

JOHN WENTWORTH, Governor of New Hampshire 1767-1776, Nova Scotia 1792-1808

Born in Portsmouth N.H. August 9, 1737. His father, Mark Hunking Wentworth, had made a fortune in the West Indies trade and in the supply of masts to the royal navy. Besides being one of the richest merchants in New England he was one of a group of land magnates known as the Masonian Proprietors, who more or less owned New Hampshire. John Wentworth's mother also was a member of the provincial plutocracy, Elizabeth Rindge.

The Mark Wentworths resided in Portsmouth in a large gambrel-roofed house with a graceful cupola, standing amid elms at the corner of Daniel and Chapel Streets. Here the future governor was born and spent his childhood until he went to study at Harvard. At Harvard John was a classmate of John Adams, later president of the United States. This was the class of 1755, in which year John graduated and entered his father's business.

He had a little money of his own, and invested it with other speculators in a tract of land on the N.W. frontier of New Hampshire. They called their township Wolfborough "in honor of the late renowned and illustrious General Wolf."

When the peace was signed with France in 1763, Mark Wentworth decided to send John "a worthy, agreeable young fellow" to London, equipped with the best letters of introduction the provincial aristocracy could supply. He was then 26. He was careful to make friends in the right quarters, and struck up a particularly successful friendship with the Marquis of Rockingham, with whom he was distantly related. Charles Watson-Wentworth, Marquis of Rockingham, was then 34, soon to become leader of the Whig opposition to George 3rd.

Rockingham's magnificent country seat, Wentworth House, was and still is the grandest establishment in all Yorkshire. Situated in a park of 1500 acres, it must have dazzled John when he first beheld it. The principal facade extended 600 feet from tower to tower, and consisted of a central block with two symmetrical wings. Its main hall was 60 feet square and 40 high, fringed with a colonnade of Ionic columns and gleaming with marble statues. The mansion contained a number of old masters -- Guildos, Titians, Caraccis, Giordanos, and Van Dyck's celebrated portrait of that earlier Wentworth, the Earl of Strafford.

None of this was lost on the young American, and the friendship with Rockingham continued throughout the Marquis' life. John ~~###~~ received from home an appointment as assistant to Barlow Trecothick, the agent of New Hampshire in London, and when the stamp troubles arose in 1765 he did his utmost to persuade Rockingham and others that the Act must be repealed.

In the summer of 1765 the Grenville ministry was dismissed and Rockingham and his Whig friends took office. Rockingham did not like the Stamp Act. Early in 1766 it was repealed. About this time John's uncle Benning Wentworth, ~~###~~ governor of New Hampshire, was in hot water at home and in England over his methods in granting New Hampshire lands. Benning had made himself rich at the game and was permitted to resign. John Wentworth, not quite 30, ofcourse fell heir to the governorship -- he was on the spot, with the ear of Rockingham, (and there is a possibility that his whole stay in England had been made with something like this in view. T.H.R.)

In August 1766 he received his commission, with other letters patent which gave him admiralty jurisdiction over the New Hampshire waters, and the post of surveyor-general to the king's woods in America. He received ~~#####~~ honors before leaving. Doctor of Common Law of Oxford University. Besides his bachelor's degree, Wentworth had taken his A.M. at Harvard 3 years later; and in 1763 Nassau (Princeton) had given him his first honorary degree of master of arts, followed a year later by an LL.D. from the great Scottish institution at Aberdeen.

Before leaving for America, John bought some fine English horses and engaged a retinue of servants. To observe the king's woods in the southern provinces he returned by way of Charleston, S.C., after a rough voyage (he was a poor sailor) stopping at Lisbon and the Canaries. He set foot to American earth in Charleston on March 22, 1767, and after 4 days rest there proceeded inland to study the timber.

He made a careful and shrewd examination and wrote the first intelligent and detailed report on the forests of the south.

He travelled north slowly, stopping at the homes of the colonial aristocracy in each province. It is an interesting fact that each and every one of the families who entertained Wentworth chose the Loyalist side in the Revolution and were in most cases banished from their homes and hearthstones almost within a decade. Such too was to be the fate of their guest, but in 1767 the colonial aristocracy ate, drank, were merry,

The reception committee in New Hampshire put on a great show at Portsmouth, concluding with a banquet. This was Saturday, June 13, 1767, and it ushered in the stormiest administration in New Hampshire history.

