

James Ricketts, serving in his regiment in Antigua, goes to Scotland to wed. He is caught up in Jacobite plot and serves in the defense of Savannah, before going to London where former foes aid his return home.

**A Royal American:
A New Jersey Officer in the King's Service during the Revolution**
By John Frederick

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“A splendid book, historically accurate,
easy to read and a gripping story.
Highly recommended.”

-Lieutenant General Sir Christopher Wallace KBE DL

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Chapter 1

When, in April 1776, James Ricketts took the letter which Captain Hutchins, without comment, handed him, he did not realize what a contrast it would be from the other one received earlier the same day. That first letter, from his fiancée Sarah, so full of love and hope, was as he had expected it would be. She'd had her talk with her father, and apart from general misgivings about her wedding a King's officer, it had gone well enough. As a leading Whig rebel, Peter Van Brugh Livingston might well have objected strenuously but for Sarah's older sister Mary also being married to an officer in James's regiment. Her father had even suggested writing to Mary. His thought was that Mary corresponded often with Montgomerie cousins in Scotland and perhaps they would agree to allowing the wedding to be at Eglinton in Ayrshire.

Rocking gently on the porch of their quarters, a gesture of relaxation which thinly disguised James's nervousness – he had made an appointment to see his senior officer, Major Prevost - James did the only thing he could think of doing. He confided his predicament to his boyhood friend and fellow officer, Jacob Hart. The gentle Caribbean breeze, the warm sun, the exotic noises of the birds all implied a peacefulness that belied the tempest within him.

"These two letters could not be more different from each other," James blurted out.

Jacob replied vaguely, "The two letters?"

James, a lieutenant in the 2nd Battalion 60th Foot, British Army, eyed his fellow New Jersey-man, an ensign in his company, with pique. "Have you been listening to a word I have said?"

His friend answered hotly, "Of course I have, but when you finish telling me about the second letter, I have something pretty distressing to bother you with. Never mind. You tell me about the second letter, first."

James whipped the letter from his pocket as if it were hot coals, passing it to Jacob who read it:

Why did it have to be so difficult to arrange a wedding back in New Jersey? grumbled James silently. Of course the answer was

obvious. What started as a skirmish over taxation had now degenerated into armed conflict in Boston and even beyond. Returning to the Province of New Jersey could prove hazardous. But he was not awaiting an interview with the battalion commander because of a letter from Sarah. The other letter breathed its own sort of fire – different from that of his fiancée. He took it from his pocket yet again, as if in hopes the impact might be softened. It read:

February the fifth, 1776

Dear James,

You will know that since you are engaged to marry my niece Sarah, I have your interest at heart and hope you will not object to my writing in an avuncular capacity, remembering that your own father is no longer alive and is, unhappily, not able to counsel you.

You must be aware of the struggle under way in which our own countrymen are determined to throw off the shackles of arbitrary domination and, as I believe they will soon openly declare, settle firmly the issue of their place amongst the independent nations of mankind. Indeed, your step-father who is to become your father-in-law as well, has been president of New York's Provincial Congress and his brother Philip is a delegate to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. I may also mention your fiancée's uncle William Alexander, who calls himself the earl of Stirling, a most prominent Whig, amongst the eminent members of your family, now a general officer in our fledgling army. Such persons would be saddened if you were to fail to respond to your duty and perchance even place in jeopardy your rights to enjoy property and an inheritance in America.

Holding office in the military remnant of the discredited regime, you are in a position to aid your compatriots in their just strife. I trust that you will remain sensible of your obligations not only to your native province of New Jersey but also to your kinsfolk. Should you warm to the call of duty in the manner I hope of you, you may discover that inclination to me by discreetly

*notifying the same to Mr Green at the Roundhead at
Kingston in the island of Jamaica.*

*I remain your Concerned and
Obedient Servant*

William Livingston

*Delegate from New Jersey to the
Continental Congress*

"I see what you mean," Jacob said, handing it back. "I know he's a big name in Sarah's mighty clan."

"What is worse," James went on, "is that he wants me to see some man in Kingston. I'm supposed to turn my coat and desert. Or perhaps even spy!"

Jacob felt his own moment had come. "I've had a similar letter."

"Not from William Livingston, surely!"

"No, no. From my neighbour Matthias Ogden. He returned from the expedition to Quebec and will almost certainly be offered a command in the Continental Army. Of course Livingston and Matthias know each other – they're both from Essex County - but there's no reason to think they are together in this. But my friend is determined that I shall join him in defence of our rights."

"Look here," said James, "we both have leave coming up – why not come with me to meet this fellow mentioned in the letter? I will have to tell the major what's afoot but since we both have leave coming, you could accompany me without my mentioning your feelings to Major Prevost. How you feel is your business but I hope you'll think twice before charging off in a direction you may come to regret."

"Does it not seem ironic to you – here we are, both trying to work out what is our duty, when our duty to the King seems a drab affair at best? Talk about being on the King's service, you'd imagine we had something important to do, would you not?"

Jacob smiled. "From your rueful look, I take it you are not completely consumed by the glory of your calling?"

"Glory, is it? Well, I suppose November is as good a time for wood cutting as any. Certainly there's not much else to do on this god-forsaken tropical paradise we call St Vincent," James observed.

"Why is it called St Vincent?" queried Jacob.

James could not resist exhibiting his knowledge and did not hesitate. "It was discovered by Columbus on St Vincent's Day."

Jacob, in turn, could not resist pushing the question. "But why pay attention to St Vincent? What has he got to do with us, who've always owned the island, since Europeans came, that is?"

"We know he was a fourth-century martyr of Spain," added James pompously. "I don't suppose he has much to do with us though – unless he was martyred for not cutting enough wood to please Caesar."

Jacob was diverted by the subject of wood-cutting. "I realize we need wood for housing troops but somehow I think it is mainly done to fight the infection of *ennui*," he said, keeping his end up as a sophisticate. "No doubt it's a better alternative than revelling in a rummy stupor like drunken sots. We're supposed to have two gills of rum a day but our worthy collection of soldiers from America, English gaols and German middens are resourceful at supplementing the diet. It's even more alluring than catching the pox from those mangy ladies in Kingstown."

James, safe in Sarah's love, felt himself above commenting: "I wouldn't know as much as you about that." Returning to the subject of boredom, he remarked, "Good God, they even have a Wood Call beat on the drum. This business of cutting wood is subtler than we think. Our serjeants invent architectural uses for the wood and get subalterns to think it was their own idea. Corporals consider themselves master carpenters and joiners – take Corporal Smith from Rahway, he's as ardent a carver of wood figures as any sailor is of scrimshaw."

