scottish Historical Review*, 86.2 (2007), p. 233.

⁸³ Macinnes, *Clanship*, p. 24.

⁸⁴ Dziennik, *The Fatal Land*, pp. 185-87.

⁸⁵ L. Namier and J. Brooke (eds), ‘John Wilkes (1725-97)’, in *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1754-1790* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1964), reproduced as The History of Parliament Online, at <<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1754-1790/member/wilkes-john-1725-97>> [accessed 19 December 2016].

campaign to erode Englishness from above.⁸⁶ Indeed, a clear example of Scots dominating colonial offices could be seen in the Indian Department: its northern department, based in Tryon, was led by the Johnsons for almost fifty years and staffed by their Scottish associates.⁸⁷ Eventually, Wilkes was imprisoned for libel against the King and Government in 1763. However, for his supporters – including those who flocked to join his Society of the Bill of Rights (SSBR) – Wilkes became a political martyr and the defender of ‘Englishness’.

During the 1760s and 1770s, Wilkes’s attack on Lord Bute and the Princess of Wales, and the rhetoric espoused by his followers in the SSBR, received popular support in the American colonies, refuelling historic anti-Scottish sentiment.⁸⁸ Referring to the forty fifth edition of the *North Briton* – the issue that led to Wilkes’s imprisonment – Scottish minister John Witherspoon despaired that:

No. 45, which was the most offensive number of a worthless paper, was repeated and echoed, by the most silly and ridiculous allusions to it, through every part of the country [America], and by many who could not tell what was signified by the term.⁸⁹

As Wilkite Scotophobia revived earlier perceptions of Scots as being ferocious defenders of the divine right of Kings at the expense of English liberties, the suspicion was that Scottish migrants were loyalists by default. Witherspoon was especially concerned about what he saw as the revolutionaries’ reproachful use of “*Scotch*” as being synonymous with loyalism.⁹⁰ In an address to Scots resident in the American colonies, he suggested that recent Scottish migrants – who were all too familiar with Wilkes’ violent anti-Scottish rhetoric – were deterred from supporting the movement for independence because of Wilkes’s popularity amongst the revolutionaries.

⁸⁶ The paper’s very title carried particular connotations: ‘North Briton’ was an alternative name for Scotland, while the paper itself served as a direct response to Bute’s own publication, the *Briton*; B. Dew, “‘Waving a mouchoir à la Wilkes’: Hume, Radicalism and the North Briton’, *Modern Intellectual History*, 6.2 (2009), p. 236; Brewer, *Party Ideology And Popular Politics*, pp. 168-187; Colley, *Britons*, pp. 105-12.

⁸⁷ William Johnson was Superintendent from 1755, Sir John until 1796. Simon Fraser (a different Simon Fraser to Colonel Simon Fraser of the 78th, but likely to have been of the same clan), was secretary to the Indian Department. American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/28.

⁸⁸ Calhoun, ‘Introduction’, p. xv; Brewer, for instance, notes that Wilkes received gifts and donations from South Carolina’s lower house, Boston’s Sons of Liberty and Maryland planters. In South Carolina and Boston, public celebrations were held when Wilkes was released from prison in 1770. Brewer, *Party Ideology And Popular Politics*, pp. 178-79; J. Brewer, ‘The Number 45: A Wilkite Political Symbol’, in S. B. Baxter (ed.), *England’s Rise to Greatness, 1660-1763* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 352.

⁸⁹ J. Witherspoon, ‘An Address to the Natives of Scotland Residing in America.’ Appendixed to *A Sermon Preached at Princeton, on the 17th of May, 1776. Being the General Fast Appointed by the Congress Through the United Colonies* (Philadelphia: R. Aitken, 1776), p. 63.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62. Emphasis in original.

In 1776, meanwhile, Philadelphia silversmith John Leacock published *The Fall of British Tyranny*, which reflected contemporary perceptions about Scots. A virulently anti-Scottish text, Leacock depicted the entire American crisis as a grand Jacobite plot orchestrated by Bute – or, as he is referred to within the play, ‘Lord Paramount’. While English troops were distracted by the outbreak of war in America, so the plot advances, Bute intended to gather Scottish, French and Spanish soldiers to capture London and restore the Stuarts as monarchs. Significantly, the play’s Scotophobic content was not confined to the body of the work: the text begins with a dedication to “the innumerable and never-ending Clan of Macs and Donalds upon Donalds” in America, before wishing that “may our gallow-hills and liberty poles be honour’d and adorn’d with some of your heads.” Reprinted in Providence and Boston, Leacock’s text demonstrates that even thirty years after the ‘45 – and a decade after Wilkes – attitudes prevailed amongst American colonists which continued to associate Scots with Jacobitism and tyrannical monarchy.⁹¹

Importantly for our purposes, there is evidence that contemporary Scotophobic ideas had reached the New York frontier. For instance, in May 1775 Tryon’s Committee of Safety recorded that “150 Highlanders (Roman Catholicks) in and about Johnstown, are armed and ready to march” should they, the “friends of Liberty”, attempt to publish “their attachment to the Cause of the World.”⁹² In this brief statement, the Committee succinctly encapsulated many of the attitudes outlined above. They, as advocates of rebellion, were the defenders of the traditional rights and liberties of English subjects. Johnson’s tenants – the Scots – meanwhile, were depicted as tyrants, prepared to use military force to suppress the rights of Tryon’s residents to defend their natural liberties. Whether or not the tenants were truly Catholic, as the Committee claimed, remains unclear.⁹³ Regardless, the Committee’s

⁹¹ J. Leacock, *The Fall of British Tyranny: or, American Liberty Triumphant. The First Campaign. A Tragi-Comedy of Five Acts* (Philadelphia: Styner and Cist, 1776); For reprints, see Evans [accessed 21 August 2017]; J. Corbitt David, *Dunmore’s New World: The Extraordinary Life of a Royal Governor in Revolutionary America - with Jacobites, Counterfeiters, Land Schemes, Shipwrecks, Scalping, Indian Politics, Runaway Slaves, and Two Illegal Royal Weddings* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), pp. 114-15.

⁹² Frey, *The Minute Book of the Committee of Safety of Tryon County*, pp. 6-9.

⁹³ Although Macinnes and Cruickshanks claim that Catholicism was a minority religion, Dobson in particular argues that Johnson attracted large numbers of Catholics to settle at Johnstown, including the MacDonell clan of Inverness who had provided what he terms “substantial assistance” to the Jacobite cause in 1745, see Dobson, *Scottish Emigration*, p. 140; Cruickshanks, E. and Corp, E., ‘Introduction’, in Cruickshanks, E., and Corp, E. (eds), *The Stuart Court In Exile And The Jacobites* (London: Hambledon Press, 1995), p. xi; Ranlet, ‘John Johnson’; Joseph Tiedemann and Eugene Fingerhut similarly identify such tensions in the Mohawk Valley, claiming that German Palatines and Lutherans “were ... forced to share this frontier region with their traditional enemy, Catholics.” They also attribute this to Johnson populating his estates with catholic settlers including the McDonnell

statement reflects contemporary attitudes regarding Scots: by accusing Johnson's tenants – rightly or wrongly – of Catholicism and stressing their willingness to bear arms to prevent the colonists from preserving their English liberties, it raises negative connotations of militant Jacobitism.⁹⁴

With this in mind, to what extent was Scottish loyalism in Tryon County simply an instance of the recurring phenomenon of Scottish loyalism or the result of local conditions within the Mohawk Valley? The evidence is mixed. Hostility towards Scottish migrants from Tryon's older settler families discouraged integration. As such, Scots largely remained within discrete ethnic enclaves and the community assumed a role of elevated – and, at times, even clan-like – importance.⁹⁵ Indeed, this allegiance to the immediate community extended beyond 1783, when residents of Johnstown attempted to re-establish their pre-war communities in the settlements of 'New Johnstown' in post-war Canada. Hence, when the decision came to join the rebellion or remain loyal, Tryon's Scottish colonists may have been influenced to remain loyal as a result of their pre-existing allegiances to the loyalist Johnson family. However, it can also be advanced that the failure to assimilate may have automatically excluded Tryon's Scottish residents from engaging with ideas of rebellion. Their pre-war affiliations with the unpopular Johnsons, combined with their status as outsiders, led the Committee of Safety to view Scottish tenants as loyalists by default.

