

NJS Presents**Museums, Archives, Artifacts, and Documents****In this Issue:**

Letter/s from a New Jersey Loyalist: Bernardus [Barnardus] LaGrange, England to the Rev. Abraham Beach, America, 1783-1792¹

By Maxine N. Lurie

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14713/njs.v5i1.155>

The document presented and transcribed here, which is archived at the Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries, is the first in a series of letters sent by New Jersey Loyalist Bernardus LaGrange (1721-1797)² from England to his former minister, the Anglican Reverend Abraham Beach (1740-1828)³ of Christ Church, New Brunswick, New Jersey in America.⁴ The correspondence in this collection continues with later letters from LaGrange's son to the minister in 1810/1811 showing that the ties were maintained for a long time.

The document transcribed here is the first in a series of letters sent by New Jersey Loyalist Bernardus LaGrange (1721-1797)⁵ from England to his former minister, the Anglican Reverend

¹ The author thanks the staff of Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries for their help with the document and images, especially Al King, David Kuzma, and Helena van Rossum. The Rutgers catalog information, and books mentioning LaGrange, all spell his first name "Bernardus," but his signature on the documents indicates "Barnardus" instead. The use of both recognizes the divergent spellings.

² Bernardus LaGrange, Edward Alfred Jones, *The Loyalists of New Jersey: Their Memorials, Petitions, Claims etc. from English Records* (Newark, N.J.: New Jersey Historical Society, 1927): 121-123. On his background see William H. Benedict, *History of New Brunswick* (1925):47, 266.

³ Abraham Beach, there are notes about him in the Finding Aid for the Wells Papers at Special Collections & University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries.

⁴ Wells Family Papers 1738-1953, Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries, MC 727 Box 5. There are nineteen letters, the first one dated October 10, 1783, the last one September 1, 1792. The early letters are addressed to Beach in New Jersey; but after 1785 to him in New York.

⁵ Bernardus LaGrange, Edward Alfred Jones, *The Loyalists of New Jersey: Their Memorials, Petitions, Claims etc. from English Records* (Newark, N.J.: New Jersey Historical Society, 1927): 121-123. On his background see William H. Benedict, *History of New Brunswick* (1925):47, 266.

Abraham Beach (1740-1828)⁶ of Christ Church, New Brunswick, New Jersey in America.⁷ The correspondence in this collection continues with later letters from LaGrange's son to the minister in 1810/1811 showing that the ties were maintained for a long time.⁸ In the initial correspondence Bernardus LaGrange, who had arrived in London just as the Royal Commission to investigate the claims of Loyalists for their losses was established, was asking for help documenting what he once owned but lost through confiscation. The letters are part of the Wells Family Papers collection containing records up to 1953, after which the family's farm was sold (more on this later). To the surprise of this author Rutgers University also has a collection of LaGrange Papers and the two fit together like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. The LaGrange papers include a copy of the testimony submitted to the Royal Claims Commission, along with deeds and other documents used to prove the claims of loss, indicating that Beach (or someone else) worked quite hard to assemble the necessary documents and send them off to England.⁹ The letter to Beach transcribed here is the first in a series of nineteen that have survived, it was written in the fall of 1783 as peace arrived and as such it says much about the moment.

Who were these two men, how did they know each other, and what do they tell us about loyalties during the Revolution? LaGrange ended up in exile, while Beach stayed and left descendants who remained in the same area until at least the mid-20th century. What are some of the factors explaining their different choices? Both suffered as a consequence of the Revolution –

⁶ Abraham Beach, there are notes about him in the Finding Aid for the Wells Papers at Special Collections & University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries.

⁷ Wells Family Papers 1738-1953, Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries, MC 727 Box 5. There are nineteen letters, the first one dated October 10, 1783, the last one September 1, 1792. The early letters are addressed to Beach in New Jersey; but after 1785 to him in New York.

⁸ There are November 6, 1811 and February 20, 1812 letters from James LaGrange to Beach. He had been sent some money from an uncle's estate (possibly Braiser), and wrote to thank Beach (perhaps the executor) and send warm greetings to the family. James noted his wife had died (it had been in 1808).

