

Loyalists in the Old Burying Ground at Halifax

*By Brian McConnell **

It was opened in June 1749 and became a place of burial for St. Paul's, the oldest Protestant place of worship in Canada, and the outpost of the Church of England in British North America. Its' first Bishop was Loyalist Charles Inglis. (1) So, it should not be surprising to find Loyalists in the Old Burying Ground at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Located on the corner of Barrington Street and Spring Garden, across from Government House, the residence of the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, the Old Burying Ground in Halifax has a busy location. The government of Canada recognized it as a National Historic Site on March 1, 1991 in part because "it bears witness to the complex cultural traditions of early British North America." (2)



Old Burying Ground with Welsford-Parker Monument

Often the first structure you notice when viewing the Old Burying Ground is the tall arch standing near the entrance, the Welsford-Parker Monument, which commemorates the British victory during the Crimean War. It was built in 1860 and named after two soldiers from Halifax who were both killed in the war, Major Augustus Frederick Welsford and Captain William Buck Carthew Augustus Parker. (3)

Before it closed in 1844 some 12,000 people were interred in the Old Burial Ground. It contains more than 1,200 head and foot stones. Many notable Loyalists are buried in the cemetery including John Howe, father of Nova Scotia Premier Joseph Howe. He arrived in Halifax in 1776 along with others evacuated from Boston as a result of conflict during the American Revolution.



Gravestones of John & Martha Howe

The Old Burying Ground Foundation now maintains the cemetery and provides guided tours during the summer. A Past President of the Halifax - Dartmouth branch of the United Empire Loyalists Association (UELAC) of Canada, Donald Lordly, UE, has been active with the Foundation for more than 30 years. When asked for suggestions of names of Loyalists interred in the Old Burying Ground he kindly provided a list of twenty. (4) The list included Foster Hutchinson, brother of the Loyalist Governor of Massachusetts, Margaret (Inglis) Halliburton, daughter of Bishop Charles Inglis, Peter Etter, a loyalist originally from Switzerland, and Loyalist William Taylor, a Boston merchant, as well as John and Martha Howe.

John Howe (1754 - 1835) and Martha Howe (1760 - 1790)

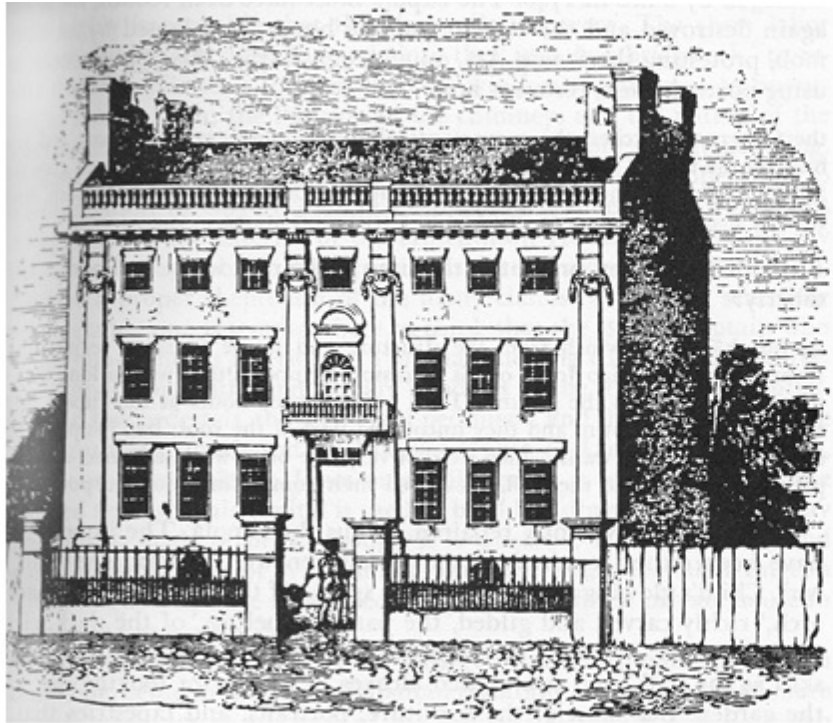
When the American Revolution began, John Howe and his wife Martha (Minns), were living in Boston where he was the King's Printer and publisher of the Massachusetts Gazette and Boston Weekly. He was born there and witnessed the Boston Tea Party in December, 1773.

