



September 15, 2024

This newsletter may interest particular those related to persons related directly or indirectly to Grace and Clifford Retson. My genealogy website is located at <http://www.retson.ca/retsongeneology.html>

Pathway to American Ancestors

As a child growing up I had no idea that I was a descendant of so many American ancestors. We were quite familiar with our Scottish roots, less so of our Irish roots and vaguely familiar with Pennsylvania Dutch not knowing that it was a euphemism for German. My first project was to determine the truth about our alleged English background. Long after my breakthrough to our pathway from England to Scotland with the Retson surname, I discovered that many of Our English ancestors came to America in the 1600s, as early as the Mayflower 1620 and even earlier to Jamestown. When you arrive in a country early, you expect to have many generations of descendant ancestors before they depart to other countries and in particular Canada. Some came early and others later. The latest to come were the loyalists' families following the American Revolution in 1783 or shortly thereafter including the Perrins, the Spicers, and others. Others came earlier searching for free land in the 1760s including the Hoars and the Lynds.

Before you can find the pathway of our ancestors south of Canada while in the United States, you have to find the American Emigrants to Canada. These emigrants who had earlier came from England, came from three States, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York, This middle time period I have found tended to be the most difficult part to research. Partly this was due to the fact that Canadian history and genealogy is less well researched than American history and genealogy. Hopefully, this gap may narrow as time advances.

The Perrins in our line were the last to leave United States (see <https://www.retson.ca/Perrin.pdf>) Andrew Perrin, son of Thomas Perrin and Martha Savery was born June 19, 1766 in Hebron, Tolland, Connecticut, United States. He died March 21, 1859, in Maynard, Grenville, Ontario. He married Abigail Gould probably in Maynard, Grenville Ontario about 1793. She was born in Granville, New York on September 8, 1775, in Grandville, New York.

They had the following children:

- i. Marcus Perrin born December 13, 1794, in Granville, Washington, New York, US married Hannah Dake
- ii. William Perrin born October 21, 1797, in Augusta, Township, Leeds County, Ontario, Died Dec. 21, 1841, Maynard, Augusta Township, Grenville, Ontario
- iii. Andrew Festus Perrin born Feb 20, 1798, in Washington, New York married Elizabeth Bunker, died 1877 in Augusta Township Grenville, Ontario
- iv. Rhoda Perrin born July 25, 1798, in New York, US, died October 8, 1889, Augusta Township, Grenville, Ontario,
- v. Orrin Gould Perrin born 1806, in Maynard, Augusta, Grenville, Ontario married Hannah Youker Abt 1831 died 1888 in Maynard, Augusta, Grenville, Ontario
- vi. Martha Perrin on May 2, 1808, in Maynard, Augusta, Grenville, Ontario died on March 25, 1882, in Maynard, Augusta, Grenville, Ontario
- vii. Ebenezer Perrin born on September 7, 1817, in Maynard, Augusta, Grenville, Ontario, married Catherine C. McCann in Prescott, Ontario, died March 25, 1882, in Maynard, Augusta, Grenville, Ontario

The exact time that the Perins crossed the border has not yet been ascertained but from the births of their children we can determine it was between 1798 and 1806.

Thomas Perrin's father was not enough of a Tory to be subjected to confiscation and the other vicissitudes visited on those who had actively opposed the break with England.

The Spicers whose fuller story is told at <https://www.retson.ca/spicer.pdf> This ancestral family was one of the first to arrive in America and among one of the last to leave what became the United States to come to Canada. The last known to date is Andrew Perrin Family.

Ezekiel Spicer was born March 1, 1741/42, and baptized April 4, 1742, in Pomfret Connecticut around 1748 for Middleton, Connecticut and for Dutchess County New York around 1759. Several records give his origins as the Mohawk Valley area of what today is *New York States*.¹

He served as a private in the Loyal Rangers

The Mohawk Valley is a natural passageway connecting the Atlantic Ocean, by way of the Hudson Valley with the interior of North America. Almost 100 battles of the American Revolution were fought in New York State.

