

## **A Brief History of the Units that Took Part in the Raid on Saint Francis in October 1759.**

The idea for this paper came to me while I was watching the *Northwest Passage, Book 1- Rogers' Rangers*, a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer picture. After going North on Lake Champlain to a point where the Rangers had to drag their boats over a hill to a small creek to go around three French war ships, Major Rogers took a closer look at the French war ships and puts Captain Butterfield in charge of the Mohawks in retrieving their belongings. Captain Williams was in overall command until Major Rogers returned. A disagreement broke out between Captain Butterfield and Captain Williams about what the Mohawks could take with them and what they could not take. Captain Butterfield told Captain Williams that the British, Highlanders and the Black Irish were just training with them and had no right to give the Rangers any kind of orders. A Highlander or a Black Irishman called them "Dirty Provencal's", and the fight was on. Having heard that, I wanted to know what units went on that Saint Francis Raid with Major Rogers. I will not be writing anything about the Rangers or their Native American Allies because there are many articles and books already written about them.

I want to clarify the incident above; yes it is fiction. However there are two events that are true. The first one is the moving of the whaleboats over land. This happened June 30, 1756, which is three years and four months before the Saint Francis raid happened in 1759. By Sugarloaf Hill the Rangers landed and hid their whaleboats; next came the hard part.

"It would be no easy task: the six-mile carry over the mountain would first have to be cleared and widened with axe and bush hooks. The rangers pitched with resolve into the foliage, and stopped their chopping and cutting only when they came to the swampy edge of a stream in the valley on the other side, its waters flowed into Wood Creek a half mile away. Retracing their steps to the lake, they retrieved their packs and carried them over the path to a hiding place near the stream. After this they

again backtracked to the lake, where each whaleboat was hefted onto the shoulders of six or seven men, the remainder of Rogers' command acting as guards."<sup>1</sup>

The Rangers went down Wood Creek and into Lake Champlain the night of July 3, 1756. In the preceding days they rowed past Fort Carillon, Crown Point and Fort St. Fredric. Waiting for bigger prizes they attacked two enemy lighters (long, flat-bottomed cargo boats) taking prisoners, scalps and some wine they hide their whale boats and headed for Fort William Henry. The French never did find out how Rogers got those whale boats onto Lake Champlain.<sup>2</sup>

The second true fact is the raid on Saint Francis, which caught my attention. Knowing that the raid part of the movie was true, I wanted to know what units actually went and a little history of each. And that is how this paper got its start.

I came across what I was looking for in Gary Stephen Zaboly's book, *A True Ranger: The Life and Many Wars of Major Robert Rogers*.

"Logic called for a lightning raid carried out by a mobile, all-Ranger detachment. But army politics, always a ball-and-chain for Rogers, dictated otherwise. Although the general was giving him 'the Choice of as many Men' as he wanted for the expedition, they had to be picked 'from the whole Army', not just from his own companies. In the end, no more than 110 white rangers, including Rogers, and twenty-four Stockbridge and Mohegan Indians, would represent his corps. About forty-five other men were drawn from Schuyler's New Jersey Blues, Whiting's 2<sup>nd</sup> Connecticut, Fitch's 4th Connecticut, Ruggles' Massachusetts and Babcock's Rhode Island Regiments. Captain Amos Ogden of the Jersey Blues, a veteran of Oswego in 1756 and other campaigns, was given charge of the Provincial contingent. Twenty-

one volunteers came from five regular Regiments: the 1<sup>st</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, 42<sup>nd</sup>, 77<sup>th</sup>, and the 80<sup>th</sup>. The entire detachment numbered about 200 men, slightly short of Amherst's estimate."<sup>3</sup>

### **British Units**

Numbering British Regiments in the Army did not come about until 1751; normally the Regiment was named after the person raising the unit or the name of the current commanding officer. This trend followed the British to North America, so when a Provincial unit was raised the colonel's name would become the unit's name followed by what Provinces they were raised in.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Foot**