Thus in Tryon County, as we have seen elsewhere, the revolution interacted with pre-existing social tensions which were otherwise unrelated to the imperial crisis. Hostility between Tryon's older settler families and the Johnsons, exacerbated by deep-rooted Scotophobia, escalated a local concern into a matter of ideological importance.

Reluctant Loyalists

The second group of claimants to be considered are those who were more reluctant in their loyalism. Of the 99 loyalists from Tryon County, only 29 (29 per cent) can be described as 'reluctant' loyalists, thus making them a significantly smaller group than their counterparts in

clan (the spelling of McDonnell varies between texts). J. S. Tiedemann and E. R. Fingerhut, 'Introduction', in J. S. Tiedemann and E. R. Fingerhut (eds), *The Other New York: The American Revolution Beyond New York City, 1763-1787* (Albany: SUNY University Press, 2005), p. 10.

⁹⁴ Jacobitism was closely linked with Catholicism. The House of Stuart was notorious for its Catholicism and their cause gained international support, albeit often unreliable, from Catholic France and the Papacy. Consequently, owing to Scotland's support for the Jacobite movement, popular opinion in England depicted Highlanders as Catholics. See Macinnes, 'Jacobitism in Scotland', p. 230.

⁹⁵ Devine, *Scotland's Empire*, p. 186; Dziennik, *The Fatal Land*, p. 147.

Albany County. Closer examination of this group reveals that – like their counterparts in Albany – Tryon’s reluctant loyalists fall into two distinct clusters.

First, there are a group of claimants who, like their active counterparts, served the British cause as loyalist soldiers. What distinguishes this group from the active loyalists, however, is that they delayed their decision to join the British forces; this group of loyalists enlisted between 1777 and 1780. In contrast to the second group of reluctant loyalists, their decision to join the British forces appears to have been made voluntarily. Despite the very brief nature of the claims from Tryon, these claimants do not mention maltreatment by revolutionary committees as a motivating factor in their decision.

Although only a small group, some notable characteristics emerge. Of the 9 claimants of this type, 6 of those were resident on Sir John Johnson’s patents. Furthermore, those 6 tenants from the Johnson estate were Scottish; all but one had settled in Johnstown in 1773.⁹⁶ The remainder were a mixture of Irish and American claimants, who lived in Cherry Valley and the Mohawk District. An appreciation of the ethnic composition of these claimants is crucial for interpreting their claims.

One distinguishing characteristic of the memorials from this group of loyalists is that, in contrast to reluctant loyalists from elsewhere within New York, they cited their reasons for not joining the British at an earlier stage of the war. Practical concerns relating to family commitments were a frequently-cited reason, as demonstrated by the claim of John McDonel. A tenant farmer from the Cornwall Township (part of Johnson’s Kingsborough Patent), McDonel had settled in Johnstown from Scotland in 1773. He delayed joining the British until 1780, when he travelled to Canada and enlisted with the Company of Artificers, building fortifications until the end of the war. According to his claim, McDonel would have joined the British before 1780, but “a large family kept him from joining sooner”.⁹⁷

Alexander Grant provided a similar explanation. Another of Johnson’s Scottish tenants, Grant had settled at Johnson’s Bush in 1773, where he shared a farm with his father. Grant also joined the British in 1780, enlisting as a sergeant in the second battalion of Sir John Johnson’s King’s Royal Regiment. Grant explained that he would have joined the British earlier, however

⁹⁶ The exception is George Mordoff who had come to America in 1743. American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York) TNA: AO 12/28.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, AO 12/31.

his father John Grant had died in service with Sir John's King's Royals in 1777. At this point, although Alexander was "very young", as the eldest of three brothers and two sisters he had inherited the burden of becoming the head of the family. Although Alexander does not state this explicitly within his claim, the implication is that by 1780 one of his younger brothers was old enough to accept this responsibility, thus freeing Alexander to enlist.⁹⁸

The claim of John McVey is particularly revealing. It suggests that – within Johnstown at least – the decision to delay enlistment to support their families may not have been reflective of the claimants own reluctance, but was accepted social practice. McVey had arrived in New York from Scotland in 1773. He had travelled with one Captain McDonald as an indentured servant, serving his time in nearby Schenectady as a cooper.⁹⁹ Having earned enough money to pay off his indenture in 1775, McVey settled in Johnstown on a hundred-acre farm, leased from Sir John Johnson. McVey explains that upon his capitulation before General Schuyler, Johnson took 300 men with him to Canada where he established his loyalist regiment, the King's Royals. Importantly, these men were unmarried; according to McVey, Johnson "desired those who were married to remain home, and to take care of their places." As he had a large family which he was unable to leave, McVey instead spent the war protecting British spies and raising recruits.¹⁰⁰ With McVey's account in mind, the suggestion is that this first group of reluctant loyalists were no less loyal than their active counterparts. Indeed, if we believe McVey, it would appear that Sir John Johnson not only authorised but actively encouraged their behaviour. By sanctioning those with family responsibilities to remain at home, Johnson attempted to ensure the future stability of the estate, to which he expected to return following the war's conclusion.

The second group of reluctant loyalists were a distinct group, who exhibited entirely different behaviours. These loyalists, like their counterparts in Albany County, only joined the British forces after being persecuted and imprisoned as suspected loyalists. Significantly, this group also display different demographic characteristics to those reluctant loyalists considered above: of the eighteen claimants (eighteen per cent of the claims from Tryon), only five were residents of Johnstown and only two were Scottish. Instead, they were a mixture of English, Germans, Irish and Americans. Like their counterparts in Albany, these loyalists may have held

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, AO 12/29.

⁹⁹ Indentured servitude was a common way for Scottish migrants to finance their passage to America. See Devine, *Scotland's Empire*, p. 102.

¹⁰⁰ American Loyalist Claims Commission: Records. TNA: T 79/70.

genuinely loyal sentiments privately, but there is no prior evidence for these sentiments and no indication that they were ever acted upon before their neighbours identified them as suspected loyalists. As the below examples demonstrate, like their counterparts in Albany County, these individuals appear to have been forced into loyalism by local circumstance.