Waiting for his interview with the battalion commander, he had time to look over what had led to his present situation. It all changed in 1771 when his widowed mother married Peter Van Brugh Livingston. He brought with him a large family including his seventeen-year-old daughter Sarah. Above all, Sarah. He also brought with him the widely-respected clout of the much larger Livingston clan, active in political and economic affairs of the provinces of New York and New Jersey. What began as a reserved acquaintanceship between James and Sarah suddenly changed. James was smitten.

His attachment to the gorgeous Sarah forced him to look hard at himself and his life. Sarah's discomfiting detachment about her

family's privileged style of life enabled her to see both families from the outside, not just as an accepting insider. To James that was something new and it evoked his wonder.

Some weeks after her father's marriage to James's mother, she put her opinions to James. "What have we in our lives which hasn't been handed to us? 'Born with a silver spoon in our mouths,' do they not say? Look at the comforts we enjoy, the servants we take for granted, even the money coming in from the Jamaica plantation your family own, eked out of the sugar crop by all those poor black people who have to do it whether they would or no!" Over his mild remonstrances, she went on: "But what have we done, ourselves, to make a mark, or even to justify our smug comforts?"

Once again the idea of duty – duty to make a contribution – reared its head. Disinclined to think of fulfilling duty by running the plantation, his father's short military career offered a more attractive pattern for doing his duty.

Particularly upsetting about this elegant girl was – he knew she was right. His response disclosed another characteristic of life so far absent – the sense of adventure, even risk. He was preparing to matriculate at King's College, New York. His education, begun by the crabby family tutor, Mr Craddock, was due for completion in the city. How sensible – but not adventurous, not exciting and scarcely risky.

When he told her these feelings, she was surprised to find the two strains so clearly there: the sense of duty and the yearning for adventure. It appealed to her and she looked at him with a new interest. It also gave her a touch of apprehension despite all her bold talk. Was she falling too readily into an emotional connection? Was she ready to assume that kind of responsibility?

James could recall his idea of duty as it had unfolded in a conversation with his revered and bigoted tutor. Mr Craddock said to him: "Well, young sir, have you notions what you'd like to do in the future?"

Perhaps he had thought James would enter the ministry. Not that such a choice would have entirely pleased the Congregationalist Connecticut savant – he was sure his charge would not choose to be a proper minister but one of those papistical, dressing-up clergymen of the Church of England, thoroughly Anglican like the rest of

the Ricketts family. Had they not helped found St John's in Elizabethtown and Christ Church in Brunswick? Still, he could do worse. They might be secretive papists but they weren't out-and-out ones – yet.

Craddock never seriously entertained the thought that James might want to help run the family plantation. True, most of their income came from the sugar crop. James's elder brother John was keen on doing just that. But the boys were unlike each other and James had a nagging distaste for the idea of running a plantation. He could not have organized such thoughts coherently, but it was not for him. He did, however, have an alternative path in mind.

"Oh, no, sir" James addressed his tutor, "I'm sure 'tis a good thing to take Holy Orders but I want to be an officer. You know, sir, in a red coat, like those who used to come," – he managed to swallow the lump in his throat – "when Polly was alive." Pretty Polly they'd called his sister who was admired by an unending delegation of army officer admirers out of the New York garrison - before she died at sixteen. When James matriculated at King's College, Mr Craddock no doubt had thought: a damned English-church hothouse, not some sensible place like Queen's College in Brunswick, founded by the Congregationalists' sister church, the Presbyterians.

He also remembered Mr Craddock's words: "If you put on a red coat and are a proper King's man, what happens if our ties to England diminish? There are those who think that's going to happen. If it comes to enforcing the King's law against our people, what would you think about that?" the tutor asked, with the Stamp Act in mind.

James recalled the time when Mr Craddock learned he'd chosen the 60th or Royal American Regiment of Foot. Mr Craddock had been quite definite about that too. "Now there's a strange corps, I must say. Look here, it's first officers were Swiss and German. Now they're in the West Indies – what a hellhole! It's not that they're fanned by slaves on a plantation, the way your brother John probably is, slumped in the arms of luxury, ordering poor blacks around and fathering numerous half-breeds."

As far as blacks were concerned, James had come to look with pride on the honesty his father had shown. The records of St John's Church, Elizabethtown, showed the baptism in 1750 of "a negro

child of Col. Ricketts", Francis, and the colonel's will of ten years later directed that "my Child Interr'd in Elizabeth Town be put in the same Decent Mahogenny Coffin with me". James thought Sarah would appreciate that.

James's ideas about combining duty and adventure matured. Sarah, to her surprise, did not put him down as a spoiled brat but increasingly sympathized and connived at his ambitions. They spent much time together during his college vacations. Nor were their relations entirely cerebral – particularly on one occasion in a barn when they had rough-housed themselves into an intimate embrace. It proved to be so intimate and startling – something their upbringing had not prepared them for – that they quickly came to a mutual, fully-clothed climax. In the afterglow of their mutual spending, they declared their love. Since they had no words to speak of what led to these declarations, they kept it a secret to be shared, mutely, by them alone.

For all the pleasure of Sarah's love, James was determined to pursue adventure as well as duty. Sarah would have it no other way, either. Before graduating from college, James pressed his mother to buy him a commission. She and her new husband had become aware of the attraction between the two and thought a time apart might be a good idea. So, on the sixth of January 1773, he was gazetted an ensign in the 2nd Battalion 60th (Royal American) Regiment of Foot, "vice Uniacke" – James wondered what had happened to Mr Uniacke - then in the West Indies. By then he knew enough about military and legal language to know that "vice" did not betoken some moral lapse by Mr Uniacke, but that he was appointed in the place of Uniacke. With a commitment made to duty as a soldier, another aspect of duty came to the fore and he reconsidered finishing at college, delaying his departure to Antigua until after his graduation. For whatever reason, his battalion seemed content to await his arrival, listing him continually in the muster rolls as "not yet joined".

His appointment with Major Prevost was at ten o'clock. James entered the officers' mess with an hour to spare. He stretched out in a wicker chair, comfortable in the atmosphere of the officers' mess. Differences in rank were downplayed with the officers encouraged

by the 60th's colonel in chief, Jeffery Amherst, to foster comradeship and avoid boredom through games like billiards.

The clock chimed ten but the door of the major's office remained closed. At this moment, a welcome interruption occurred; someone arrived who could talk of life beyond the island – Captain Brehm.