When the British decided to abandon Boston in 1776, John and Martha Howe, along with other Loyalists were transported to Halifax. In his new place of residence John published his own paper, the Halifax Journal and also became Postmaster of Halifax. Before the War of 1812, he was a spy for the British and travelled to America to meet with President Thomas Jefferson and President - elect James Madison to gain information.

Foster Hutchinson (1724 - 1799)

Like John Howe and his wife Martha, Foster Hutchinson was also evacuated to Halifax with the British when they left Boston in 1776. His name along with other family members appears on a list of inhabitants of Boston who in March, 1776 were removed to Halifax with the army. (5) As the brother of Governor Thomas Hutchinson, Foster Hutchinson, had lands and property confiscated during the Revolutionary War.

According to *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, on February 25, 1983 the land and dwelling house of Foster Hutchinson on Fish Street West was confiscated. It was also interesting to read that the very building which the *Society* made its' office was confiscated during the American Revolution from a Loyalist, the Rev. Henry Caner, Rector of King's Chapel, Boston. (6)



Former Hutchinson Home, Boston

Margaret (Inglis) Halliburton (1775 - 1841)

Margaret Inglis, daughter of Charles Inglis, who became the first Anglican Bishop of British North America, was born in New York in 1775. Her father had been a minister in New York where he published articles and spoke out favoring the Loyalist position. After the war, he took up the post in Halifax as Bishop at St. Paul's Church. His daughter married on September 9, 1799, to the Hon. Brenton Halliburton, Member of the Legislative Council, who became the eighth Chief Justice of Nova Scotia. (7) She died in Halifax on July 5, 1841 and was buried in the Old Burying Ground. There is no remaining stone, however, a tablet in St. Paul's Church reads:

*Sacred To The Memory of
MARGARET,
The Wife of THE
HONOURABLE BRENTON HALLIBURTON
Who departed This Life
On the 5th of July, 1841,
Aged 66 years.
Early trained In the Nurture
And Admonition of the Lord
By Her Pious Father,
The First Protestant Bishop
In The British Colonies,
She Was Conspicuous
Throughout Her Life
For Piety to God
And Charity to the Poor,
This Tablet Is Raised
As a Humble Memorial
Of Her Virtues
By Her Affectionate Husband.
Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord
Even so saith the Spirit:
For they rest from their Labours.*

Peter Etter (1715 - 1794)

In 1737 Peter Etter emigrated to the Thirteen Colonies from Bern, Switzerland. He first settled in Philadelphia but relocated to Braintree in Norfolk County, Massachusetts to work as a weaver. With the outbreak of the American Revolution he remained loyal to the crown and with his family of seven left Boston to Halifax on one of the ships transporting troops and civilian refugees in March, 1776.



Grave of Peter Etter in Old Burying Ground

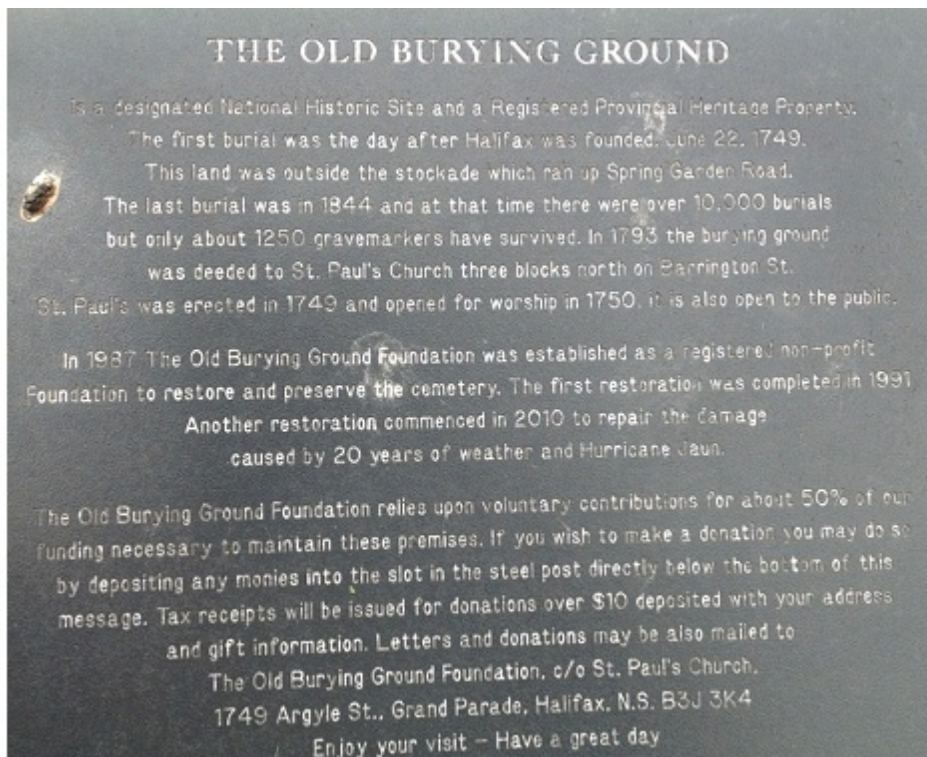
One son, Peter Etter, Jr. served as Sergeant in the Royal Fencible Americans, commanded by Colonel Joseph Goreham, in defence of Fort Cumberland in 1776 from the attack led by Jonathan Eddy and other supporters of the American Revolution. Another son, Benjamin, became a watchmaker and silversmith, then was appointed clerk of the market in Halifax. From 1796 to 1808 he was an officer in the Nova Scotia militia and served as honorary aide-de-camp to Prince Edward, while the Prince was commander of the British forces in the Maritimes. (8)