Consider, for instance, the claim of John Annable. Originally from England, Annable had settled in the Mohawk in 1774 in partnership with fellow Englishman James Mafsey. Despite not showing any particular attachment to the British cause (besides being English), in 1776 Annable and Mafsey were carried away from their farm and imprisoned at Albany's Tory jail. After three weeks they escaped and headed to Canada, where they enlisted in Sir John Johnson's regiment. Annable served for the remainder of the war as a Sergeant, while Mafsey – for reasons not disclosed – was dispatched back to England.¹⁰¹

John Staring provides a similar account.¹⁰² American-born and resident near the Mohawk River, upon the outbreak of war Staring was a blacksmith's apprentice at Johnstown. Under the terms of his apprenticeship, Staring was not at liberty to join the British, although he claimed that he intended to join as soon as he was able. As such – beyond declaring general "principles of Loyalty and attachment to the King's Laws and Government" within his written memorial – Staring did not cite any particular activities or behaviours which would have identified him as a loyalist amongst his peers. However, in 1779, he was confined in irons at the Albany jail as a suspected loyalist.¹⁰³ While Staring does not elaborate upon the circumstances that led to his imprisonment, according to the Commissioners for Detecting Conspiracies at Albany – who were responsible for the prisoners sent there from Tryon – he was held there for "some Time" with "no particular Charges as yet exhibited Before us against him". Staring was thus released on bail in September 1779 under the agreement of his "future good behaviour"; this included the stipulation that he could not return to Tryon, but that he would serve with the rebel militia and appear before the Commissioners when called upon to do so.¹⁰⁴ Staring told the Loyalist Commissioners that he escaped from Albany in 1780 and

¹⁰¹ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/29; American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

¹⁰² American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/29.

¹⁰³ V. H. Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners for detecting and defeating Conspiracies in the State of New York, Albany County Sessions, 1778-1791, Volume One: 1778-1779* (Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon Company, 1909), p. 364, reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/cu31924088942523>> [accessed 29 October 2017].

¹⁰⁴ V. H. Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners for detecting and defeating Conspiracies in the State of New York, Albany County Sessions, 1778-1791, Volume Two: 1780-1781* (Albany, NY: J. B.

headed to Canada, where he enlisted with Sir John Johnson and served for four years; it is unclear whether he made his escape before or after he was summoned to appear before the Commissioners in August 1780.¹⁰⁵

Jacob Merhill's account is typical of those loyalists who attempted to "remain quiet" and avoid the conflict entirely.¹⁰⁶ Although he claimed to have shown his opposition to the rebellion "on every occasion", Merhill did little to support the British cause in practical terms and even carried arms with the local rebel militia. However, his refusal to bear arms against British soldiers in 1777 earned him a six-month prison sentence. Despite this, Merhill was still not motivated to enlist with the British until 1780. Although he testified that "he embraced the earliest opportunity of joining Sir John Johnsons' Corps of Loyal Yorkers" in Canada, in reality there were almost three years between Merhill's initial apprehension as a suspected loyalist and his eventual enlistment. This time delay was noted by the Commissioners, but Merhill did not provide further information regarding the reasons for this hesitancy in either his written memorial or his oral testimony.

Thus, the wartime experiences of this second group were more reflective of the local disputes present within small and rural communities, such as we have seen in Albany. As Robert Calhoon outlines, "the Revolution spilled into areas of American life only tangentially connected to the question of empire versus independence."¹⁰⁷ In Albany, we have already seen how revolutionary committees were exploited by colonists to settle historic disputes which were unrelated to the revolution. As the following section of this chapter discusses, revolutionary committees did not operate on the same scale or assume the same importance in Tryon County as they did in Albany. For instance, although the minutes of Albany's Commissioners for Detecting Conspiracies refer to the existence of a corresponding board in Tryon, there are no surviving records of their minutes.¹⁰⁸ Meanwhile, the laws of the State of

Lyon Company, 1909), p. 410, reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/detectingdefecting02paltrich>> [accessed 29 October 2017].

¹⁰⁵ Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners, Volume Two*, p. 494.

¹⁰⁶ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/26.

¹⁰⁷ R. M. Calhoon, 'Introduction', in R. M. Calhoon, T. M. Barnes and R. S. Davis (eds), *Tory Insurgents: The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays*. Revised and Expanded Edition (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010), p. xvi.

¹⁰⁸ See references to Poughkeepsie Board and Commissioners from Tryon and Charlotte Counties in V. H. Palsits (ed.), *Minutes of the Commissioners for detecting and defeating Conspiracies in the State of New York, Albany County Sessions, 1778-1791, Volume Three: Analytical Index* (Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon Company, 1910), reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/detectingdefecting03paltrich>> [accessed 29 October 2017].

New York only outline the powers of the Commissioners; they make no reference to the establishment of a board in Tryon.¹⁰⁹ Thus, it is unclear whether such a board existed, how long for and the extent of its activities. It is also notable that Tryon's loyalist claimants rarely make reference to such a commission, as we saw in the examples of Albany's loyalist claimants. Instead, Tryon's loyalists refer only vaguely to "the rebels". Thus, the suggestion is that Tryon's Commissioners for Detecting Conspiracies were less influential than their counterparts in Albany.

Tryon's Committee of Safety

Tryon did have a Committee of Safety. Again, the surviving minutes are brief, fragmentary and assumed to be incomplete: aside from an initial meeting in August 1774 to establish the committee, the minutes cover only the period between May and November 1775.¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, they remain important for demonstrating how the pre-existing tensions considered so far became amplified into matters of ideological importance. Tryon was especially quick to establish its Committee, which met for the first time in August 1774. Notably, this date was after the first meeting of the Continental Congress, but actually pre-dates the call for the establishment of Committees of Correspondence included within the Articles of Association. According to the minutes of its first meeting, Tryon's Committee was created in protest against the Coercive Acts (or, Intolerable Acts, as they became known in the American colonies) and to enable communication with its counterparts in New York's other counties.¹¹¹ However, as Albany would not establish its committee until 1775, Tryon's committee did not meet again until May 1775.

Similar to its counterpart in Albany, Tryon's committee operated a hierarchical structure. From the available evidence, sub-committees are known to have existed in the districts of Canajoharie, Palatine, Mohawk and the United Committees of German Flatts and Highland districts. Its membership was drawn from Tryon's leading families – with the important exception of the Johnsons. In addition to lawyers, justices of the peace, militia captains and

¹⁰⁹ New York Legislature, *Laws of the state of New-York, commencing with the first session of the Senate and Assembly, after the Declaration of Independency, and the organization of the new government of the state, anno 1777. By order of the Legislature* (Poughkeepsie: John Holt, 1782).

¹¹⁰ According to J. Howard Hanson's introduction, the final pages of the minute book are lost. See Frey, *The Minute Book of the Committee of Safety of Tryon County*, p. xiv.