“This is a pleasure, sir!” James said to Diedrick Brehm, maintaining the tradition of banal patter considered *de rigueur* in the mess. Captain Brehm was a Hanoverian who had thrown his lot in with the British years ago – part of that close relationship between Hanover and London built upon having a German King of England, and a German Queen too. “Oh, *ja*, not too wretched, I reckon. But I am off to London early next year, to recruit more *Deutscher-und-Schweitzer* as vee are the only corps that hass that privilege.”

As Brehm had business elsewhere, the encounter was short-lived. Brehm had been captain-lieutenant of the battalion – a peculiar post. Since the Colonel's company of a battalion had to be led by someone other than the Colonel, who was usually a general far off elsewhere, the actual commander was styled “captain-lieutenant”, ranking as the junior captain of the battalion. James knew, however, that being the Colonel's company, its commander would be picked by the Colonel as someone of unusual competence. At that time, “foreign” officers could advance freely in the 60th, which became a kind of foreign legion in the British regular army.

Chapter 22

Between July and September 1779, James had less and less time for pursuits of his own. For just over a year, the French had been allies of the rebels and it was beginning to make a difference. Savannah was now threatened by attack and all efforts were being directed under General Prevost to prepare a defence.

Prevost with his engineer, a New Jersey man named Moncrieff, decided on plans to fortify Savannah. They erected fortifications swinging in an arc a mile-and-a-half southwards from the docks, outside the town. On the west, in front of the Yamacraw Swamp, were to be guns manned by sailors backed up by the frigate *Germain* in the harbour. The other end of the arc was to be in front of Wright's Plantation to the east. Redoubts were built along the arc. One of these was at Spring Hill at the Ebenezer road junction and at first was manned by provincials. Later, the 60th's three grenadier companies, including James, replaced them, with a contingent of marines helping.

"That seems just the place an enemy would want to come up," mused Prevost. "It is a broad bit of flatland over which regular troops would choose to act."

"Then, sir, we'll need to cover the two furlongs between the sailors' battery and Spring Hill, say two redoubts and another battery."

"That will take up most of my artillery," observed Prevost sardonically. "I have no more than ten heavy pieces in all."

At the end of their planning conference, the general referred to the arrival of the governor, returning after his initial flight two years earlier: "Sir James Wright arrived from England on Tuesday. I must summon a council of war, to include the governor, 'ere we are committed to such a plan."

In two days the governor had made his weight felt. Among high-ranking officers in Savannah, two schools of thought emerged: one in favour of defending Savannah, the other favouring an extended foray into the backcountry to arm loyal subjects. Sir James cast the deciding vote.

“Gentlemen, there are four reasons why I vote the way I do. First, we cannot abandon the many loyalists in this town to who knows what retribution. Secondly, if we give up Savannah, few people will risk joining us openly. Thirdly, to go galloping off on a jaunt into the backcountry, far from the navy, is to encourage defeat – Burgoyne taught us that. Fourthly, we do not know what the French are doing. D’Estaing may come our way and cut us off in the interior. We should be in a pitiable plight. I vote: we stay and fight.” The die was cast.

Another conference important to the fate of Savannah took place just after the arrival of the French. Major General Benjamin Lincoln, commanding in Charleston, Colonel Lachmer McIntosh, uncle of the McIntosh who had been at Sunbury, Brigadier General William Moultrie, Lieutenant Colonel John Laurens, Brigadier General Isaac Huger and Colonel Francis Marion met at noon prior to their meeting the French admiral who, having landed his brigade at Beaulieu south of Savannah, was planning for the assault.

These six rebels knew each other well. None of them except Lincoln knew the tall, dark and gaunt stranger in civilian clothes who was introduced by General Lincoln. The civilian was newly arrived from London and, the way Lincoln talked of him, must be a rare one – a successful undercover agent. And an English gentleman, from the sound of his voice. They noted a certain arrogance. He did not demur at any of the extravagant attributes Lincoln attached to him. His name, Lincoln announced, as if they ought to have heard it before, was Cartwright.

When Lincoln disclosed that Cartwright would be invaluable since he had an agent behind enemy lines inside the city, curiosity was aroused, to be dampened by Cartwright’s words: “Let me amend that, General. I *had* an agent but after I got in touch with, er...him” changing the gender of the spy, thinking it would go down better, “as I say, after getting in touch to alert him to his moment of destiny, he was seized by the British. Why, I am not sure. We are always vulnerable to the wiles of our enemies. ‘The wicked deviseth mischief upon his bed’,” he interjected – somewhat irrelevantly, they felt. “He is locked up where I cannot reach him. He did manage, however, to get a message out to me, just before being appre-

hended, saying that the British defences at Spring Hill were very weak despite the carefully-engineered attempt to make them look otherwise.

“Further than that, I have no information. It would be useful, though, if you could let me be a fly on the wall at your forthcoming conference with the French, for my own edification if not for your’s.”

“Well, gentlemen, I think we’d better concert ourselves before we talk to the French. So far, they’ve not been much help.”

“That’s putting it mildly,” said Laurens.

Lincoln continued: “I have to agree with you there. Their fleet left Toulon in April last year but was so slow – eighty-four days, was it? – that they missed bottling up the enemy fleet in Chesapeake Bay. Then they let down General Washington in his hopes of taking New York. Then they smeared their reputation by letting us down at Newport. As if that wasn’t bad enough, they put forward a fatuous and irrelevant plan for attacking Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and when that – thank the Lord – was dropped, they weighed anchor for the Caribbean, leaving us in the lurch.”

Moultrie had noticed Cartwright’s habit of quoting from the psalms and was not to be outdone: “Like the daughters of Zion ‘they walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go,’ – Isaiah three,” he said, glaring at the spy.

Laurens added: “Their Admiral d’Estaing said he’d return last May but he didn’t. Now, finally, he’s here.”

“Well anyway, they’ve now come ashore with a brigade under a sort of Irishman in their service,” said Lincoln, referring to the *Brigade Dillon*, then fourteen miles south of Savannah.

“I was curious to note,” said Moultrie, “that one of his four regiments is the *Royal Roussillon* which surrendered at Quebec twenty years ago – I wonder what d’Estaing thinks of that?” The others chuckled.

By the way, how many of you can speak French?” Lincoln asked. McIntosh, with Scottish reverence for learning behind him and easy familiarity with Georgia society – he was reckoned the handsomest man in the province – put up his hand confidently. Moultrie, Laurens and Huger also followed suit, less confidently.

Marion, whom the others thought illiterate, shook his head: “Not a word of the Frenchie tongue do I speak, Benjamin,” thereby indi-

cating at one stroke that he was uneducated but was still completely comfortable in the society of generals, anyway. They would discover that, uneducated he might be, but they had a genius at guerrilla warfare on their hands. Lincoln, wishing no embarrassment among his staff, added: "My French is pretty schoolboy-like; I doubt if I can follow what they say."