Ezekiel Spicer was located at Fort Edwards. In late March 1780 one of John Johnson's agents returned from Johntown with information that the loyalist there were suffering severe persecution. They were also threatened with being forced to serve with the rebels in the coming May. Those who refused would be sent to Albany in irons, their houses confiscated, and their real and personal property sold for the use of Congress. Forced service meant acting against their fellow loyalist; bringing them in for examination, taking their cattle, sheep and hogs, and at times destroying their were buildings. The loyalist asked for a pilot to be sent to lead them to Quebec, but Johnson instead proposed an expedition to Johntown, which would collect the threatened loyalist and punish local rebels. Johnson's force set off from St. John's on May 3. His expedition was a marked success. Ezekiel Spicer and his two sons Daniel and Ezekiel Jr enlisted with the Major Edward Jessup's Loyal Rangers in the Company of John Jones.

In 1781, during the American Revolution, colonial forces, consisting of militia and Oneida allies, were victorious over a mixed force of Loyalists and Native allies.

On November 24, instructions were sent from headquarters in Quebec City to disband the regiments in lower Quebec on December 24, 1783 (including the Loyal Rangers). The veterans and their families were permitted lodging and provisions for the winter. Crowding, measles and smallpox became a problem. The preliminary articles of peace with the United States were signed November 30, 1783.

A copy of a rebel newspaper published in Fishkill, New York on April 17 arrived in Quebec making it clear the loyalist were not welcomed home²:

The article of giving the Renegadoes or Tories a temporary residence among us is a bitter ingredient in this cup of happiness, and I am confidant from the well known characters of our worthy commissioners they would never have consented to it had thee been any other mode to have avoided it but by the calamitous war, and even this, I doubt not would have

¹ Watt, Gavin, A Service History and Master Roll of Major Edward Jessup's Loyal Rangers, Carleton Place: Global Heritage Press, 2017, page 226

² Watt Gavin K. 2017 page 53-54 citing Cruikshank, Earnest & Watt, Gavin K. The History and Master Roll of The King's Royal Regiments of New York, Revised edition. Campbellsville; Global Heritage Press, 2006, page 103

been preferred by those Gentleman had they put entire confidence in your Spirit, Virtue and Patriotism believing that these would effectually prevent what they could not. Vizt. The Return of those abominable Wretches, those Robbers, Murderers and Incendiaries even to come near us, no method is left us to prevent this great Calamity but by a general Association to render their Situation by every means in our power so unhappy that they will prefer a voluntary Banishment to the proposed return, let it be a Crime abhorr'd by Nature to have any communication with them -
-Like Cain of old they will carry their mark on their foreheads, let them be avoided like persons Contaminated by the most deadly contagion and remain as their just demerits as Vagabonds on The face of the Earth

A note from American (Loyalist) Migration provides the following note;

Spicer, Ezekiel of Albany Co. Memorial New Oswegatchie 1786. He served as a Pvt. in the Loyal Rangers. Claim for a house and 150 acres on a 21 lease; a loom etc. Evidences; Deposition 23 February 1786 New Oswegatchie by William Leahy, Sr. that the claim is jus. (12/28/268, 64/28, 109/284;13/15/449-450)

A transcript of his evidence was reported as follows³:

962 Ezekeel Spicer, Late of Charlotte Co. N.C.

Oct 3 Cliamt. Says he was at De Chine in '83.

(113) Is a nat. of A. lived at Fort Edw. Joined in '81, served 3 years, 2 Sons with him

Too little Had 1000 acres Lease for 21 near Fort Edward, bought it in
To allow '78 gave £5 York Mon. for it. Lot a little furniture & other Articles, about £10.

Britain's solution to the widespread poverty and homelessness of the Loyalists was to provide the Loyalists with land grants which could be used to build new settlements and start over. These grants were also looked at as a reward for the men's loyalty to the crown.