⁹ Bernardus LaGrange Papers, 1721-1797, Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries, AC 1453. The Claims document is in Folder A (3).

their lives were disrupted and they lost property. LaGrange became a refugee three times (twice to New York City, and then to London). But unlike many modern day refugees he had several advantages starting with a shared language, and then connections to prominent individuals within the Loyalist community in London.¹⁰

Bernardus LaGrange was originally from a Huguenot family living in the Albany, New York area. He moved to New Jersey and at the time of the Revolution was a New Brunswick Loyalist, a lawyer, and Christ Church (Anglican) vestryman.¹¹ In 1747 he had married Frances Brasier, daughter of Francis Brasier of Perth Amboy and Raritan Landing. LaGrange practiced law in New Brunswick and Raritan from 1745 to the start of the Revolution. Often his clients were trying to collect debts, and the debtors resented LaGrange for this and accused him of overcharging for his services.¹²

According to his application to the Royal Claims Commission when the Revolution started LaGrange estimated his practice was worth £400 a year, and stated he owned at least two stone houses, plus land in several places. Openly opposed to the Revolution he had faced the ire of his “infatuated and misguided” neighbors. In April 1775 New Brunswick Patriots hung in effigy James Rivington, publisher of *Rivington’s New-York Gazetteer*, a notorious Loyalist newspaper. He referred to them as “lower class” and full of “New England rum.”¹³ In June 1775 it was LaGrange’s turn – they carted an effigy of him through the streets of the town.¹⁴ Sufficiently intimidated after

¹⁰ This included former Governor William Franklin, General Cortlandt Skinner, and the Rev. Thomas Bradbury Chandler.

¹¹ LaGrange was on the Church committee that petitioned the SPG to appoint Beach to be the minister in New Brunswick.

¹² On background see Brendan McConville, *These Daring Disturbers of the Public Peace: The Struggle for Property and Power in Early New Jersey* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999). LaGrange is briefly mentioned, 236.

¹³ On James Rivington *New Jersey Archives v.31 Newspaper Abstracts 1775*, 117; image with the woodcut is in Robert G. Parkinson, *The Common Cause: Creating Race and Nation in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2016): 53.

¹⁴ Jones, *The Loyalists of New Jersey*; this is mentioned in his petition to Parliament in the LaGrange Papers at Rutgers. Part of the document appears in the *New Jersey Digital Highway*; Rebecca Yamin, *Rediscovering Raritan*

the Declaration of Independence, on July 14, 1776 he went to Staten Island where he joined the British forces under Sir William Howe. About this time he was sent two threatening letters signed “A Mechanic” saying he and his wife should change their “sick” “wicked” “black” hearts; although born in America he had become a “cruel enemy.”¹⁵ He returned to New Brunswick after the British gained control of the area in early December 1776, and while there during the British occupation he was the official administering the Oath of Loyalty to the King, undoubtedly adding to his patriot neighbors’ dislike. This was surely increased further by the devastation in the town and surrounding area, where “Homes were rifled, stores plundered, houses dismantled, and barns, dwellings, and churches sacked or burnt to the ground.”¹⁶ When the British evacuated June 23, 1777 he fled to New York City. In 1783 he sailed for London and never returned.

Both the strength of his loyalism and the actions of his family explain what happened. LaGrange had four children – a son and three daughters. During the Revolution James Brasier LaGrange, his son, served with Loyalist forces as did all three of his sons-in-law. Lydia LaGrange married Dr. Henry Dongan, who served in the New Jersey Volunteers; after the war they went to his native Ireland. Frances LaGrange married Edward Dongan, an Elizabethtown and Rahway lawyer, who briefly served in the New Jersey Volunteers before dying of battle wounds in 1777. Susannah LaGrange married Arthur Wadman, another Irishman and British soldier, and they moved to London. When Bernardus LaGrange filed his claims he said he was sixty-two years old

Landing: An Adventure in New Jersey Archeology (NJ DOT and Federal Highway Administration, 2011): 74-75; and in Larry R. Gerlach ed., *New Jersey in the American Revolution, 1763-1783: A Documentary History* (Trenton: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1975): 272-274.