The history of the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Foot can be found in the book *A Register of the Regiments and Corps of the British Army* by Arthur Swinson. He wrote the following, "Raised by a Royal Warrant dated 28 March 1633, when Charles I granted to Sir Charles Hepburn permission to raise in Scotland a Regiment for French service."<sup>4</sup> The Regiments first name was "Le Regiment d'Hebron (Hepburn)", having several colonels between which their names graced the unit in 1684."The title of The Royal Regiment of Foot was conferred by Charles II."<sup>5</sup> Here is a short list of principal campaigns, battles, etc. up to and including The French and Indian War (Seven Years War in Europe):<sup>6</sup>

- 1673 Maestricht
- 1689-97 Flanders
- 1695 Namur
- 1701-14 Flanders & Germany
- 1745 Fontenoy
- 1746 Culloden
- 1757-60 Canada

- 1758 Louisbourg
- 1758 Ticonderoga

They kept the unit name of The 1<sup>st</sup> or Royal Regiment of Foot till the Childers reforms of 1881, at which time they were renamed “The Lothian Regiment (Royal Scots)”. That lasted until 1920 when they were renamed “The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)”.<sup>7</sup> “In 1983, the Regiment celebrated its 350<sup>th</sup> year Anniversary.”<sup>8</sup>

### **27<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot “Inniskilling”**

“In 1688 the inhabitants of Enniskillen took up arms in defence of their town against the threat of attack by the forces of James II. The troops so raised, The Inniskillingers, Foot and Dragoons.”<sup>9</sup> In 1689 “The Inniskilling Regiment” was also known as Tiffin’s Regiment of Foot. The regiments name would change when a new Colonel took command. Here is the list of principal campaigns, battle, etc. up to and including The French and Indian War (Seven Years War in Europe):<sup>10</sup>

- 1690 Boyne
- 1691 Aughrim
- 1695 Namur
- 1715 Jacobite Rising
- 1739 Porto Bello
- 1745 Jacobite Rising
- 1756-60 Canada
- 1758 Ticonderoga

“In 1751 ‘The Inniskilling Regiment’ was to become the “Twenty-seventh Regiment”, but were, however, invariably referred to as the “Twenty-seventh Inniskillings” even in official correspondence.”<sup>11</sup>

The Childers reform of 1881, at which time they were renamed to “1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers.”<sup>12</sup> The chapter of the regiment’s separate history ended and a new one opened, “on 1 July 1968, on the anniversary of their first becoming The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. The regiment joined the remaining regiments of The North Irish Brigade to become The Royal Irish Rangers (27<sup>th</sup> Inniskilling), 83<sup>rd</sup> and 87<sup>th</sup>).”<sup>13</sup>

### **42<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of Foot “Black Watch”**

“The 42<sup>nd</sup> (Royal Highland-Black Watch), known as the oldest Highland Regiment in the British Army rose circa 1725 from six Independent companies of Highlanders.”<sup>14</sup> Here are the titles that this unit has had; “1725-39 Independent Companies -Am Freiceadan Dubh –Gaelic for “The Black Watch”, 1739-51 The Highland Regiment of Foot; in 1751 they finally got the unit number: The 42<sup>nd</sup> Foot.<sup>15</sup> With the Childers reform of 1881 the 42<sup>nd</sup> was changed to “The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) after being linked to the 73<sup>rd</sup> (Perthshire) Regiment of Foot,<sup>16</sup> until 2006 when it became a battalion of the Royal Regiment of Scotland.”<sup>17</sup> The term “Ladies from Hell” did not come along until World War I and that by the Germans<sup>18</sup>. French and Indian War re-enactors using that term should understand that it is not correct for the time period.