¹¹¹ The Committee was established because "the Brittish [sic.] Parliament has lately passed an Act for raising a Revenue in American without the Consent of our Representative to abridging the Liberties and privileges of the American Colonies and therefore blocking up the Port of Boston ..." See Frey, *The Minute Book of the Committee of Safety of Tryon County*, p. 1.

local traders, Tryon's committeemen included representatives from large landholding families: the Fincks, who held the patent for the Stone Arabia tract; the Rebers, who held the Harrison patent; and the Van Slycks, who held a patent in the Palatine District.¹¹² Although most – but importantly, not all – of Tryon's Committee-men were American-born, they were from a variety of different ethnic backgrounds, including Dutch and English.¹¹³ Thus, the evidence so far confirms Venables' claim that Tryon's older settler families, not connected with the Johnsons, adopted the revolutionary cause.¹¹⁴ The root cause of their opposition to Sir William Johnson and his associates is unclear; however, it is likely that they resented Johnson's allegiance with the Iroquois, in particular his efforts to prevent unhindered westward expansion into the Ohio Valley and the dispossession of Mohawk lands by European colonists.¹¹⁵

In contrast to the Committee at Albany, however, Tryon's Committee of Safety failed to take on the municipal functions associated with local government. Instead, by the time the Committee met again in 1775 it had become distinctly anti-Johnson in its focus. This was likely to have been a consequence of the vagueness of Article Eleven of the Association; without clear instructions regarding how the Committees were to operate, local circumstance shaped both their authority and the direction of their activities.¹¹⁶ Thus, in the first meeting since their hiatus, the Committee singled out the Johnsons – who by this point were publicly opposed to American independence – as their opponents. The minutes state that:

This Country has for a series of Years been Ruled by one family [the Johnsons], the different Branches of which are still strenuous in dissuading people from coming into Congressional Measures ...¹¹⁷

¹¹² For biographies of Tryon's Committeemen, see Frey, *The Minute Book of the Committee of Safety of Tryon County*, pp. 105-46.

¹¹³ Isaac Paris was from Alsace, while the Van Slycks may have been Métis. According to Tom Arne Midtrød, the Van Slycks of seventeenth-century Schenectady (over the border from Tryon County) were Métis but had become fully integrated into Dutch colonial society. See T. A. Midtrød, 'The Flemish Bastard and the Former Indians' p. 83-108.

¹¹⁴ Venables, 'Tryon County', p. 180.

¹¹⁵ See Andrew Shankman, quoted in A. Taylor, 'Expand or Die: The Revolution's New Empire', p. 624; Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, pp. 163-64; K. DuVal, *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution* (New York: Random House, 2015), p. 95.

¹¹⁶ T. H. Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010), p. 169; Continental Congress, *The Articles of Association*, 20 October 1774, reproduced at <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/contcong_10-20-74.asp> [accessed 22 September 2017].

¹¹⁷ Frey, *The Minute Book of the Committee of Safety of Tryon County*, p. 7.

As such, the Committee's attention was primarily focused upon events at Johnstown, including the militarization of its tenants.¹¹⁸ Its minutes reveal that Tryon was divided by a bitter civil war, which had its origins in the earliest years of the American crisis and, as we have seen, pre-dates the outbreak of revolutionary warfare elsewhere within the colony. Schenectady, located on the border between Tryon and Albany counties, was particularly sensitive to events in Tryon, which it monitored closely. Schenectady's Committee of Correspondence, which reported into Albany, even took the decision in July 1775 to intercept and read Guy Johnson's mail, on the basis that it might contain "matters of importance".¹¹⁹

One particular episode, which was fully documented by Tryon's Committee of Safety, illustrates Calhoun's assertion that the Revolution amplified local disputes which were otherwise unconnected to the imperial crisis into matters of ideological importance.¹²⁰ In July 1775, Tryon's Mohawk District Committee reported that Thomas Hunt had trespassed upon John Fonda's lands. Fonda accused Hunt of acting deliberately and "spitefully"; Fonda had earlier forbidden Hunt to cross in case he should damage Fonda's crop of freshly-sewn peas. Following an altercation in which Hunt struck Fonda with a broom, Fonda knocked Hunt down with his hoe and Hunt threatened Fonda's life with "scolding and threatening words", Tryon's Sheriff Alexander White confined Fonda within the county jail at Johnstown. Outraged by the apparent injustice of events, a hundred-strong crowd assembled and broke Fonda out of jail.¹²¹

An understanding of the main instigators' identities is essential for interpreting this episode. John Fonda, from the Mohawk district, was from another of Tryon's prominent – and rebellious – families. As many as fifty Fondas were known to be in the American service, while one Adam Fonda was a representative upon the Mohawk district committee.¹²² Thomas Hunt, meanwhile, was one of Sheriff White's servants. White had come to America from Ireland in 1760 and served as a captain with the New York provincial troops during the Seven Years War.

¹¹⁸ Kammen, *Colonial New York*, p. 308; Taylor, *Divided Ground*, pp. 3-4 and pp. 78-79; E. Countryman, *People in Revolution: The American Revolution and Political Society in New York, 1760-1790* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1989), p. 129.

¹¹⁹ A. Flick (ed.), *Minutes of the Albany Committee of Correspondence 1775-1778, Volume Two. Minutes of the Schenectady Committee 1775-1779, and Index* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1925), p. 1018, reproduced at <<https://archive.org/details/minutes1775177802albauoft>>[accessed 4 November 2016].

¹²⁰ Calhoun, 'Introduction', p. xvi.

¹²¹ Frey, *The Minute Book of the Committee of Safety of Tryon County*, pp. 49-51.

¹²² *Ibid.*, pp. 120-22 and pp. 136-38.

Although he had been awarded 1,000 acres of land upon the war's conclusion, White instead leased a tract of land from Sir John Johnson, thus making him one of Johnson's tenants.¹²³ Owing in part to his connections to the Johnsons, White became notoriously unpopular during the American Revolution and was a target for Tryon's revolutionaries. For instance, although it was not reported in Tryon's Committee minutes, White later related to the Loyalist Commissioners that, after they had broken Fonda out of jail, the crowd had advanced upon his own house. According to White, "heavy firing ensued" and he was forced to flee to Johnson Hall for safety.¹²⁴

Despite its apparently trivial nature, this episode is particularly useful for demonstrating how those residents who resented the Johnsons' dominance within Tryon County were quick to adopt revolutionary rhetoric to settle their grievances. Following the alleged incident upon Fonda's land, Tryon's Committee heard affidavits from residents who claimed that White was a loyalist. Major Jelles (Giles) Fonda – presumably another relative – and others reported that White had been heard to "say oftentimes, that he would fight for his King and Country" and that he hoped to hang "a good Many" rebels upon the conclusion of the conflict.¹²⁵ Based on these depositions, the Committee decreed that White "has proved Sufficiently himself unworthy of his Office and an enemy in general and in particular to our American Cause." Refusing to acknowledge White's authority any longer, the Committee elected their own sheriff.¹²⁶

Thus, what began as a minor dispute between two individuals escalated into a matter of ideological importance. The suggestion is that Tryon's older settler families – including the Fondas and their contemporaries – took advantage of the incident to remove White, one of Johnson's close associates, from a position of power. By the summer of 1775, a clear social divide had emerged which pitted these families against the Johnsons and their supporters.

¹²³ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO, 12/29. Although a tenant, White was not a poor man. According to his testimony he had numerous servants, including one black "servant."

¹²⁴ The account is described in detail in White's testimony before the loyalist commissioners, but it was also reported in the minutes of the Albany Committee of Correspondence, who had the incident related to them by the Committee at Schenectady. See J. Sullivan (ed.), *Minutes of the Albany Committee of Correspondence 1775-1778, Volume One* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1923), pp. 165-66, reproduced at <https://archive.org/details/MinutesOfTheAlbanyCommitteeOfCorrespondence1775-1778Vol1> [accessed 16 March 2017].

¹²⁵ Frey, *The Minute Book of the Committee of Safety of Tryon County*, p. 55-56.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

With the introduction of the Committee of Safety, which was controlled by Johnson's opponents, these pre-existing tensions hardened into discrete political factions.