Marion interjected: "Have you heard the frog...er, French sent Prevost a surrender demand?"

"What, all on their own?" exclaimed McIntosh.

"I fear so," admitted Lincoln.

"And what's that I hear about them telling our boys to stay clear of their camp – that they ain't real soldiers and must stay out of the way?" added Huger.

Lincoln's brow clouded. "I fear we'll have to put up with more of their arrogance for the sake of this alliance, *mes amis*."

"Well, if we can get them varmints to attack right away, it might just be worth it, Monseers," said Marion archly.

Lincoln added: "I agree with you, *messieurs*, and he must be pressed to do so. Perhaps, Lachmer, you could make a point of it? Till this afternoon then." They took their leave.

At three, they entered a grandiose, spanking-clean white tent, more like a marquee in their eyes. White-coated sentries stood outside and presented arms as they entered. They found a cloth-covered table behind which sat Charles Hector Théodat, *Comte d'Estaing, Amiral-général* of His Most Christian Majesty's service, fifty years old, looking more like a soldier than a seaman. Beside him were two aides, *Capitaine de vaisseau* Armand Duprés and *Lieutenant* Gagnier-Croisé; all rose on the entrance of the Americans. "*Messieurs, je vous prie de m'accorder l'honneur de vous présenter mes aides-de-camp...*" d'Estaing said, naming them.

The Americans stumbled a bit over acknowledging these aides-de-camp, Marion even reproducing his solecism *Monseer* to the hidden embarrassment of his colleagues. Cartwright, who had been viewed askance since he entered the tent – they knew not who he was nor why a civilian should be there anyway – by contrast, bowed deeply. His colleagues had not done that and some felt a degree of distaste over such exotic extravagance. He added to the rebels' dis-

composure by saying, in rapid French: *Enchanté, messieurs, de faire votre connaissance. J'étais donné le grand plaisir de comprendre le grandeur fin des forces armées de Sa Plus Chrétienne Majesté il y a plusieurs années quand je voyage en votre bel pays. Enchanté, absolument enchanté.* ("Delighted, gentlemen, to make your acquaintance. I was given the great pleasure of understanding the artful grandeur of His Most Christian Majesty's armed forces several years ago upon travelling in your beautiful country. Delighted, absolutely delighted.")

To give him his due, d'Estaing sized him up for a vain fellow and immediately switched to impeccable English – better English than most of his American allies, in fact, though he noted that Laurens, the diplomat's son, having been educated in England, was better at it.

After a few well-meant remarks by the Americans, the admiral looked at Huger, saying: "Do I perceive from your name, General, that you are of French blood?"

Huger smiled. "Well, sir, my name, which in this country is pronounced 'YOU-gee' is from Huguenot stock."

"Yes, I see," said d'Estaing drawling his inquiry to an end. A practising catholic, he had no wish to explore heretical origins further.

Laurens then began to urge d'Estaing on the need for an immediate attack, beating McIntosh to the punch.

"But, alas, Colonel, I'm afraid that is out of the question. My compatriots have been fighting the English for a long time – much longer than you have, I dare say – and we would not dream of an assault without regular approaches, parallel lines and all the apparatus so familiar to professional engineers...and soldiers." At that *mot juste* his aides nodded like approving schoolmasters confirming the head's pronouncement. Further discussion was useless, clearly.

One of the American officers lifted his eyebrows.

Cartwright was moved to utter: "Yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off."

The admiral thought to himself, *mon dieu*, what have we here? An Huguenot, and an Anglo-saxon Jansenist!

The Americans had the impression they were dealing with a man of culture and mediocrity. They noted that, whatever his limitations, he harboured a hatred of England at odds with his urbanity. It

was a loathing exceeding anything that they ever felt. It embarrassed them.

D'Estaing went on to say that on the twenty-third, he would begin digging parallel trenches north of the French camp which, by then, would have moved to a point about two miles south of the town. He planned to open a bombardment some ten days after that. He proposed meeting on the eighth of October to agree final plans. The Americans said nothing, looked at each other, got up and left. Departing, one of them muttered "just like that, eh?"

For his part, when they had left, d'Estaing turned to his aides, reverting to French: "So untutored, so inexperienced, these colonials. And do you realize that half of the English army is made up of colonials too, who will be as naive as their enemies, our comrades-in-arms? Mind you, gentlemen, much as I despise the English bandits who stole Canada from us, I sometimes wonder what we think we are doing helping English subjects to renounce their lawful sovereign. How can we do that without encouraging the same ideas in French heads? We do well to keep this rabble out of our camp. We have to discourage any contagion."

In the British camp, Colonel Maitland provided an example of courage and resourcefulness. Ordered back from Port Royal Island on the twelfth, he extricated his eight hundred men by land just before the first of Lincoln's troops left the city toward their rendezvous with d'Estaing. Maitland had no help from the navy in the face of a sizeable French fleet, so his withdrawal had to be by land. Not only did he manage to bring out his men, avoiding all unfriendly patrols, sloshing through unhealthy swamps, but he fought the ague fits he had contracted and kept his head clear enough to guide them despite his overwhelming fever. On the sixteenth, as the rebels surrounded the town and reached out to the French, he made it into town. That was the very day d'Estaing sent his surrender demand to Prevost that the British – the English he always called them – surrender to the arms of the King of France - no mention of the Americans. Prevost, playing for time, had secured a twenty-four hour delay; his gamble worked and Maitland was home. The two battalions of Fraser's Highlanders, especially, were a large and welcome addition to the defences. They had got in just before Lincoln closed

the gaps and the twenty-four hours were up. Prevost then rejected the demand for surrender.

As expected, French troops started digging approaches a week later. It seemed to Laurens and McIntosh that, for all d'Estaing's yearnings to be off, he was amazingly slow. On the third of October, the hot weather moderated. The French artillery bombardment began from the south while their ships fired across Hutchinson's Island from the sea. The cannon did damage to some of the four hundred and fifty houses but defence works were not hit. The minds of the civilians were concentrated while the works they slaved at with renewed vigour were unhurt. That was to prove a singular advantage in the days ahead.

Five days later, a council of war met at d'Estaing's bidding – 'council of war' proved a somewhat inaccurate term since it consisted largely of the rebels learning what the French had decided. A battalion of the *Brigade Dillon* would begin attacking with a feint before dawn toward the Sailors' Battery, pushing ahead if possible, whilst Huger's five hundred militia would make a second feint pushing up the southerly road into the centre of the perimeter.