¹⁵ Letters in the papers that were submitted to the Royal Claims Commission, LaGrange Papers, Rutgers; also copies in the New Jersey Digital Highway, and Gerlach, 239-242.

¹⁶ Charles D. Deshler, *Memorial Sketch of Old Christ Church New Brunswick, New Jersey* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Heidingsfeld, 1896), 8-9.

and had two children with him and “more than” ten grandchildren nearby, with no means of support.¹⁷

LaGrange’s property was confiscated in 1778 and 1779, the farm and house in Raritan were sold to William Paterson. After he arrived in England in 1783 he received an “emergency” pension of £80 a year. He repeatedly wrote to Beach because he needed the value of his property at the time it was sold to file claims for compensation in England. He worried that if the property was evaluated low when sold, and bought with worthless Continental money, he would not be able to collect the much higher amount it had been worth before the war started.¹⁸

In the end, while he resented his losses, and complained about the property confiscated and “given away for a song,” sold at what he said was a fraction of its worth (because of inflated Patriot money, and cheating by the Commissioners in charge of sales, as well as those who bought at discounted prices), he did receive something from the British government. He filed claims for £8,387 12s, and received compensation of £2,638 for lost property (perhaps close to the estimated 37% returned overall to Loyalists). He also received £240 a year for lost income, and a pension of £120 per year. Surely this was less than he thought he was due, but it was sufficient that he wrote they could manage if “frugal.” “Frugal” was a sizeable house (with six “handsome” rooms, two kitchens, garret rooms) and a garden, though less than he had been accustomed to before the war. The correspondence shows that he was later proud of his son who married well, and obtained a good job at the Exchequer.

As noted LaGrange was originally from the Albany, New York area and there are some letters in the collection with family members who continued there after the war. Two brothers, a

¹⁷ With him were his widowed daughter Frances and son James.

¹⁸ Support for his claims came from leading New Jersey Loyalists in England who could personally testify to the nature of his home, position, and losses.

sister, and a cousin are mentioned.¹⁹ Unlike Bernardus they and their families remained in the new United States. Possibly they had not participated so obviously in the war, on what became the “wrong” side.

Abraham Beach was a Loyalist who stayed in New Jersey during the war and remained in the new United States afterwards. He was born in Connecticut in 1740, graduated from Yale in 1757, and later felt the call of religion (although not the Congregationalism of the College). Ordained in England in 1767, he was then assigned by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) as the Anglican minister of Christ Church, in New Brunswick.²⁰ He married Anne (Antje) Van Wickle, the orphaned daughter of a local Dutch family. It was her family that owned Elm Farm along the Raritan River about three miles outside of New Brunswick. And it was later through one of their daughters that the farm descended to the Wells then Lawrence families who kept title until the 1950s. It was also the marriage that connected Beach to the local Dutch community, which he assisted in organizing the Queens Grammar School and then College (now Rutgers Preparatory School and Rutgers University).²¹ Through his Church and the school he had connections with local Patriots, which may have moderated his views during the war and then helped him remain afterwards.²²

¹⁹ LaGrange Papers. Brothers John and Arie, sister Annatjo, and a cousin Omio (one letter refers to Omio as “brother”).

²⁰ Beach, as did other SPG ministers, served more than one congregation, in his case also Piscataway and at times others New Jersey towns as well.

²¹ Beach was one of six men credited with starting the Queens Grammar School (now Rutgers Preparatory School). The other five were all Patriots – Dr. John Cochran, Rev. Jacob R. Hardenbergh, Rev. John Leydt, Rev. Johannis M. Van Harlingen, and William Ouke, mayor of New Brunswick. Documents and articles reproduced in Rutgers Preparatory School Brochure, when it became independent of Rutgers University, 1957. Not surprisingly, members of his Anglican congregation were more mixed in allegiance.