Female Loyalists

The final group of loyalists to be considered are Tryon's female loyalist claimants. Just as we have seen in Albany and New York City, they are few in number: of the 99 loyalists from Tryon, only 9 claims (9 per cent) were submitted by women. The claims from Tryon are exceptionally brief; some to the extent that they did not allow for further analysis. As such, this section focuses on the memorials submitted by 8 women; the claim of Mary Anderson has been excluded on the grounds of insufficient information.

Like their counterparts in Albany County, Tryon's female loyalists are a largely homogeneous group. All but one of the claimants were widows; six had been widowed as a direct consequence of the war, with their husbands being killed in active service, while one was widowed through old age.¹²⁷ The exception to this group is Margaret Francis Hill, whose claim is considered below. In another similarity to Albany's female loyalists, claims were typically lodged in the widow's own name, but their deservedness for financial compensation was based upon the activities of their late husbands. However, loyalist widows also referred to other male family members who had served with the British troops to strengthen their claims.

Consider, for example, the claim of Catherine Cryderman. Originally from Germany, Catherine described settling at Johnstown "many years ago". She describes her late husband, Valentine Cryderman, as "a loyalist very true to King George", however he was too elderly to fight.¹²⁸ Instead, the Crydermans sent three of their five sons to enrol with Sir John Johnson; the other two were unable to serve as they were underage. Christian Cameron shared a similar experience. Originally from Scotland, Christian came to America in 1763 and settled on the Johnson Patent. Her husband, Donald Ross, joined the British in 1776 at Fort Stanwix, while her eldest son also served (although the dates of his service are not provided). By 1780, both Donald and her son had died.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ The group of war widows includes Elizabeth Cline, who claimed that her husband John was killed by "rebel Indians". See American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/28.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, AO 12/29. Emphasis in original text.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, AO 12/29.

Meanwhile, Eva Pencil from Susquehanna used her petition to stress the loyalist credentials of her own family. Her husband, James McNut, had joined Sir John Johnson in 1778 and died in Canada in 1779. However, Eva went on to describe how her father, Groddus Dingman, had been driven out of New York and into Canada as a suspected loyalist. Both of her parents died at the loyalist refugee camp at Mashishe in 1782.¹³⁰ Eva's testimony also raises a notable point about the unique nature of war for those loyalists resident on the Iroquois frontier. Living near the Susquehanna River, west of Cherry Valley, Eva's family were a target for those nations who had not allied with the British, such as the Oneidas and the Tuscaroras. She describes how "rebel Indians" seized and killed her husband's livestock, her father's livestock and her mother's possessions.

Like their counterparts in Albany, the evidence suggests that Tryon's female loyalists only took responsibility for their husband's claims if they did not have adult sons. Although few in number, closer examination of the claims of Tryon's deceased loyalists – those who had submitted their own claims, but had died before the case came before the Loyalist Commissioners – reveals that adult sons assumed authority for the claim, if the claimant had any.¹³¹ None of the eight female loyalists considered had sons who were of legal age: Catherine Cryderman's eldest son, Joseph, was described as "underage", while Christian Cameron's son, Finlay Ross, was also under twenty one years of age. Nevertheless, their sons provided additional testimonies to support their mothers' claims.¹³² Thus, in all instances Tryon's loyalist widows were referred to in the Commissioners' minutes as "the claimant", and appeared in person to provide their own testimonies. The only exceptions to this pattern are the claims of Keatrine (Catherine) McGruer and Ann Cameron; McGruer was too sick to attend while Cameron was described as "an infirm old woman, unable to travel".¹³³

Regardless of whether the claimants had adult sons or not, there was no guarantee that they would be entitled to receive any compensation that may be awarded. The evidence from the claims suggests that, despite being underage, the decision remained in the hands of their eldest sons. Joseph Cryderman, for instance, informed the Commissioners that "the family

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, AO 12/28.

¹³¹ See for example the claim of Alexander Ferguson, whose eldest son assumed responsibility. *Ibid.*, AO 12/29.

¹³² *Ibid.*, AO 12/29.

¹³³ For Keatrine see American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/29; For Anne see *Ibid.*, AO 12/31 and American Loyalists Claims, Series II (New York). TNA: AO 13/11.

have all agreed that his mother [Catherine] shall receive the sum allowed”.¹³⁴ Christian Cameron, however, was not so fortunate. Finlay Ross, her eldest son, requested that “the whole is to be paid to him [Finlay] for himself, 2 sisters and younger brother”. The fact that his mother had re-married – and was financially supported by her new husband – presumably played a role in the decision.¹³⁵

Mary Beth Norton argues that female claimants – especially from rural communities – were disadvantaged when it came to providing accurate financial and legal details regarding their estates that would affect both the outcome and the total value of their claims.¹³⁶ We saw that female loyalists in Albany County were confident recalling details about their homes, furnishings and livestock, but often displayed their ignorance when it came to acreage or valuations. Tryon’s female claimants, in contrast, do not display this lack of awareness. Of course, this may be reflective of a limitation of the source material; claims from Tryon are typically briefer than those from Albany and as such this information may not have been captured. However, this lack of knowledge usually arose from further questioning by the Loyalist Commissioners and was recorded in their minutes, rather than within the claimant’s initial testimony. Therefore, it is notable that this trend is not seen amongst Tryon’s female claimants. The suggestion, therefore, is that the collective process of submitting claims, organised centrally within regiments and the communities at New Johnstown, may have resulted in these women receiving better advice than their counterparts in Albany when it came to completing their claims.

Like their counterparts in New York City and Albany County, Tryon’s female loyalist claimants used their appearances before the British Commissioners as an opportunity to highlight the mental and emotional distresses of war.¹³⁷ Indeed, despite the brevity of their written claims, Tryon’s female loyalists were no less vocal than female loyalists elsewhere in expressing how the war had caused them and their families extensive suffering. Catherine Cryderman, for instance, blamed her husband’s death upon the treatment he received from revolutionaries. She described how, despite his advanced years, Valentine was imprisoned for three months in 1776 after refusing to take the Oath of Allegiance. According to Catherine, “he was so ill in

¹³⁴ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/29.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, AO 12/29.

¹³⁶ M. B. Norton, ‘Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War: The Case of the Loyalists’, *WMQ*, 33. 3 (1976), pp. 389-94.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 403-06; DuVal, *Independence Lost*, p. 280.

consequence of his sufferings, that he never recovered. He lost his senses and was confined to his bed for a long time”.¹³⁸ Isobel McBain made a similar complaint: her husband Andrew was imprisoned within Albany’s Tory jail for eight months, after he was caught attempting to get his family to safety in Canada. According to Isobel, “he got the beginning of his death” in the Tory jail and died in 1783, leaving her with two young children to support.¹³⁹

Margaret Francis Hill is the sole exception to the loyalist widows considered above. Describing herself as “a single woman”, Hill came to America in 1776, where she was employed as Guy Johnson’s housekeeper. She describes herself as being “resented” by Tryon’s revolutionaries, who were opposed to both her Englishness and her close attachment to the Johnsons. Hill’s wartime experience contrasted starkly with those of rural loyalist wives; indeed, it was more comparable with those of single women in New York City, such as Lorenda Holmes. Like Holmes, Hill described the brutal behaviour that she received at the hands of revolutionaries. She claimed to have been treated:

with barbarity, cruelty, hardships and indignity, stripped of her clothes and confined to a cold room in Bedford New England during the depths of winter with no fire or candlelight.