The main attack would begin with three columns of French assaulting the Spring Hill redoubt. Simultaneously, two American columns would attack to the left of the French, coming in at the redoubt from the west. The latter thrust would engage Laurens's 2d South Carolina Continentals and 1st Battalion, Charleston Militia to be followed by a second echelon: 1st and 5th South Carolina Continentals under McIntosh. The foot troops were to be preceded by Pulaski's cavalry moving to the left in front of the redoubt until the first echelon breached the abatis and allowed the horsemen to exploit the breakthrough. It seemed a straight-forward enough plan but timing was vital. The council broke up.

When General Prevost and Captain Moncrieff felt that an attack was imminent, they changed the disposition of their forces. Charged with matters of intelligence, the British Adjutant General's section in Savannah had indeed managed to implant an idea in the enemy's minds that Spring Hill would be a weak point in the defensive system. At the last minute, the loyalists at the redoubt were replaced by the 60th's grenadiers, amongst whom was James.

As dawn began to break, he and his companions heard firing from their right. The musketry was accompanied by the distinctive squeak and splatter of the swivel guns the sailors had set up and which fired a mixture of nuts, bolts and anything else which was handy and lethal. The French had sent a battalion along the river-front to make a diversionary attack which, owing to darkness and the thick fog, was at first undetected. They groped forward toward the sailors' battery, stumbling and splashing about on the wet ground and at first light were subjected to murderous fire from the entrenched tars and marines. As if that weren't bad enough, HMS *Germain* in the river became aware of the troops moving along the shore, adding their firepower. Soon the French veered off toward the south, moving away to James's right, all thought of advancing toward the town abandoned. Apart from hearing the firing from his right, James and his men had no idea what was afoot.

More noise from their left caught their attention. Again, they could only guess what was taking place. In fact, Huger's advance toward the Cruger redoubt was brought abruptly to a halt by the two de Lancey battalions and the New Jersey Volunteers. That particular bout of fighting did not last long because Huger's men were militia and militia never reckoned to make a sustained assault under heavy, effective fire. These militia were not about to start a new trend. A few found cover, most scampered off.

James had Serjeant Smith with him once again. "So, we heard a sharp action to the right which died down, then firing to our left, eh, serjeant?"

"Yes, sir. I imagine as it gets light, the fog near the river on our flanks is clearing and people can see enough to try and kill each other. It's like a nightmare, ain't it, sir? I mean who knows what is out there in our front? Thank God we had time to build up an abatis" observed Smith, referring to the sharpened poles the enemy would confront after climbing the steep earthwork behind which the grenadiers waited. Such was the place Cartwright expected to be a weak point.

The grenadiers' thoughts of what lay ahead of them were well-founded. Moving eastwards a half mile, three French columns deployed along the edge of a wood, ready to advance across five hundred yards of open ground toward the redoubt. Their assault

was meant for five o'clock when American columns would be attacking from the west. But the French were late and the whole allied force of forty-five hundred began to move in one long column toward their objective. Without waiting for the troops to deploy into five columns, d'Estaing led his leading column across the open field.

The leading attack column advanced as they had been commanded, hearing the admiral's familiar voice urging them on but most of them not seeing him nor knowing for certain whence the voice came which called so confidently *vive le roi* and *boutez en avant*. Nothing lasts for ever, however, and the purgatory of blindness and disembodied sounds gave way to a hell of violent noise. The last sight many of the column saw was the horrid ditch behind which stood high the even more horrid abatis.

James and his soldiers heard the French voices to their front but, afflicted by the same blindness and inability to fix the range of sounds, could only wait for something – anything – concrete to consent to being measured by their bewildered senses. They had not long to wait. The French suddenly materialized out of the thinning fog. Each side saw the other for the first time, not more than twenty yards apart. The result was predictable. All was shouting and explosion as the French hurled themselves yelling into the ditch and up the other side, struggling to reach the malevolent forest of felled trees which blocked their way on the parapet. At the instant they began to rush into the ditch, the defenders opened fire. D'Estaing was wounded but bravely urged on his soldiers. As the first column was shattered, the remnants moved to their left, more in a daze than with any clear intention. The other French columns coming behind them had been swept by grapeshot as the gunners became alert to what was advancing against them, even if they could not see the enemy, and poured onto them fire which at least the leading column had not had to endure. The second and third columns had also to reckon with the wall of musketry and also the unnerving sight of what had befallen those in front of them, wandering about the ditch aimlessly or laid out dead on the slope to the abatis.

James was completely occupied in adding to the musketry pouring from his nearby soldiers. He could not see what was happening to his right and was too busy to care about it if he had seen it, but another chapter of the terrible drama was there unfolding. The

cavalry of Pulaski's Legion had shifted to their left, as instructed, and were waiting under heavy fire for the infantry to breach the abatis. Marion's South Carolinians and the Charleston militia were met by the same sort of heavy fire as James's men had administered and were further decimated by a foe not before encountered – enfilade fire from both the redoubt to their right and the Sailors' Battery to their far left. The Carolinians nevertheless succeeded in hacking their way through the abatis, planting on the parapet a flag with a crescent in the canton, the regimental colour of the 2d South Carolina, with the fleur-de-lys flag of France next to it. They got no farther. The three officers carrying the colours, one of them Lieutenant Garnier-Croisé of the admiral's staff, went down. Another American officer re-planted the colours but he too went down. A third time the colours went up, this time put in place by an American non-commissioned officer with a well-known and courageous record, but he too went down, mortally wounded.

James, Serjeant Smith, Major Glasier, Captain Wickham and the three grenadier companies had been firing into the attacking troops. When the crescent flag dropped to the ground for the third time, Beamsley Glasier, seeing the attack was faltering like a wave at the tide's turning, seized the opportunity. "Now! Grenadiers, Now!" he screamed and the soldiers, joined by sailors and marines from the battery and redoubts on the right, charged furiously into the stymied enemy before them. James discharged one of his two pistols at a Frenchman who seemed to slide off to the left out of his vision. It felt like slow motion. With his sword he parried a bayonet thrust and struck at the enemy soldier who crumpled as the blade took him in the chest. Suddenly, the path ahead of him was choked with bodies, only the bodies were either inert in death or were calling for quarter. As the fog had lifted sporadically during the hour-long battle, other troops, being able to see more than James's men could, had joined in from left and right. The view that emerged was one of bloody chaos.

Meanwhile, Pulaski's horsemen had tried to force a way between the redoubt and the defences farther to the west. The result was a textbook one: unsuited for an assault against an unbreached abatis, they were hopelessly mauled. Pulaski, in a surge of futile gallantry, tried to rally his men but they knew their hope of survival lay

in flight. Pulaski was fatally hurt and Major Horry, whose mother had made the crescent colour, took over. There was no changing the outcome as the horsemen fled to their rear.