New Hampshire contained nearly 50,000 people, was rapidly growing, now that the French menace was removed on the north. By 1775 population was more than 80,000. Portsmouth contained 4500 souls of whom 175 were negro slaves. Grants of land made after 1741 were supposed to yield a small quit-rent to the Crown. The quit-rents were unpopular, and Wentworth endeavored to make them more palatable by applying some of the proceeds to the cutting of roads, which New Hampshire needed very much, In 1771 he used £ 500 for this purpose, and wrote England that he had opened 200 miles of road. In 1772 he persuaded the N.H. legislature to hire Capt. Samuel Holland for 100 guineas to make a map of N.H., which was done. A fine map, and a bargain. In 1772 the standing army of N.H. consisted of 1 officer and 5 men, stationed in Fort William and Mary (known as "The Castle) on Great Island, about 3 miles from the centre of Portsmouth.

But with the exception of exempted groups, all males between 16 and 60 were obliged to bear arms and perform military drill 4 days each year. Each man or boy had to provide himself with a musket, and each town must keep a store of supplies on the basis of a barrel powder, 200 lbs bullets and 300 flints for every 60 men of military age. Thus every town or precinct could furnish a company of armed men. A number of companies combined to form a regiment, and each regiment was obliged to assemble once in 3 years.

In 1767 Wentworth found about 10,000 men in the militia. He took a keen interest in making a military force of them, attended reviews whenever possible, and made his interest felt by every officer and man.

But his busiest interest was in the Kings Woods. He enforced the cutting laws with great tact and vigor. He enjoyed the hardships and adventures of these excursions into the wild country, frequently crossing rivers on logs afloat, although he could not swim. And he took care to keep England informed on the fatigues of his work, as well as the efficiency.

In 1770 Wentworth sailed up the coast to Halifax in the hope of finding a large tract of timber which the Crown might reserve in entirety for the use of the Navy. His orders called for 200,000 acres in Nova Scotia, bordering on the ocean and traversed by navigable rivers. About 18 miles west of Halifax (St. Margaret's Bay) he found just what he sought but left the matter to be settled by the local governor and the Lords of Admiralty.

Except in the District of Maine, where there were pine trees 150 feet tall and 5 or 6 feet through at the butt, the west bank of the Connecticut River produced the best mast timber in America. In 1769 , January, Wentworth pounced on some poachers there, travelling 300 miles in cold and snow in just 16 days, there and back.

When he authorised the cutting of a man's trees to fill an order for the navy, he invariably took care that the owner of the soil had preference in hauling them to the contractor. He believed that the dignity of government should be constantly before the people; hence if he rode to Boston to discover why a Massachusetts marshal had failed to carry out order of the surveyor-general, he traveled in a coach and required accommodations for 12 horses and 8 servants.

New Hampshire possessed no province house in which to lodge its governor. For an abode for John Wentworth the assembly hired a dignified 2½ storied house on Pleasant Street. It could have been bought for £ 1700 but the shrewd legislators preferred to rent it for £ 67 per annum, which the owner complained was less than half the lawful interest on the capital invested. Here the bachelor governor was installed soon after his return from England, and here he continued to reside until the summer of 1775.

It was too near the road perhaps, but half hidden by ancient lindens, and John was hardly just when he described it as "a small hut with little, comfortable apartments." His description of its surroundings was more appreciative. "On the one side we look over the town and down the river to the boundless Atlantic Ocean; on the other side we overlook a place for a garden, separated from the fields by a large sea-water pond."

Within a month he ordered wall papers from Boston, some of a specified kind, the rest "of any pretty, fanciful and cheap satin." (Some of the original flock-paper adorns the walls today -- 1920) Furniture was brought from Boston, and in the course of a few months His Excellency had accomplished his object of making "a Lilliputian Wentworth House here." The atmosphere of the Marquis' great house was partly reproduced by a retinue of Yorkshire servants whom John had brought with him.

For companionship the Governor relied upon his cousin, Michael Wentworth, a retired colonel of the British army, who had recently emigrated to America to try his luck. Although the Colonel was John senior by 10 or 15 years the two men had much in common, especially a passion for horses. Both were fond of music.

As a housekeeper John had much to learn -- ordering bacon in July, for instance, when there was none to be had. He had to get his coals from Louisburg, Cape Breton, the nearest supply, through Lord William Campbell. Then there was the servant problem. The domestics brought from Yorkshire were soon ambitious to become something more than butlers and footmen. To fill the vacancies he bought the services of poor immigrants who had met the expenses of the voyage by mortgaging their labor for a period of years to the captain of the ship. He sent to England for 2 footmen, "that can play well on a French horn; also, or one of them, play on a ~~violin~~ violin." He added, "My tailor will clothe them in my livery; and the mast-ship, or any other ship to this port, will bring them out to me."