Mary Beacock Fryer in Chapter 12 of King's Men – The Soldier Founders of Ontario. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1980 details the resettlement of the Loyalists after the war:

Eight townships were laid out beside the upper St. Lawrence. The lower five were the New Johnstown settlement, the upper three New Oswegatchie. The first five around the Bay of Quinte were the Cataraqui settlement. When they were named, #1 beside the St. Lawrence was Charlottenburgh, #2 Cornwall, #3 Osnabruck, #4 Williamsburgh, #5 Matilda, #6 Edwardsburgh, #7 Augusta, #8 Elizabethtown. Of the Bay of Quinte townships, #1 was Kingston, #2 Ernestown, #3 Fredericksburgh, #4 Adolphustown, #5 Marysburgh. Also shown are the first three townsites, Kingston (#1 Cataraqui), Johnstown (#6 New Oswegatchie,) New Johnstown (#2 New Johnstown)

³ Fraser, Alexander, United Empire Loyalists, Enquiry into the Losses and Services in Consequences of Their Loyalty, evidence in the Canadian Claims, Second Report of the Bureau of Archives for the Province of Ontario, Repository Ontario Archives Call letters 971.024 U56 vol.2; The Archives of Ontario, Loyalist Settlements 1783-1789, New Evidence of Canadian Loyalist Claims, Research and Transcription by W. Bruce Antliff

Fryer, Mary Beacock. King's Men: The Soldier Founders of Ontario (Kindle Locations 5744-5749). Dundurn. Kindle Edition.

A man named Sir John Johnson was instructed to inquire as to which lands belonged to the native communities, and to purchase any land that they claimed as theirs. Captain Justus Sherwood, who remained in the area, was employed to provide a detailed survey of Augusta and the surrounding townships. By the spring of 1784, supplies had been gathered and the land had been surveyed in detail and divided into lots to be drawn for. Batteaux and provisions were ready to be transported along with the Loyalist settlers to the new settlements. The area surrounding present-day Augusta township was divided into two ranges of townships, the first of which being called the Royal Townships. There are seven Royal Townships, Augusta being the seventh and titled Royal Township Number Seven (RT7). Eventually, the townships were named, Augusta was named for Princess Augusta after the third daughter of King George III. In June 1784, the Loyalists finally embarked from Quebec down the St. Lawrence River to their new settlements; Edward Jessup's Corps were to be the first settlers of the new Royal Township.

Ezekiel Spicer is documented as living in 1784 in Ontario. Ezek. Spicer is shown in Concession 1 on Chewett's map of Augusta 1787.

An Ezekiel Spicer received a 200 acre concession in Concession 9 Lot 1 on 2 Nov 1803 See also below under Daniel Spicer.

Ezekiel and his wife Elizabeth had several children⁴ of which the following are possible:

- i. Ezekiel Jr. b. 1757 New York, m.. Rachel Jackson 31 May 1803
- ii. William Whelm Spicer 1759
- iii. Daniel Spicer 1764 Mohawk Valley New York 1833 m. Phebe Martin
- iv. Jeramiah Spicer b. 1772 New York
- v. Catherine Spicer b. 10 Nov 1787 d. 25 Jun 1817 Elizabethtown
- vi. Elizabeth Spicer m. John Bunker (misspelled Bowker
- vii. Elijah Spicer,
- viii. Jabez Spicer indexed as a Son of a Loyalist 07 Dec Book E page 168 Petition S31
- ix. Susannah Spicer b. 1787 m. John Bostwick, d. 25 Jun 1817, Elizabethtown, Leeds, Ontario

Rachel Spicer is indexed residence Edwardburg 31 May 1803 Book E 240 Petition S37

Ezekiel died in Johnstown, Ontario in 1800.

Future pathways to our United States ancestors will be covered in future newsletters.

This newsletter was sent to individuals who have expressed an interest in this genealogy at some time. If you do not wish to receive future updates, please email me at jretson@shaw.ca and indicate so.

⁴ William Reid, The Loyalist in Ontario, The Sons and Daughters of the American Loyalists in Upper Canada, Page 305 lists Elijah of Elizabethtown OC 7 Dec 1802, Jabez of Augusta OC 7 Dec 1802, Susannah, m. John Bostwick of Augusta OC 31 May 1803 and Catherine, m Stephen Todd Beach of Elizabethtown OC 29 Mar 1803