²² There were an estimated eleven Anglican ministers in New Jersey in 1775, but only four in 1783 with just two of those working. Of those when the war started, one was a Patriot serving as a Continental Army chaplain and surgeon, most were Loyalists who left, while one (Rev. William Ayres) was “Incapacitated through insanity 1775 – 1780.” Apparently only Beach stayed and tried to minister to his and other congregations. Rev. David R. King, comp. *The Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey 1785-1985* (Diocesan Bicentennial Commission, 1985); Nancy L. Rhoden, *Revolutionary Anglicanism: The Colonial Church of English Clergy During the American Revolution* (New York: New York University Press, 1999): 89. Also letters of Beach to SPG in Walter Herbert Stowe, ed., “The

On July 7, 1776 the Declaration of Independence was read in New Brunswick near the Church. Shortly after when Beach began to conduct services, which according to Anglican ritual started with prayers for the health of the King and his family, he was threatened with arrest on the grounds that this now constituted treason. He stopped then and discontinued services until the British occupied New Brunswick. He resumed from December 1776 to June 1777, while they remained in the town, traveling back and forth through the war zone between his church and home.²³ But he stopped conducting services again when the Patriots regained control. Only in 1780, after he was assured from England that he could, without disapproval, leave out the king's name, did he resume conducting services. In May 1784, shortly after the Revolution ended, at his suggestion a meeting of Anglican ministers was held at Christ Church, which is seen as the beginning of the effort to create the Episcopalian Church of the United States. Beach himself though left to become the assistant minister of Trinity Church in New York City, noting that he and his family had been subsisting on the products of the farm through the war. Members of the Church had lost so much property they could not pay his salary (and the SPG was no longer contributing to it).²⁴ Afterwards Beach continued to serve at Trinity, and played an important role in the creation of the U.S. church. Through the years Beach and his family spent summers at Elm Farm and he retired there in 1813.²⁵

Reverend Abraham Beach, D.D.: 1740-1828," *Historical Magazine Protestant Episcopal Church* 3 (1934): 76-95; Walter Herbert Stowe, ed., "Additional Letters of the Reverend Abraham Beach: 1772-1791," *Historical Magazine Protestant Episcopal Church* 5 (1936): 122-141.

²³ Approximately today's Easton Avenue.

²⁴ Correspondence with the SPG in letters edited by Stowe cited above; Richard G. Drunin, *The Missionaries and Rectors of Christ Church in the City of New Brunswick* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Christ Church, 1985); Richard P. McCormick, *Experiment in Independence* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1950):49-50. Deshler, *Old Christ Church*, 8-9, description of the damage in New Brunswick included five churches and 142 buildings damaged or destroyed, two-thirds of the 150 families suffering losses.

²⁵ Timothy Cohen, "Abraham Beach," *The Link: Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance* v.17 #2 (March, 2015):4; Timothy Cohen, "The Elm Farm at Rutgers Prep," *The Link: Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance* v.17 #1 (January, 2015): 1, 3.

Some of the other letters and what they tell us.

In subsequent letters LaGrange continued to ask for help to prove his losses, and also vented his anger at his former associates in New Brunswick. In a particularly long letter of February 10, 1785, having learned that Beach was moving to New York, he offered the following opinion: "It gives me Sincere pleasure to find that you are like to leave that Dirty Nest of Brunswick, I think there remains nothing to regret your leaving it, unless in its' Revolutions it has acquired a new set of Inhabitants, unknown to me, those I left there (a very few excepted) were far beneath your notice;²⁶ Doctor Chandler²⁷ mentioned this circumstance to me some time ago, and that Mr. Moore was to be your assistant."²⁸

He also predicted disaster. Loyalists were convinced even before fighting began that the Patriots could never win, Britain was just too powerful. Through the war they expected to win out in the end. And once the Peace Treaty was signed they predicted that the new nation could never survive. LaGrange fits this pattern. In a letter of August 18, 1786 he noted the economic recession in America and how he had warned others, but they had not listened. He was right, he wrote, and now they all "would be ruined."²⁹ There are other letters at this time with similar comments. In fact, economic depression, high taxes, trade problems, fighting along the frontier, all contributed to a sense that the new nation might not survive. They also led to the Philadelphia Convention that

²⁶ LaGrange's disdain for the patriot residents of New Brunswick was clearly mutual. During disputes over land grants and legal fees in 1768-1770 he was accused of charging exorbitant rates. When suspected of being a Loyalist in 1775 he was carted in effigy through in the town. See above notes and John E. O'Connor, *William Paterson: Lawyer and Statesman, 1745-1806* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1979): 36.