McIntosh arrived with his column, the 1st and 5th South Carolina Regiments, but his front was swept up by the remnants of the first column of Americans who were stumbling their way into the Yamacraw Swamp where, to add to the misery, they came under fire from HMS *Germain*. There they floundered as the firing died down. When it was reported to him that no one was left standing on the parapet, McIntosh ordered his column to retreat. The magnitude of the debacle was prevented from being even more crushing by the fog which was still heavy enough in places to discourage pursuit.

James, winded, and with no one in front he could see to pursue, looked back to take in the scene of the slaughter. A tally showed later about eighty enemy dead in the ditch and a further ninety-three between the ditch and the abatis behind it. The British loss was sixteen dead and thirty-nine wounded. The French lost six hundred and fifty men, a higher percentage of their soldiers than the rebels who lost about five hundred and fifty. At ten o'clock in the morning, the enemy requested a truce.

When the dead had been buried, General Lincoln retired to Charleston to lick his wounds. He now had the dispiriting task of piecing together what had gone wrong. He conferred with the familiar officers he had talked to before the attack, less Colonel Marion who had gone to the west of Charleston. Their mutual dislike of the French allies made Lincoln's task easier at first. "Goddamn frogs. They looked down on us like some kind of offal the whole time, didn't they?" he asked of his companions, most of whom nodded in agreement. Resentment was written all over their faces, even when they didn't speak it.

Moultrie voiced what they felt: "Off to the Caribbean to avoid meeting the Royal Navy – gone in eleven days, they were."

"Then there was that insolent demand for the city's surrender to the King of France," added Laurens.

However it was Huger who presented a more balanced attitude. "Oh, I don't know about that. Look at it from their point of view – they furnished more infantry than we did and practically all the artillery, and the sappers. They suffered all but a fifth of the eight

hundred casualties, too. I grant you, d'Estaing led an incompetent attack but he was damned brave for all that. No doubt it's a comfort for us to put the blame elsewhere but we made mistakes too. What about sending in poor old Pulaski to prance about in front of the entrenchments, an impossible job for cavalry, if ever there was one?"

After that post-mortem, Lincoln still had one niggling thought: the fiasco at Spring Hill. He called in Cartwright. There was some difficulty in locating him but at last he was found emerging from a brothel. "Why the mess at the Spring Hill redoubt?" the general asked the intelligence agent. "It wasn't lightly defended. It was very strongly held and very competently too. It's ironic that while we were beat by a regular regiment, it was one raised in the colonies!"

"You do realize, general," replied Cartwright, thinking a haughty tone his best protection, "that intelligence about enemy dispositions is never a sure thing. My source was quite correct about the arrangement of troops at the time the report was rendered to me. We could not help it if there was a last-minute switch."

Lincoln did not pursue it farther, but Cartwright was not so self-assured as he appeared. Why was the alteration made? Would a mere switch of troops account for the extent of the fortification? Presumably they were like that before the last moment. Am I faced with some sort of collusion between Mrs Bainbridge and the British? He did not know the answer to any of this, but he wondered, and would not let it rest.

The battle had one curious epitaph. The tune of *The British Grenadiers* had for long been a march heard round the world, the epitome of British military music. Drummers beat the well-known rhythm when the fifes became inaudible on the field of conflict. It was used, not just by grenadier companies, but by the Royal Regiment of Artillery. In the nineteenth century it was adopted for the 1st Foot Guards when they became the Grenadier Guards. The origins of the tune and the drum-beating are not known but the words, known to British and other schoolchildren over the world, and considered to be the most British of British marches, were first sung on the seventeenth of January 1780 at Covent Garden by Charles Frederick Reinhold. It is ironic that the words (attributed to Charles

Dibden) and so British in reputation, should have been composed in honour of the grenadiers of the 60th or Royal American Regiment of Foot. The good news of Savannah was published in the London Gazette on Christmas Day, 1779. A fortnight earlier a Royal Proclamation had commanded a day of fasting and humiliation. The words sung on the stage quickly became well-known:

*Some talk of Alexander,
And some of Hercules
Of Hector and Lysander,
And such great names as these.
But of all the world's great heroes, There's none that can compare
With a tow, row, row, row, row, row,
To the British Grenadier.*

Chapter 30

Unfairly, Sir Henry Clinton found himself to be the convenient scapegoat for the Yorktown defeat. Despite the endless meddling of Lord Germain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, despite his disastrous grant of operational independence to Cornwallis, despite Sir Henry's attempts to prevent Cornwallis from entering Virginia and then, when that failed, to have Admiral Graves rescue him, Cornwallis remained the blue-eyed boy of Germain and all London. Clinton recognized his impossible position and, with a change of government in London imminent, resigned, planning to return to England. All this affected James, Richard and the other members of the staff of the adjutant general in New York.

Seeing his hopes go down the drain, one by one, De Lancey still strove to keep his staff up to date. "Now that Prince William Henry has safely come and gone, we can attend to other matters. You may not all of you yet know that in March, Lord North's government resigned, mostly owing to the failure of their policy over here. The Marquis of Rockingham has become prime minister. He has consistently said he would end the previous government's coercive policies and bring peace to America. Consequently, we look forward to a new commander-in-chief coming to us. He is Sir Guy Carleton, lately governor of Canada. He was appointed to command here in February and arrives the fifth of May. We'll all have to get used to him. And do whatever we can to assist him. Are there any questions?"

Apart from a few queries on administrative details to do with Sir Guy's expected arrival, nobody raised anything. Carleton alone could tell them his plans. They were preoccupied with digesting the fact that the attempt to quell the rebellion was a failure. They would have to contribute to the policy of making peace. They needed some sort of breather.

There was no breather. Sir Henry's peace of mind was plagued up to the moment he set sail by the violence of the struggle between rebels and loyalists. Driven frantic by the rebels' successful driving of loyalists from their homes, Governor Franklin and his Board of

Associated Loyalists embarked on a campaign of revenge and intimidation which reached its climax in the "execution" of Huddy, a rebel artillery officer, by Lippincott, an affair not directly involving James, but one which engaged the attentions of Governor Livingston, General Washington and the foreign minister and king and queen of France.

Clinton needed advice on how to deal with loyal Americans – they were turning out to be as much a problem as the rebels were. Where better to turn than the American on the AG staff that St Simon had talked so favourably about? James was startled to be summoned to the Commander-in-chief's office at the beginning of April.