He kept 16 horses in his stable. His carriages varied in style from the stately coach to "a little sulky one-horse chair for one person", which was made to order in Philadelphia in accordance with John's minute instructions. "A sulky on steel springs, with wheels at least 4 inches lower than our good friend Mr. Foxcroft's, to be painted the lightest stave-color, and gilt mouldings, with my crest and cypher inclosed in a plain oval without the least ornament, and rather in a small compass."

In the early autumn of 1769 Copley, reputed the best portrait painter in America, came to Portsmouth to paint John Wentworth. It is a pastel of great beauty, and shows us the handsome intelligent aristocrat, amiable but saved from weakness by a resolute New England chin. In the midst of Copley's visit, the secretary of the province, Theodore Atkinson Jr. died of consumption at the age of 33. His widow was the daughter of Samuel Wentworth, a prominent Boston merchant, and she was a first cousin of her husband and of John Wentworth.

She was one of the most beautiful women in America. Copley painted her portrait in 1765 and preserved for all time her appearance at 19 or 20. Quality is apparent in every line and feature; no great amount of character to be sure, but an abundance of animation, grace and charm. Atkinson had married her before her 17th birthday. She was now a widow at 24. The funeral took place on Nov. 1, 1769, and John directed that minute guns be discharged from the Castle and from a warship in the harbor.

Exactly 10 days later John and Frances Atkinson were married, with colors displayed on shipping in the harbor, all the bells ringing, and cannon roaring. For a number of years they had no children, but on Jan. 20, 1775 the booming of guns down the harbor announced to all Portsmouth that Mrs. Wentworth had given birth to a son. A month later the babe was carried to Queen's Chapel and baptized with the name of Charles-Mary, after Lord and Lady Rockingham, at their request. John wrote, "The boy is well and hearty. He will do to pull up stumps at Wentworth House" -- this was John's unfinished country seat at Wolfeborough.

In 1770 Benning Wentworth died, and John quickly drew attention to the manner in which his vast lands had been acquired. He proposed to regrant them and was supported by the Council with one dissident, Peter Livius, an influential man who proceeded

attack John's administration of New Hampshire, first at home, and then in London. Some of Livius' points were true -- his claim that there were 9 relatives of John on the Council, for instance. And Livius succeeded in convincing the Lords of Trade, in spite of a long memorial from Wentworth on the subject. They decided that John was guilty of 4 of the charges, and questioned "whether Mr. Wentworth's conduct in the maladministration with which he has been charged renders him a fit person to be entrusted with your Majesty's interests in the important station he now holds."

John's recourse was to the Privy Council, through his powerful friend ~~#####~~ Rockingham, and the affair was referred to the Privy Council's Committee for Plantation Affairs. The Committee found that there was "no foundation for any censure upon the said John Wentworth". This was in 1773 -- the affair had dragged its course over nearly 3 years.

John was triumphant and the citizens of Portsmouth celebrated his vindication by giving a bell in his honor.

His project of a "Wentworth House" in the remote hills of New Hampshire had been begun in 1768, when he sent two men to begin clearing the site beside a lake in the township of Wolfeborough. Behind it were steep hills and rocky woodlands, and there was a superb view. He planned a post road through Wolfeborough linking Portsmouth to Canada, and intended to live there most of the year. In 1768 he was still a bachelor and made his plans accordingly.

About 100 acres were cleared, and amid the stumps and brush arose the frame of a mansion 104 feet long and 42 feet wide, "built of the best, and by the best workmen in the country." In May 1769 the house was habitable, but far from finished. As the years went on it developed into one of the finest houses in New England, containing among other features a ballroom 40 feet long. Other buildings soon appeared, described by Wentworth as follows:

"One stable and coach house 62 feet long, 40 feet wide and 24' post. Another stable of same dimensions. One barn, 106 feet by 40, and 17 or 18 feet post. One large dairy with a well. Chimney, smoke, and ashes house etc. One blacksmith's shop. Joiner and cabinet-maker's shop under the same roof. One garden, walled with stone on 3 sides (the front secured by an arm of the lake) contained about 40 acres. A park of 600 acres enclosed with large lengths of trees. In the park, one sawmill and one grist mill. On this estate was every implement of husbandry and for the shops thereon; and various boats and gondolas for conveyance of goods, produce and cattle." (Quoted from a statement which Wentworth filed with the Commission of Enquiry into the Losses and Services of the American Loyalists.) He valued the whole estate at £ 20,000. The fame of the plantation spread beyond the limits of the province and survived the Revolution.