²⁷ Rev. Thomas Bradbury Chandler, Anglican minister at St. John's Church in Elizabethtown, a very vocal Loyalist who spent the war years in England, but returned to New Jersey after 1785. One of the founders, along with Beach, of the Episcopal Church of the U.S.

²⁸ According to Philip Ranlet, *The New York Loyalists* (Knoxville: University Tennessee Press, 1986):171, the Patriot members of Trinity Church vestry objected to Moore and instead picked Samuel Provoost.

²⁹ Letters to and from his brother: New Jersey Digital Highway; the LaGrange Papers. As a general sentiment among loyalists see: Wallace Brown, *The Good Americans: The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York: Morrow, 1969): 172.

wrote the constitution in 1787. During this time LaGrange was corresponding with his relatives in the Albany region, one of whom informed him in 1788 that conditions were terrible, all was “Anarchy and Confusion,” but also that ten states had already ratified the Constitution.

And yet as time went on LaGrange appears to have had some regrets, as did various other Loyalists. He missed old friends, places, and in particular Christ Church. Thus in a letter of February 15, 1787 he mentioned that a surplice his wife gave to the church before the Revolution had been stolen by Hessians, and offered to buy a new one and send it if it “would be accepted from a Deserter of his Country.” This striking phrase was similar to those others Loyalists sometimes expressed. Thomas Hutchinson, the former governor of Massachusetts, came to miss the region that had been home for generations of his family, and at times felt like a man without a country. He too died an exile, but before the war was over.³⁰ If Hutchinson wished he could go back to his house in Milton, LaGrange wrote relatives that he would never return. Living until 1797 LaGrange at least appears to have seen some of his family succeed in the “old country.”

The most recent estimates are that there were 500,000 Loyalists in the American Revolution, of which 75,000 (including an estimated 15,000 free and slave blacks) left.³¹ LaGrange and his family are among that number. But this would mean 425,000 stayed, including Beach and his family. Perhaps hardest to estimate are the number who left and then returned. There are New Jersey examples in this group as well, some of whose complex stories can be told elsewhere.

³⁰ Bernard Bailyn, *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974); as a general sense among Loyalists see Mary Beth Norton, *The British Americans: The Loyalist Exiles in England, 1774-1789* (Boston: Little Brown, 1972):129.

³¹ Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Knopf, 2011). See especially appendix on numbers.

Transcription of the Letter

October 10, 1783 from Hornmerton³² in Hackney, England

We arrived at Portsmouth the 23rd September after a Very Disagreeable and Dangerous passage of 40 Days, the particulars of which, I must refer you to a Letter Jemmy³³ is now writing to his Aunt Molly,³⁴ who we suppose is now with Mr. Brasier.³⁵ There are Commissioners appoint by Act of Parliament passed Just before they broke up, to Enquire into the Losses of the Loyalists, they are now Setting and receiving Claims, and Examine Every Claimant Strictly.³⁶ I am preparing mine and Mrs. Dongan's³⁷ in order to be Delivered next week. I find it necessary to have the Act of assembly for prosecuting persons and Confiscating Estates,³⁸ also proof of the Confiscation and Sales in Consequence thereof. I must therefore beg your goodness, with the assistance of Mr. William Patterson³⁹ (which, flatter myself from our former friendship he will not refuse me) or Such Other person as you think proper; To Send me the printed Act, with Copies of the Court Record proscribing both me and Mr. Dongan. Also proper Certificates on the

³² Possibly today's Homerton, in Hackney, now an East London borough.