According to Hill, Tryon’s revolutionaries attempted to exploit her proximity to the Johnsons to secure their demise; she described how she was repeatedly offered “a considerable sum of money” to poison Guy and Sir John Johnson, which she rejected “with abhorrence.” As such, she was imprisoned twice.¹⁴⁰

To conclude our assessment of Tryon’s female loyalists, perhaps the most important observation is that none of the women considered so far described their own motivations for remaining loyal or the activities that they personally undertook to advance the British cause. Instead – with the exception of Hill – their claims relate solely to the activities and services of their male relatives, be these husbands, sons or even fathers. This is in stark contrast to New York City and Albany County where, as we have seen, women were engaged in a range of activities to support British and loyalist forces. This may have been a consequence of numerous factors.

¹³⁸ American Loyalists Claims, Series I (New York). TNA: AO 12/29.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, AO 12/28.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, AO 12/24.

First, it may be reflective of the fact that these women did not have their own political opinions. Kacy Tillman, for instance, argues that many eighteenth-century women were not able to determine their own ideological stance; instead, they were extensions of their husband's political opinions.¹⁴¹ As we have seen in Albany County, the political decisions made by male members of the household had major implications for female members of the family, who were automatically viewed as loyalists by default. There is no evidence to suggest that this was different in Tryon. However, it does not sufficiently explain why Tryon's females – even if initially unwillingly opted into the loyalist cause – would not engage with the movement.

The second – and more likely – possibility is that the ability to support the British cause was ultimately influenced by geographic location. Female loyalists considered elsewhere were in close proximity to British troops; either at the military headquarters in New York City or close to prospective loyalist soldiers passing through Albany County in need of shelter and provisions. As we saw with Tryon's active loyalists, very few journeyed beyond Tryon County to enlist with British and loyalist forces; as such, they were not in need of shelter or provisions. The suggestion, therefore, is that there simply were not the same opportunities in Tryon for women to provide similar assistance.

Conclusion

This chapter concludes that the American Revolution in Tryon County was essentially a civil war. By adopting revolutionary rhetoric, Tryon's competing factions introduced the use of military force – under the pretence of ideological concerns – to resolve a pre-existing social conflict which was otherwise unrelated to the question of independence. Sir John Johnson, as the son and heir of a British agent, followed the path taken by his contemporary colonial officials and remained loyal. Displaying parallels with behaviours that we have seen in Albany, Johnson's opponents – Tryon's older settler families – used the revolution as an opportunity to remove Johnson from his position of influence. In contrast to Albany, however, they used Tryon's Committee of Safety as an almost-exclusively anti-Johnson apparatus rather than as a municipal structure; this is particularly evident from the Committee's pursuit of Sheriff White. Meanwhile, Johnson's tenants – a significant proportion of whom were Scottish – demonstrated an allegiance to him which was reminiscent of Highland clanship. In addition,

¹⁴¹ K. Tillman, 'What is a Female Loyalist?', *Common Place*, 13.4 (2013), reproduced at <<http://www.common-place.org/vol-13/no-04/tillman/>>[accessed 22 September 2017].

Chapter Five: Case Study – Tryon County

an important element of loyalist support came from those resident near Native American territories, who had historically enjoyed a positive relationship with Sir John's father, Sir William Johnson. Thus, the development of loyalism in Tryon was shaped in response to local circumstances.

Conclusion

This dissertation investigated the development of loyalism in the colony of New York. Through a series of comparative case studies, it has demonstrated that the loyalist experience differed greatly between three distinct geographic regions – New York City, Albany County and Tryon County – within a single colony. Analysis of the little-used memorials of loyalist claimants from each of the three regions revealed that local environments shaped the development and nature of loyalism within each region: different counties entered the war at different stages, loyalist claimants described varying motivations for remaining loyal, while the nature of the activities and services provided by loyalists to advance the British cause also varied considerably. As such, this dissertation argues that loyalism in New York was ultimately a product of local circumstance.

The local contexts that shaped the nature of New York loyalism had their origins in the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries. A long-term chronological lens was adopted in order to investigate how and why New York's distinctive regions developed. Part One of this study argued that changes introduced as part of the colony's process of Anglicisation – defined by Ignacio Gallup-Diaz as legal and political, as well as social, cultural and material – contributed to the development of distinct regions within the colony.¹ Legislative changes introduced during the 1690s and early 1700s, analysed in Chapter One, first and foremost established New York as an English colony. While all of the English colonies in America experienced Anglicisation to some extent, New York's experience of this process was distinctive in two respects: first, the changes were immediate, introduced in a comparatively short space of time to resolve a pressing political need; secondly, owing to the colony's origins as a Dutch settlement, Anglicisation in New York had an ethnic dimension.² Crucially for this study, Anglicisation laws contributed to the colony's uneven development. New York City became established as the "metropolis" of the colony: home to the General Assembly,

¹ I. Gallup-Diaz, A. Shankman, and D. J. Silverman, 'Introduction', in I. Gallup-Diaz, A. Shankman and D. J. Silverman (eds), *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), p. 1.

² J. M. Murrin, 'Anglicizing an American Colony: The Transformation of Provincial Massachusetts' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1966); J. M. Murrin, 'England & Colonial America: A Novel Theory of the American Revolution (1974)', in I. Gallup-Diaz, A. Shankman and D. J. Silverman (eds), *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), pp. 9-19.

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Supreme Court and Royal Governor, it formed the centre of colonial government.³ Anglicisation changes also elevated the status of New York City's English residents, including lawyers and merchants. With office-holders required to swear oaths of allegiance to the English monarch and the Anglican Church, those non-English residents who wanted to participate in colonial government were forced to become Anglicised themselves. Albany County, in contrast, was geographically isolated from the effects of such legislative changes in the Hudson Highlands. As such, its inhabitants remained predominantly Dutch in language and religion.

However, legislative change alone was not sufficient to alter New Yorkers' everyday behaviour. As we saw in Chapter Two, social, material and cultural changes occurred during the mid-eighteenth century which complemented previous administrative reform and encouraged extensive urban development. Once again, the impact of such changes was felt unevenly across the colony. Using Peter Borsay's model of an urban renaissance as a methodological framework, we saw that New York City – equipped with the structures necessary to facilitate cultural Anglicisation – underwent significant urban improvement. By the outbreak of the American Revolution, New York City had emerged as a recognisably Georgian provincial town, complete with a coffee-house, subscription library and a vibrant print culture, all of which promoted emerging British ideas of sociability and polite society. Despite the best efforts of some of its wealthier residents, Albany County, in contrast, experienced little urban development. Attempts to improve the physical landscape of the city of Albany largely failed, or – if completed at all – were completed in the Dutch taste. By the outbreak of the Revolution, therefore, Albany remained predominantly Dutch in culture and architectural appearance. Rural, under-populated and under-developed, the frontier region that would become Tryon County – the subject of the third case study – remained part of the western fringes of Albany County until 1772. As such, cultural change in that region was also severely limited.

By the outbreak of the American Revolution, then, the three regions whose loyalist claims were selected for detailed analysis in this study had developed in very different ways. The different nature of these local contexts played an essential role in shaping the nature of

³ W. Smith, *The History of the Province of New-York, from the first discovery to the year M.DCC.XXXII. To which is annexed, a description of the country, with a short Account of the Inhabitants, their Trade, Religious and Political State, and the Constitution of the Courts of Justice in that Colony* (London: Thomas Wilcox, 1757), p. 188.