Here is a list of principal campaigns, battles, etc. up to and including The French and Indian War (Seven Years War in Europe):<sup>19</sup>

- 1743-7 Flanders
- 1745 Fontenoy
- 1745 Jacobite Rising
- 1757-60 Canada
- 1758 Ticonderoga
- 1759 Guadaloupe

- 1762 Martinique and Havannah
- 1763-4 North America

### **77<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot**

The 77<sup>th</sup> (Montgomerie Highlanders) Regiment was formed in 1757 under its Lieutenant-Colonel, The Honorable Archibald Montgomerie (later 11<sup>th</sup> Earl of Eglinton).<sup>20</sup> The regiment was sent to North America in mid-1757, where they landed at Charles Town, South Carolina. The next year the regiment was assigned to General John Forbes' expedition to take Fort Duquesne (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), and was present in its capture.<sup>21</sup> In 1759, they were part of Amherst's army that took Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point. The following year Lieutenant-Colonel Montgomerie was in command of some of his men from the 77<sup>th</sup> as well as soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Royals and a strong detachment of Provincials,<sup>22</sup> when they were sent to South Carolina against the Cherokees. "After destroying the Lower Towns and the main Middle Town of Estatoe, the soldiers (because of the lateness of the season) had orders to return to New York City as soon as possible by General Amherst. Consequently they went no farther into Cherokee territory."<sup>23</sup>

Returning too late to help in the final battles to take New France -the Regiment spent the winter in New York. In 1761 six companies of the 77<sup>th</sup> were in an expedition against Dominique, which in short order the governor surrendered the Island. In 1762 six companies of the 77<sup>th</sup> were sent as part of an expedition against Martinique and Havannah, which were taken and the Regiment returned to New York by the end of October. The two remaining companies of the 77<sup>th</sup> were sent by General Amherst to retake St. John's Newfoundland, which they did. The last action by the 77<sup>th</sup> was when a detachment accompanied Colonel Bouquet's relief party to Fort Pitt during "Pontiac's Rebellion". With the conclusion of hostilities the Regiment was disbanded. Soldiers deciding either to return home or stay on in North America.<sup>24</sup> Some, like Robert Kirkwood, transferred to the 42<sup>nd</sup>.<sup>25</sup>

## **80<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot**

The 80<sup>th</sup> (Light-armed) Regiment of Foot was created in 1758 by Colonel Thomas Gage<sup>26</sup> which was also known as Gage's Light Infantry. They were in theory to replace Rogers' Rangers and other North American Ranger units. It was viewed by the British government that the Ranger units of North America were unreliable and ill-disciplined, basically the British military wanted to replace the Rangers with less expensive and more disciplined troops. Here are some of the battles that the 80<sup>th</sup> were in:<sup>27</sup>

- 1758 Ticonderoga
- 1758 old Fort Anne
- 1759 Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point
- 1760 La Gallette, Fort Levis and Montreal
- 1763 Battle of Bloody Run and Devil's Hole Massacre

In 1764 at the end of Pontiac's Rebellion, the unit was disbanded.

## **New Jersey Provincials "Jersey Blues"**

### **"Schuyler's New Jersey Blues"**

Schuyler's "New Jersey Blues", "started out as a militia unit organized at Piscataway and Woodbridge, New Jersey in 1673 'to repel foreign Indians who come down from the upper Pennsylvania and western New York (in the summer) to our shores and fill (themselves) with fishes and clams and on the way back make a general nuisance of themselves by burning hay stacks, corn fodder and even barns."<sup>28</sup> The militia's did not participate in King William's War (1689-1697), however in 1709 they assembled at Albany for a proposed, then abandoned, Canadian invasion of 1710 during Queen Ann's War (1703-1713). In 1740, 300 New Jersey volunteers joined an expedition to attack Cartagena,

Columbia during “The War of Jenkin’s Ear (1739-1744).”<sup>29</sup> Around 1744 the militia unit was becoming known as the Jersey Blues because of their regimental coat, “dark blue, unlaced highland-style coat with pewter buttons and unlaced buttonholes, its cuffs were red (slashed in the British style) with white buttons.”<sup>30</sup>