³³ Jemmy – his son James Braiser LaGrange (c.1760 – 1822). A King's College (now Columbia) student, he was drafted into the American army, but when released joined the Loyalist New Jersey Volunteers. In 1782 he was briefly in the regular British Army, but ill health soon ended his service. Later in England James met a young orphan girl named Dorothy Waddington, living with Lady Robinson, her wealthy English aunt. When they fell in love the aunt generously helped them, and assisted him in finding a decent paying position working at the Exchequer in London. James had two children, a daughter and son (James Waddington LaGrange), who prospered. From Jones, *New Jersey Loyalists* 123-124, and the letters in the Wells and LaGrange Collections.

³⁴ Aunt Molly, possible the wife of Francis Braiser. A later letter mentions an "old" "Molley," maybe there were two.

³⁵ Francis Braiser, Lagrange's father-in-law who owned property in Somerset and at Raritan Landing.

³⁶ The Royal Loyalist Claims Commission was established in 1783 to evaluate losses from the Revolution. The original records are held by the British National Archives.

³⁷ Mrs. Dongan – Lagrange's widowed daughter Frances who married Edward Vaughan Dongan, a lawyer from Elizabethtown and Rahway. He had joined the New Jersey Volunteers, was wounded on Staten Island, and died in 1777. Frances and a baby son fled to New York City where the child died. Walter Townley Dongan, 18 months old, was buried with his father. Jones, *New Jersey Loyalists*, 61-62.

³⁸ Confiscation Act, 1778, Early American Imprints #43509. Other additional laws followed. Ruth Keesay, "New Jersey Legislation Concerning Loyalists," *New Jersey History* v.79 (1961):75-94.

³⁹ William Paterson (1745-1806), College of New Jersey graduate, lawyer, and New Jersey Attorney General during the war. A Patriot who, like Alexander Hamilton in New York, represented some Loyalists after the war. Paterson was later governor of New Jersey, and then a U.S. Supreme Court Justice. O'Connor, *Paterson*.

Sale of our Estates in Consequence⁴⁰ thereof, So as to Come by the Very first opportunity. Mr. William Backhouse merch^t of new York has my Orders to pay you all Expenses.

Notwithstanding our Disagreeable passage I had not the least Sickness, nor Mrs. Dongan[.] During the passage, Jemmy was not so well off, he was poorly. We are now at Mr. Wadman's,⁴¹ he and Sucky⁴² are Very well and Desire a great deal of Love to you and Mrs. Beach.⁴³ Sucky has another fine little Boy. I have not been able to Enquire about news, therefore can write none, further than that the Definitive Treaty⁴⁴ is Signed and peace proclaimed here. If you have time, Shall be much obliged to you for a particular Account how matters go on among you. Jemmy and fanny⁴⁵ joyn me in Love to Mrs. Beach and Every one of your good family. Mrs. And Mrs. Braiser and old Molley and am Dear Sire your most Aged [?] Very Humble Servant.

Bernardus Lagrange

On the back:

My lands are

The Farm on Raritan. Land on Schooley's Mountain part in Hunterdon and part in Morris

⁴⁰ His property was confiscated in 1778 and 1779, and the farm sold on April 13, 1779 to William Paterson for £12,324 8s. The farm contained 355 acres, and a house, which Cornelia Bell Paterson described as "tolerable." Given the rampant war time inflation this was considerably less than it might appear. Jones, *New Jersey Loyalists*, and O'Connor, *Paterson*, 109; Richard Haskett, "William Paterson, Attorney General of New Jersey: Public Office and Private Profit in the American Revolution," *William & Mary Quarterly* s.3 #7 (1950):38; Richard Haskett, "Prosecuting the Revolution," *American Historical Review* 59 (1954): 586-587.

⁴¹ Arthur Wadman, married to LaGrange's daughter Susannah. An Irishman and British soldier he was captured, paroled, then served until 1780, when the family went to England. Apparently at the time of the letter they were in London, with their six children. Jones, 238-239.

⁴² Sucky probably a nick name for his daughter Susannah LaGrange Wadman.