The general told him: "I've sent for you, Ricketts, at the suggestion of St Simon who has a high opinion of you, and since I have a high regard for him, I will have the same opinion of you, I don't doubt. This bloody Lippincott affair. To be more precise, the entire matter of the Board of Associated Loyalists. It's a Pandora's box. You are an American. I need your eyes to see clearly what is going on. The fact is – and what I say to you is in confidence – Governor Franklin and his board could well turn this war into a bandit's picnic. I want you to meet them and smoke them out for me."

James attended a number of Board and other legal meetings to observe the depth of enmity and duly reported his impressions of their implacable hostility to the general.

When Sir Guy arrived, he was thrown into the awkward matter. He quickly discovered that matter to be only one instance of an increasingly bitter and lawless feuding. It encouraged acrimonious pressure, both from British regulars and the rebels. He had no time to ease into his new position; he was being pressed to decide what to do about Lippincott. Sir Henry had already taken steps to curb the power of Franklin's Board of Associated Loyalists. That was some help. Much more would be required.

Sir Guy thus consulted the Chief Justice of New York and the Attorney General. In ten seconds the normally relaxed and affable, tall Irishman turned into a taut racquet, all stiff and explosive. "I am telling you straight, gentlemen, I have never before been in such an awkward and potentially dangerous situation. Irish protestants are known for hating Rome but I had less trouble winning the trust and

– yes, I’ll say – affectionate friendship of the papish clergy of Quebec than I have coping with this loyalist board.”

William Franklin was openly suspected of being behind his board’s unprincipled behaviour and of duplicity toward Sir Henry Clinton. Sensing the increasing enmity which the British military authorities were feeling towards him and under the pretext of carrying a petition from the loyalists to the King, he left America, sailing to England the next month. What with both Clinton and Franklin gone, the guard was changing fast.

By summer’s end, it was obvious that peace was coming. “It is not the peace I hoped for, with Britain and America united, but it will be peace, for all that,” James commented to Sarah.

Sir Guy made a habit of looking in on his staff and on one occasion he asked James how, as an American, he felt. James tried to explain: “I am American. I’ve always thought of myself that way. It’s odd. I don’t think of myself often as a loyalist. Perhaps that’s because I’m a regular officer, not in a provincial regiment. I’m not going to turn my back on New Jersey, not unless I am forced to. I suppose they – or do I say ‘we’ – will have independence. I don’t regret that from any opposition to home rule. I regret it because it breaks our family ties to Britain. And I remember what both the Earl of Eglinton and our own Major John Brown said about our tendency to isolate ourselves, to turn inwards, to wallow in ignorance of the outside world, and even smugly enjoy that ignorance.

“I don’t want my country to be self-centred like that and I don’t want my children to, either. To me, Britain is our window to the outside. That’s why I will always try to keep in touch, to be as much at home in one as in the other – if that’s possible,” he added wistfully.

Sir Guy looked at him hard and long but not unkindly. “You’re not Irish, I suppose?” he remarked impishly, smiling. “Seriously though, I cannot say what is possible. As you know, I come from a country which is largely disaffected from the rest of Britain. My sort knows all the reasons for this and we share the blame for it, but we would still fight any lessening of the bonds with Britain. I come out of the “ascendancy” crowd, than which no lot is more bigoted. Yet I am the darling of the papists in Canada – some say I saved Canada for the Crown. Maybe. But what Canada did for me, a benighted Irish

bigot, is wonderful. It taught me tolerance. Maybe some of that is true for your country, too. Unfortunately, those who teach us the value of toleration are not always themselves examples of it. At any rate, let's talk again."

"Thank you, sir,"

Sir Guy was not finished. "You've gained some insight into how courts martial work, I hear from De Lancey and St Simon. I'm going to put that to use and appoint you to one or two standing courts martial," said the general as he grabbed his tricornered hat with the gold piping, smiled and stooped cautiously, narrowly missing the door lintel as he made his way to the stairs, humming softly.

True to his word, Sir Guy put James on a general court martial constituted the third of August at ten o'clock at the City Hall under the presidency of Major Edward Eyre of the 40th Regiment. This detail took up a lot of James's time but the only trial was a private soldier of the 22nd Regiment, severely mauled at Elizabethtown during Knyphausen's expedition, who was convicted of desertion, having been captured by Associated Loyalists among whom was Captain Tilton - who had figured in the Lippincott trial and had later escaped the rebels or been exchanged. The defendant was sentenced to five hundred lashes. The court was dissolved at the end of the month.

Once more, James found himself on a court martial, from the nineteenth of October, exactly a year after Yorktown, sitting under Brigadier General Martin, the dispossessed governor of North Carolina, whom he had met during his prior introduction to the Board of Associated Loyalists. Two private men of the 3d Battalion New Jersey Volunteers were sentenced to death for assaulting Lieutenant Waller Locke of HMS *Warwick*. A drummer and five private men of General Skinner's New Jersey Volunteers were acquitted.

None of this registered with James as particularly significant for his life except that it reinforced his conviction that army life could be brutal and that with little to do but wait around to be withdrawn after a seven years' war it had not won, morale worsens and insubordination increases along with more and more extreme steps to maintain discipline. It was a fine thing when ex-governors of provinces were kept employed sitting on courts martial, like General Martin. The sooner it all ended, the better, thought James.

James's sense of living in a finale was increased when Lieutenant Pierson arrived back from Savannah, bearing a letter for James. It read:

20th June, 1782

My dear James,

Your kind letter arrived without mishap. In times such as these, however, correspondence is always uncertain. In our situation, many details which beg to be stated must be left unsaid lest others derive aid and comfort to our cost. You will understand me if I stick close to the news you sent me and which, I assume, is in the public domain.

Glad as I am that someone as hurtful to our interests as Mr C. has quitted our lives, my feelings of anger towards him are not assuaged by his failure to tell me, for reasons we can both imagine, of the death through fever of my dear brother a full year before the time when I informed you of his part in complicating my affairs.

It brings home to me the hope that this hateful struggle of brother against brother will soon end – we hear that the King's troops will quit Savannah in July – and that the corrupting influences of clandestine activity – of which C. was so signal an example – will leave you untouched by them.

I am so grateful that amidst the many demands on your time and attention, you nevertheless took pains to tell me the news of C. (whose name I cannot bear to write out). We both have reason for wanting peace to come and, more than that, being able to live in that heavenly state where hatred has no power and love can be shewn without inhibition or dissembling.

D.B.

Breakfasting in their garden one cool November morning, Sarah noticed her husband in a particularly silent and uncommunicative mood. At last he broke the quiet: "I've been thinking a lot about our future."