The Jersey Blues were called up for King George’s War (1744-1748), where Peter Schuyler became their Colonel for the first time,<sup>31</sup> in which they saw no major action. It was not until the French and Indian War (1754-1763) that the Jersey Blues saw significant action. Here again Peter Schuyler was appointed to command of the Jersey forces.<sup>32</sup> He and part of the Jersey Blues were captured at Oswego in 1756.<sup>33</sup> Colonel Schuyler was a prisoner of the French until 1758, when a prisoner exchange released the colonel and 114 other people.<sup>34</sup>

While Colonel Schuyler was imprisoned in Canada, the units of the Jersey Blues that were not captured did see considerable combat; “a unit was wiped out at Sabbath Day Point on Lake George in 1757, another 300 men were at the fall of Fort William Henry in 1757 some being massacred by the Indians.”<sup>35</sup> The Jersey Blues were also at the ill-fated attack in 1758 on Fort Carillon, but returned in 1759 with General Jeffrey Amherst to take the fort. They were at the fall of Montreal and Canada itself.<sup>36</sup>

Here is a list of principal campaigns, battles, etc. up to and including The French and Indian War.<sup>37, 38</sup>

- Cartagena, Columbia 1740
- Fort George, Fort Oswego 1756
- Sabbath Day Point, Fort William Henry 1757
- Fort Carillon(Fort Ticonderoga) 1758
- Fort Carillon(Fort Ticonderoga) 1759
- Montreal 1760



The Jersey Blues went on to fight in the American Revolution, War of 1812, the Civil War, The Spanish-American War, First and Second World Wars, Iraq and Afghanistan.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Connecticut Provincials**

### **“Whiting’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Connecticut”**

“An October, 1739 Act that stated in part: ... for the better regulating the militia of this Colony (Connecticut), and putting it in a more ready posture for the Defense of the Same...all military companies in this Colony shall be formed into Regiments...”<sup>39</sup>“The 2<sup>nd</sup> Connecticut was raised in 1739 (New Haven, Milford, Branford, Derby), and the 4<sup>th</sup> Connecticut was also raised in 1739 (Fairfield, Stratford, Danbury, Newtown).”<sup>40</sup>

For the 2<sup>nd</sup> Connecticut at the beginning of the French and Indian war, Lieutenant Colonel Nathan Whiting was put in charge. “Their first recorded battle was September 8, 1755 when Whiting’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Connecticut and Colonel William’s Massachusetts Regiment were attacked between Fort Edward and Sir William Johnson’s camp at Lake George (the “Bloody Morning Scout”). Lieutenant- Colonel Whiting led the survivors back to Lake George and to Sir William Johnson’s camp. They repulsed the French under Baron Dieskau and their Indian allies when they lay siege to Johnson’s defenses.<sup>41</sup> In 1756 Whiting was promoted to full Colonel in the Connecticut militia, and in 1757 his Regiment was at Fort Number 4 on the Connecticut River in New Hampshire.”<sup>42</sup>

Here is a list of principal campaigns, and battles during The French and Indian War.<sup>43</sup>

- Bloody Morning Scout, Fort William Henry 1755
- Fort Carillon(Fort Ticonderoga) 1758
- Fort Carillon(Fort Ticonderoga) 1759
- Montreal 1760

- Havana, Cuba 1762

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Provincials**

##### **“Fitch’s 4<sup>th</sup> Connecticut”**

The history of the 4<sup>th</sup> Connecticut is sketchy at best; their first Colonel was John Read in 1758.<sup>44</sup> Colonel Eleazer Fitch was the 4<sup>th</sup>'s commander from 1759 to 1760.<sup>45</sup> After the fall of French Canada; Connecticut raised only two regiments per year until 1762. With the end of The French and Indian there was no need to raise regiments to fight until the American Revolution.