⁴³ Mrs. Beach: Ann Van Wickle Beach (d. 1808). She inherited Elm Farm on the Raritan River above New Brunswick, where they spent much of the war, and summers afterwards. When he retired in 1813 from Trinity Church in Manhattan, he returned to that farm. The land was sold to Rutgers Preparatory School in 1958. Frank V. Spurduto, *A History of Rutgers Preparatory School* v.1 (Somerset, New Jersey: Rutgers Preparatory School, 1967): 19.

⁴⁴ Treaty of Paris: Preliminary Treaty November 1782, formal treaty September 3, 1783, and ratified in United States January 14, 1784.

⁴⁵ Fanny, his daughter Frances LaGrange Dongan.

Counties. House and Lott in Brunswick,⁴⁶ also Meadows. Lands on Foxhill in Morris County.

And Woodland at South River.

Mr. Dongan's

House and Lott in Elizabeth Town of 6 acres

House and Lott, at Rahway 6+ [fraction but unreadable] acres[.]⁴⁷



Above:

Reception of the American Loyalists by Great Britain in the Year 1783. This engraving, based on a painting by Benjamin West, shows a helmeted Britain hand outstretched to welcome Loyalists. One figure represents William Franklin, others a Native American, women, children, and slaves. Franklin was among those who supported LaGrange's claim for compensation. Wikipedia Commons.

⁴⁶ New Brunswick.

⁴⁷ Frances LaGrange Dongan claimed £2,232 and received £422. Women generally received less than male applicants. Jones, *New Jersey Loyalists*, 61-62; material to prove her claims are in the LaGrange Papers. She fared better than poor applicants (male or female) who were not always literate and were without contacts to help them obtain documents or exert influence.

Below:

Scan of the letter Bernardus [Barnardus] LaGrange to Abraham Beach, October 10, 1783. Wells Family Papers 1738-1953, Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries, MC 727, Box 5.

Hamerton in Hackney 10th October 1783.

