

McAlpin and Drummond

Daniel McAlpin and Peter Drummond were two of the earliest settlers in what was to become the town of Malta, both having come here in 1774. How come there are no streets named after them or historic markers with their names. BECAUSE THEY WERE BOTH LOYALISTS.

McAlpin was a retired Major in the British Army who purchased about 1,000 acres near Saratoga Lake and built a home in 1775 and a second house in 1776. We had approximately 20 servants, many livestock and at least 170 acres in cultivation. He was a wealthy man.

Peter Drummond lived with McAlpin when he first came to Malta in 1774 and there is no record of him owning land here, however the records from that time are very spotty.

McAlpin and his wife Mary had three adult children living with them. Both men were staunchly loyal to the Crown and tried to enlist their neighbors in this cause. In May, 1776, McAlpin was brought before the Albany Committee of Correspondence (remember all of New York north of Albany was Albany County at that time). He was put under house arrest with a guard posted at his door but in June he was taken to Albany. Even though he refused to take an oath of loyalty, General Schuyler allowed him to return home because of his advanced age. That was a mistake. In February, 1777, he fled with a party of forty to Canada where he was given a command in the Kings Loyal Americans, organized by another infamous local loyalists, Ebenezer Jessup. He led this group at the Battle of Saratoga. After the battle, McAlpin and many of his troops refused to surrender to Gen. Gates but instead again escaped to Canada. These constant trips through the Adirondacks in winter proved too much for his health and he died a few months later.

His friend Drummond was one of the party that accompanied him the first time to Canada but was captured and sent to the jail in Albany. Somehow he escaped and made his way to Canada and that is the last we hear of him.

McAlpin's property was seized and his family sent to Albany to fend for themselves. It would be very interesting to know which of our forefathers got a hold of the property.

The most famous, or infamous, Tory in our area was Joseph Bettys, from the Town of Ballston. At first a loyal colonists, he fought alongside Gen. Benedict Arnold on Champlain Lake. And like Arnold, he felt that he had not been sufficiently honored so he became a spy. He led a number of raids in the Balls town area and must have traveled throughout Malta often. In 1781, he was captured in near Jonesville and hung in Albany.

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