John rejoiced in the great project; he was active and daring always in the woods, which he loved. But Frances found the remote life very trying, and wrote to a friend, "... although I live in the woods I am fond of knowing what passes in the world. Nor have my ideas sunk half enough in rural tranquillity to prefer a grove to a ball-room. I wish you were here to take a game of billiards with me, as I am alone. The Governor is so busy in directions to his workmen that I am almost turned hermit."

He imported several pairs of pheasants from England and turned them into the woods, where they perished. He took some cusk from salt water and put them in Smith's Pond, where contrary to all predictions they thrived. His love of adventure led him to explore part of the White Hills in the summer of 1772.

Other settlers followed the road to Wolfeborough, some of them aristocrats like himself, most of them poor. In 1766 there was no population at all. In 1775 there were 200.

John's income at this time was small: his salary as governor was £ 700; as Surveyor General of His Majesty's Woods he received £ 400. His independent income was almost nothing. His revenue from all sources totalled perhaps £ 1200. How did this cover his expenses in Portsmouth and at Wentworth House? Apparently John's father, Mark Hunking Wentworth lent him more than £ 13,000, most of which was doubtless

expended at Wolfeborough. Other obligations increased John's indebtedness to £ 18,000.

Wentworth House may have been an extravagance, but it focussed the attention of rich and poor upon the township of Wolfeborough, tempted the speculator and attracted the settler. John forced the towns along the way to do their share of work on the well-nigh-impassable road. He reckoned that when real estate began to boom, the sale of his odd lots alone would pay for the great ~~farm~~ ^{farm and mansion} on the shore of Smith's Pond. But the revolution prevented the happy realization of his expectations.

John had been active in the formation of a college, originally designed as a school to educate the savages and financed for this purpose in England, and located at Hanover, N.H. He was a zealous propagandist for the Church of England and tried to have the Bishop of London named as one of the trustees, but failed. It was suggested by Rev. Eleazar Wheelock, the Connecticut Dissenter who was founder of the school, that the college be named Wentworth College. But it was finally named after Lord Dartmouth and a charter of George 3rd was issued to Dartmouth College on Dec. 13, 1769. Wentworth seems to have hoped that in time he could bring about a connection of the college with the Established Church. Probably President Wheelock of Dartmouth College felt more relief than he would have liked to admit when the outbreak of the Revolution put an end to the ecclesiastical manoeuvres of Governor Wentworth.

When the Townshend Acts, which provided for a tax on tea, amongst other things, were passed in 1767, their effect in America was ~~serious~~ ^{serious}. And worse was the rigorous manner of their enforcement. Wentworth saw the evil results, growing every day, and wrote to a friend in August 1768, " ... with moderation, prudence and temper the act would surely have taken place with very little difficulty. (But) not one healing measure has yet appeared. All have been, in the sailor's style, 'Obey the act and be damned!' The answer is readily known from London Bridge through ~~all~~ ^{down} ~~all~~ ^{named} His Majesty's dominions ... All Englishmen will huzza out, 'We'll be ~~named~~ ^{named} if we do!'"

Wentworth enforced the laws in New Hampshire faithfully, but with prudence. He spoke softly, but was a man of action and the people knew it. Nevertheless he saw the rise of feeling which he was powerless to combat. In Sep. 1769 he wrote to Rockingham, " ... the conduct in the colonies was first impelled by vexation and passion into excess. It now seems subsiding into principle and system, infinitely more likely to get rooted than all the former noise and clamor. If these circumstances are early and wisely considered, mutual confidence will again flourish; but otherwise cordiality will soon be converted into perpetual distrust."

A few days before the Boston Massacre he wrote, "Our province is yet quiet, and the only one; but will, I fear, soon enter. If they do, they'll exceed all the rest in zeal."

On June 27, 1774, he prevented a Portsmouth "Tea Party" by judicious arrangements for 27 chests of tea, which were re-shipped to Halifax. And when the "committee of correspondence" summoned members of the Assembly to meet in the courthouse on July 6 for the avowed purpose of electing delegates to the First Continental Congress, Wentworth appeared with his Council and the sheriff of Rockingham County, and pointed out that their meeting was illegal and bade them disperse. They adjourned to a tavern -- and arranged for deputies to a convention which should elect delegates to the Congress.