Dear Sir

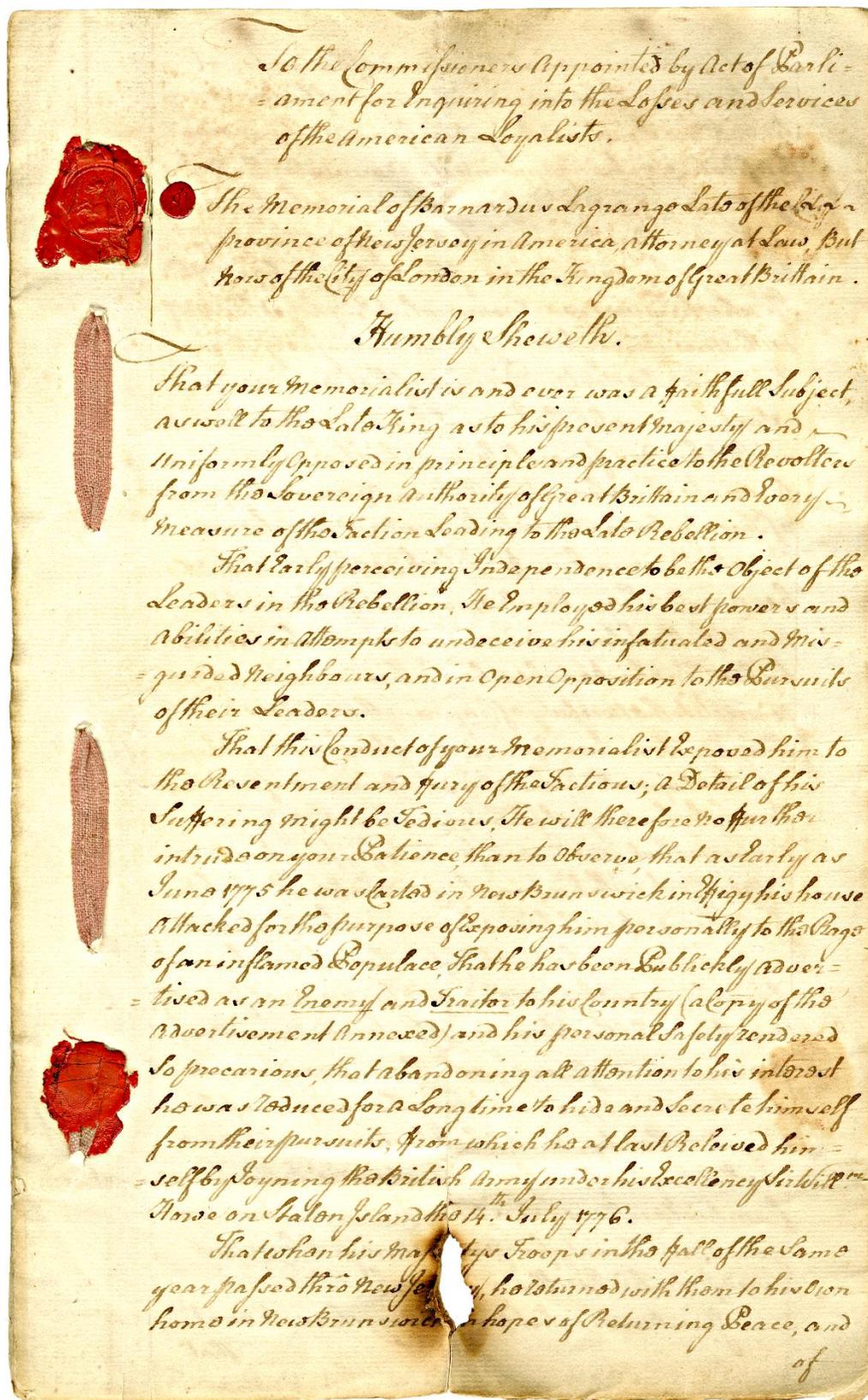
We arrived at Portsmouth the 23^d September after a very disagreeable and dangerous passage of 40 Days, the particulars of which, I must refer you to a Letter Jemmy is now writing to his Aunt Molly, who we suppose is now with M^r. Brasier. There are Commissioners appointed by Act of Parliament passed just before they broke up, to Enquire into the Losses of the Loyalists, they are now settling and receiving Claims, and hearing every Claimant Strictly. I am proposing mine and M^r. Dongans in Order to be delivered next week. I find it necessary to have the Act of Parliament for proscribing Persons and Confiscating Estates, the proof of the Confiscation and Sales in consequence thereof. Must therefore beg your goodness, with the assistance of M^r. W^m. Patterson (which I flatter myself, from our former Friendship he will not refuse me) or such other person as you think proper, to send me the printed Act, with Copies of the Court Record proscribing both me and M^r. Dongan, also proper Certificates of the Sales of our Estates in consequence thereof, so as to come by the very first opportunity, M^r. W^m. Backhouse March: of New York has my Orders to pay you all Expenses. Notwithstanding our disagreeable passage, I had not the least Sickness, but M^r. Dongan during the passage, Jemmy was not so well off, howe poorly, we are now at M^r. Wadman's, he & the Children are very well and desire a great deal of Love to you and M^r. Beach, the Children has another fine little Boy. I have not been able to Enquire about News, therefore can write none, further than that the definitive Treaty is signed, and peace proclaimed here. If you have time, I shall be much obliged to you, to recount how matters go on ^{for a particular} ~~with you~~ among you Jemmy and Panny Joynes in Love to M^r. Beach and every one of your good Family M^r. & M^r. Brasier and Old Molly and am Dear Sir. Your Most Obed^t. and Very Humble Servant
Barnardus LaGrange

Turn over

Below:

Scan of the Claims Application

Memorial of Bernardus [Barnardus] LaGrange to the Commissioners etc. Bernardus LaGrange Papers, Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries, AC 1453 Folder A (3). Pages are fastened together with a tie, and the front marked with two red wax seals. The top seal has the image of a British dragon on it.



Maxine N. Lurie, an Emerita Professor of History at Seton Hall University, still teaches one course a year, most recently New Jersey History. The author of scholarly articles and books on the state's history, she is currently working on a manuscript about those caught in the middle of the civil war that raged here during the American Revolution. The documents presented here are a product of work for that project.