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loyalism within each of the three regions. Predominantly drawing upon the written memorials and oral testimonies of loyalist claimants who appealed to the post-war Loyalist Claims Commission for compensation, Part Two compared both the motivations for remaining loyal and the activities of loyalists in New York City, Albany and Tryon Counties.

In New York City, the decision to remain loyal was a matter of individual choice. Educated, literate and with access to printed information from across the Atlantic, New York City's loyalists made informed choices based upon the latest ideological arguments. However, the politicised nature of the town resulted in its inhabitants being suspected of loyalty as early as 1775, after the revolutionary Continental Congress introduced the Articles of Association.⁴ For the city's merchants, adherence to the Association – the boycott of British goods – would have profound consequences for their commercial activities and livelihoods; refusal to comply immediately identified such individuals as “disaffected” to the American cause. For others – including doctors, lawyers and other perceived persons of influence – their political affiliation became the subject of speculation within the city's coffee-house and other venues of polite sociability. Although New York City's loyalists were drawn from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, they constructed their identity as loyal subjects as being superior to that of the rebel “mob”. Upon the outbreak of war and the British occupation of the city, proximity to the British forces created unique opportunities for loyalists resident there – including female and black loyalists – to interact with the troops and support the British cause without being forced to leave their homes, families and livelihoods.

Albany County, in contrast, was a rural and parochial society. As such, the decision to remain loyal was a collective decision, rather than an individual choice, predominantly taken by male members of the household. Loyalist claimants described enlisting with their fathers, brothers and sons, while female members of the family who were left behind to manage the estate described suffering on account of the political decisions taken by their husbands. The American Revolution came to Albany later than in New York City and Tryon. Whereas battle lines – either ideological or military – were drawn in both of these regions as early as 1775, residents of Albany County were able to delay choosing sides until the summer of 1776. It was not until the geographical focus of the war turned to the Hudson Highlands and Albany County became the military centre of the conflict that colonists there began to form their political

⁴ Continental Congress, *The Articles of Association*, 20 October 1774, Article Eleven, reproduced at <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/contcong_10-20-74.asp>[accessed 22 September 2017].

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allegiances. Loyalism in Albany County often reflected existing community tensions which predated and were otherwise unconnected to the revolutionary dispute. For instance, the historic tension between landlords and tenants caused tenants to deliberately adopt political allegiances which opposed those of their landlords. Meanwhile, revolutionary structures which were designed to detect and defeat loyalism were used by vengeful communities to resolve historic grievances. Consequently, the claims from Albany included the highest proportion of 'reluctant' loyalists: those who were forced into loyalism by local circumstance, often after attempting to remain quiet at home.

In Tryon County, the focus of the final case study, the Revolution represented a bitter civil war between the descendants of Sir William Johnson and Tryon's older settler families. Sir John Johnson, William's son and heir, remained loyal. He was supported by his tenants – including a significant portion of Scottish Highlanders, who demonstrated an allegiance which was reminiscent of clanship – and Native American populations, who had developed alliances with the Johnsons in their role as Superintendents for Indian Affairs. As the revolutionary dispute intensified, Tryon's older settler families – such as the Fondas, Fincks, Rebers and the Van Slycks – who were opposed to the Johnson family's dominance within the county, used the conflict as an opportunity to remove the Johnsons from their position of influence. Forming themselves into a Committee of Safety as early as 1774, they manipulated its proceedings into an anti-Johnson apparatus. War broke out in Tryon County as early as 1775 – before the Declaration of Independence – when Johnson Hall came under attack.

What, then, can this study add to the current historiography and how can its findings enhance existing understandings of loyalism? First and foremost, this dissertation speaks to recent revisionist historiography which advances the complexity of loyalist identities. Expanding upon Edward Gray's recent conclusion that "the term *loyalist* is of little ontological value", this dissertation has shown that loyalism was neither a fixed set of behaviours nor were allegiances necessarily permanent.⁵ Even within the confines of a single colony, loyalists from different regions exhibited a range of contrasting behaviours when attempting to prove their loyalty. For some – especially in Tryon and Albany Counties – military service was the most-often cited indicator of loyalty. For others, their loyalty was demonstrated through the assistance that they provided to those making hazardous journeys to enlist with the British forces, including providing shelter and provisions to loyalist soldiers, or serving as guides to navigate New York's

⁵ E. G. Gray, 'Liberty's Losers', *WMQ*, 70.1 (2013), p. 186.

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dense forests. However, some loyalists did very little in practical terms to support the British cause. In New York City, the politicised nature of society and contemporary understandings of colonial politics meant that, for some, simply being known to be loyal was enough. As such, 'passive' loyalists were a phenomenon confined to New York City.

Loyalism was also fluid. Building upon the foundations laid by Ruma Chopra's *Choosing Sides*, this dissertation has shown how some loyalists – especially 'reluctant' loyalists – changed sides, or attempted to remain neutral by signing the Articles of Association and even enlisting with the rebel militia in their attempts to avoid the conflict.⁶ However, when local circumstances ultimately forced them into making the decision whether to take up arms for or against the British, these individuals enrolled with loyalist forces and spent the remainder of the war in active military service. Thus, while endorsing Judith Van Buskirk's conclusion that political concerns formed only one aspect of loyalists' identities, this dissertation adopts a broader geographical focus to consider the multi-faceted identities of loyalists resident in regions beyond New York City.⁷

Secondly, this study demonstrates that – in line with recent historiographical developments – loyalism was simultaneously both a local and global phenomenon. Speaking directly to works such as Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan's *The Loyal Atlantic*, and Allan Blackstock and Frank O'Gorman's *Loyalism and the Formation of the British World*, this dissertation has not only confirmed such perspectives, but the methodology chosen has enabled it to go deeper in its analysis.⁸ In contrast to these studies, which draw continuities between isolated case studies of loyalism from diverse regions across the British Atlantic between the late-eighteenth and early-twentieth centuries (especially that of Blackstock and O'Gorman), this dissertation adopts a narrower geographical focus and shorter chronological timescale. This methodological approach facilitates an intensely-focused view of loyalism, which allows for deeper interrogation of what it meant to be loyal in a single historical moment. We have seen that loyalism, despite being part of a global imperial dispute, was ultimately a local concern – contested at county, or even district level, rather than at colony-level. New York's loyalist

⁶ R. Chopra, *Choosing Sides: Loyalists in Revolutionary America* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013).

⁷ J. L. Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

⁸ J. Bannister and L. Riordan (eds), *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012); A. Blackstock and F. O'Gorman (eds), *Loyalism and the Formation of the British World, 1775-1914* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014).

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claimants were motivated by a range of factors which were largely unconnected to the question of independence, including self-interest and the preservation of their homes and livelihoods, community pressure and family pressure.