"So have I, my sweet," she said, barely above a whisper.

"Of course you must have, my darling. Not right for me to be so self-absorbed – not to notice what you've been thinking," he admitted guiltily.

"Never mind. *What* do you think?" she asked him.

He paused to pour more tea. "In a few months, the war will be over and then, sooner or later, the army will be gone. That leaves us two alternatives: we follow the drum and make a career in England or the Caribbean or wherever. In that case, I have an uncertain prospect – uncertain as to promotion. For one thing, the regiment is always reduced in peacetime. It may go to one or two battalions and vacancies will be few. Even though we both feel at home in England, it would be uncertain, professionally, and we would be far away from all our connections here."

"And if, my sweet, we should have children – what then? They'll be reared entirely in England, I imagine, without those connections which in England, for better or worse, we know are necessary to get on comfortably in society, to be a mite crass," she added.

"But you're right," he cut in. "They always say women are the greatest realists, don't they?"

"What's the other alternative?" she said, putting their conversation back on a pragmatic track.

"Suppose I resign. I think Sir Guy would let me do that. It would not mean running out on anybody. There is little I can do now to have any effect on this country's future. We're all just marking time until someone else makes decisions. If I resign, we could go to England until everything quietens down. Before doing so, I'd like to have some idea if we can go back to Elizabethtown – I assume we'd go there, rather than Basking Ridge. Lord Stirling will want his place back and, besides, it's a little too close for comfort to Uncle William, I fancy."

There was not much more to be said. The latter choice was the one they both favoured. Sarah undertook to write, broaching the subject to her relations: their parents, still presumably at Basking Ridge, and some of James's family at Elizabethtown. After all, Sarah particularly had made every effort to keep in touch, to the annoyance of the hard man of the family.

Replies came back by the end of November; all agreed that while they were overjoyed at the prospect of reunion, it was too early to say anything definite. Perhaps a couple of years would suffice for things to settle. They might find it easier than they thought to make a life in England, in which case they would have a real choice when

the right time came, though all hoped the choice would be Elizabethtown.

James and his wife looked at each other steadily. A few seconds later, they simultaneously burst into gales of mirth. They clasped hands. It always seemed that serious talk between them heightened their desire for each other. Knowing the house was momentarily empty of servants, they went inside. Even though it was morning, they abandoned themselves to one another as if it were the most natural thing in the world to do.

James decided to see Sir Guy. It was easier for him to do than he thought it would be – Sir Guy was one of those people who make it seem as if he had been waiting for his guest; James almost had to bite his tongue not to apologize for being late. He repeated what Sarah and he had discussed. Sir Guy agreed that peace was coming but pointed out that treatment of loyalists – and whatever James thought of himself, his neighbours would think of him as one – was going to vary from “province, er, state to state”. He remarked that people in their social circles had advantages, especially since James had seen no fighting in his own state. Sir Guy had friends in London to whom he would be happy to recommend them and he was sure they would make out. As for the army, James had never joined the company of which he was captain. That was all right because Lieutenant Samuel DeVisme, paymaster to the 60th in New York and known to James and Sarah, professionally and socially, was anxious to buy a company – DeVisme would probably stay in the army and eventually settle in London.

“By the way,” added the general, “a word of advice, if I may. You may not wish to use your rank on this side of the ocean when the peace does finally come, but life being as it is in England, you’ll always want to be “Captain” Ricketts – it won’t hurt. Irishmen like me are famous for being aware of such matters, you know.” It was thus arranged for James to sell his captaincy to DeVisme for fifteen hundred pounds and resign eleven days before Christmas.

One person James hated to say goodbye to was Richard.

“My dear fellow, what you plan is eminently sensible. I’m not sure how long I’ll stay in the army once this is over. One of these days, you’ll find a penniless waif lounging on your London doorstep

begging food and a bed for the night." The unlikelihood of such an event befalling the Earl of Bassett threw James into gales of laughter. He noticed that Richard's face did no more than hint at a smile, so he knew how emotionally trying the peer was finding the occasion. Sarah was not fooled for an instant and threw her arms round Richard, planting a noisy kiss on his cheek.

"When you come to see us, you unspeakable wretch" she said, "I'll scare up some London beauties to plague you, you rogue."

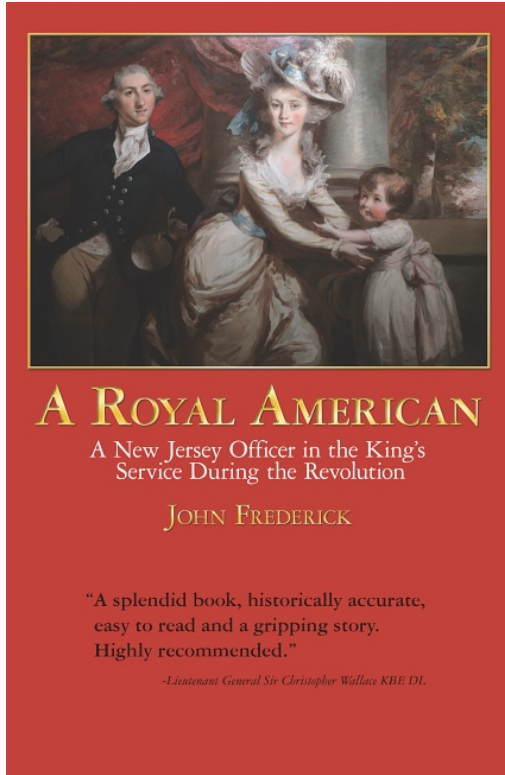
"Bless you," he said in a strained voice, turning quickly away to leave the room.

Not everyone was so buttoned up. Laurie, cleaning dishes in the kitchen, broke into floods of tears and was for a short while inconsolable until she remembered she was a Black Watch wife and dried her tears. Cyrus was in raptures over being given the option of going to England with them and leapt at the chance with both hands. "You never do know – I might be grabbed back into servitude in this country, but I know a black man is really free the minute he sets foot in ol' England."



Author Biography

John Frederick is a native of Manhattan but has spent most of his professional life in England. A holder of U.S. and British citizenship, he is an Anglican priest. While he has authored a theological study of liturgy, he is perhaps better known for two authoritative books on British Army lineage. *A Royal American* is his first venture into historical fiction, drawing heavily on his knowledge of the make-up and culture of Britain's military forces. He is married with two daughters and a step-daughter. He lives in Princeton, New Jersey.



James Ricketts, serving in his regiment in Antigua, goes to Scotland to wed. He is caught up in Jacobite plot and serves in the defense of Savannah, before going to London where former foes aid his return home.

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