Here is a list of principal campaigns and battles during The French and Indian War.<sup>46</sup>

- Fort Carillon(Fort Ticonderoga) 1758
- Fort Carillon(Fort Ticonderoga) 1759
- Montreal 1760

#### **Massachusetts Provincials**

##### **“Ruggles’ Massachusetts”**

“Timothy Ruggles’ Massachusetts Regiment was raised in 1755 to be part of Sir William Johnson’s expedition to take Crown Point. Col. Timothy Ruggles was second in command and unfortunately, the campaign was suspended. The Regiment was also part of the failed attempt to relieve Fort William Henry in 1757.”<sup>47</sup> “In 1758 Ruggles was subsequently named Brigadier General in charge of Provincial forces from Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In 1759, Brigadier General Ruggles was second in command to General Amherst when the British and Provincials took Fort Ticonderoga.”<sup>48</sup> Ruggles’ Massachusetts Regiment continued to be raised until 1762, when most of the major battles were done

in North America. Most Provincial Regiments were raised for one campaign, then disbanded and raised again the next year.

Here is a list of principal campaigns, battles during The French and Indian War.<sup>49</sup>

- Bloody Morning Scout, Fort William Henry 1755
- Fort Carillon (Fort Ticonderoga) 1758
- Fort Carillon (Fort Ticonderoga) 1759
- Montreal 1760

### **Rhode Island Provincials**

#### **“Babcock’s Rhode Island Regiment”**

Henry Babcock’s Rhode Island Regiment, very little in the way of records about Babcock or the regiment. Babcock started out as a captain in 1755 under Sir William Johnson; promoted to major 1756-58. Henry Babcock became colonel of the Rhode Island Regiment before taking Fort Ticonderoga in 1759.<sup>50</sup> He stayed with the Regiment until it was dissolved at the end of the French and Indian war.

Here is a list of principal campaigns, battles during The French and Indian War.<sup>51</sup>

- Fort William Henry 1755
- Fort Carillon (Fort Ticonderoga) 1758
- Fort Carillon (Fort Ticonderoga) 1759
- Montreal 1760
- Havana, Cuba 1762

In doing the research for this paper, it seems that the British kept far better records than the Americans or provincials did. Even in the beginning I stated that this would be a "Short History of the Units that took Part in the Saint Francis Raid," but how little I would find on some of the North American units surprised me. The reason for this is that the Provincial units were only for one campaign season at a time. However, I hope that I have given you enough history on each of these military units so that, if you choose to do further research on your own, the work cited pages in the back should be able to get you to the next level of research.

For those who wish to do further research on any of the British units, there is a website that leads me to the museum's website of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, 42<sup>nd</sup>, 77<sup>th</sup> and newer 80<sup>th</sup> British units. The website address is; [www.armymuseums.org.uk](http://www.armymuseums.org.uk). Other helpful websites are [www.electricscotland.com](http://www.electricscotland.com), [www.allempires.com](http://www.allempires.com) and yes even [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Regiments\\_of\\_Foot](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Regiments_of_Foot). For further reading on the subject the books that may give you the most help are; *A Register of the Regiments and Corps of the British Army* by Arthur Swinson and *The Irish Regiments 1683-1999, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* by R. G. Harris.

## Footnotes

1. Zaboly (2004) p.132
2. Zaboly (2004) p.133
3. Zabloy (2004) p. 270-271
4. Swinson (1972) p.73
5. [theroyalscots.co.uk](http://theroyalscots.co.uk)
6. Swinson (1972) p.73
7. Swinson (1972) p.73
8. [theroyalscots.co.uk](http://theroyalscots.co.uk)
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10. Swinson (1972) p.124
11. [Inniskillingsmuseum.co.uk](http://Inniskillingsmuseum.co.uk)
12. Swinson (1972) p.124
13. Harris (1999) p.134
14. Swinson (1972) p.139
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17. [theblackwatch.co.uk](http://theblackwatch.co.uk)
18. [allempires.com](http://allempires.com)
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20. Annand (1961) p.37
21. McCulloch (2006)
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26. Alden (1948) p.48
27. [Wikipedia.org/wiki/80<sup>th</sup>\\_Regiment\\_of\\_Light-Armed\\_Foot](http://Wikipedia.org/wiki/80th_Regiment_of_Light-Armed_Foot)
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