Finally, this dissertation responds to a renewed interest in how colonial contexts shaped the direction of the American Revolution and the development of loyalism. As we have seen, the decision to remain loyal was informed by a series of different choices, dependent upon the societies in which a loyalist was resident. Crucially, this study argues that those different environments in which New Yorkers took the decision to remain loyal were the long-term consequence of administrative and cultural changes which occurred during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In urban New York City, loyalist claimants were educated and literate participants of a recognisably Georgian polite provincial society. Their decision to remain loyal was an informed and individual choice, and – agreeing in part with the assertions of Brendan McConville – for many it was a logical consequence of the emotional and cultural ties that had developed between Britain and the American colonies.⁹

In rural Albany and Tryon Counties, in contrast, the development of personal allegiances was influenced by different factors. In these regions where the most up-to-date political information was not always accessible to large swathes of the populations, individuals were reliant upon friends, neighbours, families or other persons of influence when deciding whether or not to remain loyal. Beyond the urban centre of New York City, where strong material and cultural ties with Britain did not develop, McConville's explanation for the development of loyalist allegiances falls short. Instead, this dissertation agrees with the conclusions of Robert Calhoun *et al.*'s *Tory Insurgents* that the Revolution interacted with pre-existing social tensions, some of which had roots that extended as far back as the late seventeenth century.¹⁰ Because loyalism was a local concern, loyalist claimants in rural areas were from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities and genders, not all of whom had emotional, cultural or commercial attachments to Britain.

Although the conclusions of this study feed into an emerging corpus of scholarly literature, this dissertation is fundamentally distinctive in both its approach and findings. Its main

⁹ B. McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

¹⁰ R. M. Calhoun, T. M. Barnes, and R. S. Davis (eds), *Tory Insurgents: The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays*. Revised and Expanded Edition (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010).

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difference to previous scholarship derives from its original use of and sustained engagement with the records of the Loyalist Claims Commission. Despite their vast potential for revealing the complexities of colonial life during the Revolutionary-era, the claims remain a deeply under-utilised resource. Not only is this dissertation distinctive in making steps to remedy this neglect, but it is original in the way in which this is conducted. It pulls away from the traditional uses of the claims material in two ways. First, it eschews the use of the claims material to support individual biography. Rather than tracing the pre- and post-war experience of a select few loyalists, it instead makes use of over 400 individual claims to produce a collective biography of New York's loyalist claimants. Secondly, in contrast to Wallace Brown's *The King's Friends* – which is predominately concerned with the socio-economic status of loyalist claimants – it uses the claims to gain unique insight into the ways in which loyalists understood their world and the imperial crisis which unfolded around them.¹¹ By focusing on the terminology used by loyalists to describe the Revolution, it uses the claims to recover a contemporary view of what it meant to be loyal. In doing so, it echoes Brubaker and Cooper's assertions in encouraging us to think differently about the utility of "identity" as a concept, as this study highlights the co-existence of multiple loyalist "identities" within a single moment.¹²

The unique geographic focus of this dissertation is also significant. It moves away from the focus upon New York City which has come to dominate loyalist scholarship.¹³ By incorporating lesser-studied upstate and frontier regions, it is sympathetic to local community studies.¹⁴ However, this dissertation goes beyond the approaches of such works by comparing three distinct areas of New York with each other, identifying similarities and significant differences in the way in which each region experienced the American Revolution. It therefore explores the impact of contingency and local factors on identity within a fluid political moment.

¹¹ W. Brown, *The King's Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1966).

¹² R. Brubaker and F. Cooper, 'Beyond "Identity"', *Theory and Society*, 29.1 (2000), p. 2.

¹³ Such as R. Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion: Loyalists in New York City During the Revolution* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011); P. Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island: Staten Island And The American Revolution* (New York & London: New York University Press, 2007); Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*.

¹⁴ J. S. Tiedemann and E. R. Fingerhut (eds), *The Other New York: The American Revolution Beyond New York City, 1763-1787* (Albany: SUNY University Press, 2005); J. M. Johnson, C. Pryslopski, and A. Villani (eds), *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013). J. S. Tiedemann, E. R. Fingerhut and R. W. Venables (eds), *The Other Loyalists: Ordinary People, Royalism, and the Revolution in the Middle Colonies, 1763-1787* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009).

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The findings of this dissertation, of course, open up potential future lines of enquiry. For instance, the loyalist claims not only provide insight into colonial life, but also the post-war fate of loyalist refugees. The memorials included within this dissertation indicate that New York's loyalist exiles settled within various corners of the British Empire, including Canada, Britain and the Caribbean. The suggestion is that a loyalists' ultimate destination may have been dependent upon their pre-war domiciles: those from New York City were more likely to travel to England, while Tryon's loyalists replicated pre-war communities at New Johnstown in Canada. This is something that this dissertation has alluded to, but not explored in depth.

Another possibility would be to apply the methodological approach of this study to a different colony (or colonies). Owing to the enormity of the task of scrutinising the loyalist claims in such great detail, this dissertation is confined to the colony of New York. As such, without further research, its findings are not necessarily applicable to the other former British colonies in North America. Although this study posits that loyalism in New England and the southern colonies was equally likely to have been a product of local circumstance, the contextual factors that shaped loyalism there would be different to those seen in New York.¹⁵ New England, with its long history of dissent, did not develop the same economic, cultural and emotional ties with Britain that we saw in New York. A comparison of the contrasting behaviours demonstrated by New England exiles and those from the Middle Colonies whilst in England suggests differing attitudes towards Britain.¹⁶ Meanwhile, in the southern colonies, the presence of slave populations may have contributed to increased levels of unity amongst the white population.¹⁷ Demographically, both regions contrast with New York's ethnically heterogeneous population.

¹⁵ Virginia DeJohn Anderson, for instance, explores the importance of local conditions in New England in shaping the wartime fates of patriot Nathan Hale and loyalist Moses Dunbar. See G. Mailer, review of V. DeJohn Anderson, *The Martyr and the Traitor: Nathan Hale, Moses Dunbar, and the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), in *WMQ*, 75.1 (2018), pp. 151-55.

¹⁶ Compare, for instance, the difference between Samuel Shoemaker of Philadelphia – who viewed his time in England as an opportunity to visit famous English people and places, sample English cuisine and shop for Wedgwood – and New England loyalists Jolley Allen, Samuel Curwen and Samuel Peters, who suffered greatly with homesickness and generally found England to be a wretched place. See Allen Family Papers, AAS; G. Atkinson Ward, *The Journal and Letters of Samuel Curwen, an American in England, from 1775 to 1783; With an Appendix of Biographical Sketches*, 4th ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1864); K. W. Cameron, *The Papers of Loyalist Samuel Peters: A Survey of the Contents of his Notebooks – Correspondence During his Flight to England, Exile, and the Last Years of his Life* (Hartford, CT: Transcendental Books, 1978); Diary of Samuel Shoemaker, Esquire, of Philadelphia. From November 7, 1783 to October 5, 1785, Manuscripts Collection, N-YHS.

¹⁷ See, for instance, S. Frey, *Water from the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), especially Chapter One: 'The Pre-revolutionary South: Foundations of Culture and Community', pp. 5-44.

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To conclude, this dissertation demonstrates the creation and interpretation of new knowledge through original research. It is a timely study, contributing to an expanding body of scholarly research dedicated to loyalist studies. It is distinctive both in approach and in its findings, undertaking a detailed and sustained analysis of a chronically under-utilised body of source material. Through a comparison of three of New York's distinct geographic regions – New York City, Albany County and Tryon County – it has enabled loyalist claimants from each region to describe, in their own words, what it meant to be loyal. As we have seen, this varied considerably according to local circumstance. Thus, this dissertation concludes that in the colony of New York the decision to remain loyal was largely determined by local, rather than ideological, factors.

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