

'Yankees' invade Canada

By PROF. ROBERT E. BROWN

The big news in November 1775 was an American invasion of Canada. Having failed to win French-Canadian support for the American cause through persuasion, Congress had decided in October that Canada must be taken to prevent British use of the colony as a base of operations.

In particular, Americans desired to secure the Hudson River-Lake George-Lake Champlain water route between Albany and Montreal. The invasion was to be two-pronged. General Richard Montgomery would advance by way of the water route to Montreal, while General Benedict Arnold would march through Maine to Quebec.

Montgomery entered Montreal on Nov. 12, then moved on toward a junction with Arnold. At this point, Americans had high hopes of a quick conquest of Canada.

MEANWHILE, Washington and Howe warily eyed each other at Boston, and Gov. Dunmore continued his naval depredations in Virginia rivers and coastal areas.

Dunmore also made an unsuccessful attempt to prevent a part of Patrick Henry's army at Williamsburg from crossing the James River and posing a threat to Norfolk.

Dunmore did win a skirmish against Virginia militiamen and used his victory to issue what came to be known as "Dunmore's Emancipation Proclamation" freeing all slaves and indentured servants who would fight on the King's side.

Dunmore gained the title "King of the Blacks" and his regiment of black soldiers became "Lord Dunmore's Ethiopian Regiment."

ON THE civilian front, British authority continued to evaporate as Congress advised New Hampshire and South Carolina to set up quasi-independent governments.

This trend was recognized by George III, who allowed all colonial officials to abandon their posts if threatened with loss of life or property.

Gov. Tryon in New York speculated that repeal of Parliamentary taxation might bring peace. Otherwise, he said, the sword was drawn and the sword must settle the issue.

Tryon made the unrealistic prediction that 5,000 troops could restore British authority in New York. From Massachusetts came the threat of a separate declaration of independence unless Congress took action. James Warren wanted to stop petitions to Britain and declare independence, saying that the sentiment for a complete break was universal in the Bay Colony.

JOHN ADAMS assured Warren that the colonies had been independent since Lexington and Concord. But John Winthrop feared that unless Congress acted, Massachusetts would go ahead with its own declaration.

Travelers reported that Americans were "tramping, making firelocks, casting mortars, shells, and shot, and making saltpetre" for gunpowder.

Even the women and children talked of fighting, suffering and dying for their country.

Apparently deciding that the conflict would be of long duration, the wives of Generals Washington and Gates left Philadelphia to join their husbands at Boston, receiving enthusiastic welcomes along the way.

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Tax rolls open to inspection

Property tax assessment rolls may be inspected during normal business hours by "any individual, regardless of citizenship or status as a taxpayer in the community," Attorney General Frank J. Kelley has held in an official opinion.

"No restriction can be placed on the number of individuals who may inspect public records," the attorney general ruled.

Kelley said a township could establish rules and regulations to protect the records and to prevent interference with discharge of official business.

However, "the use of a tape recorder would cause a safety hazard or disrupt the premises, it is my opinion that prohibiting the use of tape recorders is an unreasonable restraint on the right of the public to inspect property tax rolls."

The opinion also noted that the right of the public to inspect property tax rolls does not include the right to use township office equipment.

A township has the duty to provide reasonable facilities for inspection of

records, but it does not have to provide reproduction equipment.

The opinion was sought by State Sen. Gary Byker (Richmondville).

GROP assists OCC grads

The GROP (Graduate Opportunity for Placement) shop, a special office which assists two-year college graduates in obtaining full-time employment in the tri-county area, is entering its third year of operation at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus.

According to Barbara Kabacoff, who heads GROP, the office's main goal is to arrange interviews for Orchard Ridge technically trained graduates.

Representatives of business and industry in the tri-county area interested in interviewing graduates may contact Ms. Kabacoff at Oakland Community College in Farmington.

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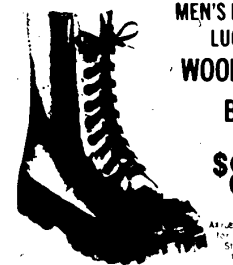
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