William Taylor (1735 - 1810)

William Taylor was a Boston merchant who had property confiscated in June, 1782 for his support of the Crown. He came to Halifax with other Loyalists. Oakland Lodge, on Robie Street in Halifax, which was owned by Sir Samuel Cunard, founder of the famous shipping line, was originally an Estate owned by William Taylor. (9)

Many of the graves in the Old Burying Ground are unmarked. Some of the graves with stones over time were damaged before restoration could be commenced. The Old Burying Ground Foundation welcomes donations to assist in maintaining the cemetery. The history and a request for assistance are on a sign as you enter which appears below.

Sign posted near entrance to the Old Burying Ground



Notes:

* This article was prepared on January 17, 2016 by Brian McConnell. To contact him please email: brianm564@gmail.com

(1) "The First Bishop - A Biography of Charles Inglis" by Brian Cuthbertson, published by Waegwoltic Press, 1987.

(2) See "Old Burying Ground National Historic Site of Canada" at <http://historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=9982> and "The Old Burying Ground - National Historic Site - Provincial Historic Site & Municipal Registered Heritage Property" at <http://oldburyingground.ca/>

(3) See "August Frederick Parker" by Cameron W. Pulsifier in Dictionary of Canadian Biography at <http://www.biographi.ca/>

(4) Names of Loyalists interred in the Old Burying Ground provided by Donald Lordly, UE, Past Chairman of the Old Burying Ground Foundation, were: William Brattle (unmarked grave); Moses Delesdernier; Peter Etter; Benjamin Etter; Dr. John Halliburton; John Howe and Martha; Foster Hutchinson; Margaret Inglis; Benjamin Kent; Peter Lennox; Christopher Minot (unmarked grave); James Murray; Elizabeth, Lady Pepperell, wife of Sir William Pepperell; Jeremiah Rogers (unmarked grave); Jonathan Snelling; Jonathan Sterns, Gilbert Stuart, William Taylor, Lt. Charles Thomas (son of Nathaniel Thomas, Loyalist), Edward Winslow (ancestor of Edward Morrissey, Past President of Halifax - Dartmouth Branch of UELAC).

(5) See "List of Inhabitants of Boston Evacuated to Halifax in 1776" with Provincial Archives of New Brunswick at: <http://archives.gnb.ca/>

(6) See "The Confiscated Estates of Boston Loyalists" by John T. Hassam. A.M., reprinted from the Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society for May, 1895 in Provincial Archives of New Brunswick at: <http://archives.gnb.ca/>

(7) See "Bishop Charles Inglis and his Descendants" by Rev. Arthur Wentworth Hamilton Eaton, D.C.L. published in Acadiensis, July, 1908 Vol. VIII at <http://www.inglis.uk.com/bishopcharlesandhisdescendants.htm>

(8) See "Benjamin Etter" by Donald C. Mackay in Dictionary of Canadian Biography at <http://www.biographi.ca/>

(9) See "Oakland Lodge" in Canada's Historic Places at <http://historicplaces.ca/>