So far, Wentworth still held a certain amount of respect and even affection amongst the New Hampshire people. But in the autumn of 1774, at General Gage's request, he arranged, rather surreptitiously, for a number of carpenters to go to Boston and work on the barracks for Gage's troops. This brought the first outbreak of public opinion. His conduct was condemned by the Portsmouth "committee of ways and means", of which his uncle, Mark Hunking Wentworth was chairman. John blamed it on the machinations of his old enemy Livius, and Livius' friends, and described his uncle as "a ~~superannuated~~ ^{superannuated}, weak, already forgiven old squire."

On Dec. 13, 1774, having heard from Paul Revere in person that the British govt. intended seizing all provincial munitions, about 400 men of Portsmouth and vicinity

raided the Castle, overpowered its garrison of 6, and carried off the powder. Wentworth did his best to arouse the more conservative element in Portsmouth to the support of H.M.'s government, but all he could raise was 9 men, who included his young brother-in-law (Francis' brother) Benning Wentworth. Even the revenue officers refused to assist him.

Wentworth sent to Gage and Admiral Graves, asking for ships of war to protect the treasury of N.H. and the custom house. At this point a committee called on him asking him to promise pardon for all who had engaged in the attack on the Castle. He could make no such promise, but said if they would return the powder and disperse, the government would consider it "an alleviation of the offense." ~~But the men seemed disposed to adopt this course.~~ The men seemed disposed to adopt this course. But during the night some of the more active insurgents, under a lawyer named Sullivan, who had represented N.H. at the Congress, went to the Castle and carried off 16 cannon, 60 muskets and other military stores. With the assistance of insurgents who marched in from the countryside, these materials were taken up the Piscataqua river.

Two armed ships, Canso and Scarborough, arrived from Boston, with 100 marines. But as Wentworth wrote to Lord Dartmouth on Dec. 20, 1774. "... with regard to bringing any of them to punishment, there is not strength enough in the government to effect it in its present state. No jail would hold them long, and no jury would find them guilty."

Wentworth next asked Gage to send troops, and Gage did in fact send an officer to inspect buildings at Portsmouth suitable for barracks; but Gage was too fully occupied in Boston to spare any of his soldiers. Wentworth had gathered 50 or 60 loyalists, more for a bodyguard than anything else, and named several of them magistrates and militia officers in place of disaffected men. This naturally increased his unpopularity and produced menaces which, he wrote, "... I mind no further than to arm my house well and associate about 50 good men."

In Jan. 1775 he wrote, "... ~~Our hemisphere threatens a hurricane.~~ Our hemisphere threatens a hurricane. I've in vain strove almost to death to prevent it. If I can bring out of it, at last, safety to my country and honor to our sovereign, my labor will be joyful."

By this time loyalists in the rural districts were being tormented by their radical neighbors, and many were fleeing to Boston. Portsmouth not being considered a place of safety." (Amongst them was Wentworth's friend Benjamin Thompson, later Count Rumford)

The fights at Lexington and Concord created much excitement in N.H. and about 1200 men from the southern part N.H. marched to Cambridge. The provincial congress at Exeter voted to raise three regiments, 2 of which distinguished themselves at Bunker Hill a few weeks later. In May, Captain Barkley of the Scarborough seized two vessels coming into Portsmouth with provisions and sent them off to supply Gage at Boston. He also began to impress fishermen out of their boats to augment his own crew. This brought 600 or 700 rebels into town, who set up a battery on Jerry's Point.

Wentworth appealed to Barkley to release the fishermen and this was done. The Assembly met and simply dithered. A stout loyalist was Wentworth's friend Captain Fenton, a former British army officer. Fenton advised his neighbors to stay on their farms and not join the insurgents. He was called to account by the rebel Provincial Congress at Exeter; instead he went to Portsmouth, and after attending the morning session of the Assembly, called at Wentworth's house on Pleasant Street.

At once the house was surrounded by a multitude of men under arms, demanding that Fenton come forth and yield himself up. Wentworth sent for his bodyguard, but none responded. A cannon appeared in the street, and after it was pointed at the door of Wentworth's house, Fenton came out and gave himself up. In the evening, while the mob escorted Fenton to Exeter, Wentworth and his household fled to the dilapidated old fort, which lay under the guns of H.M.S. Scarborough.

In the meantime Wentworth House at Scarborough had been ransacked, and would have been burnt but for the persuasions of 2 elderly men in the mob. The Provincial Congress had carried off almost all the public records of N.H. and carried them off

to Exeter.

Wentworth's difficulties were increased by the bullying behaviour of Barkley of the Scarborough, and at last, when the Portsmouth Committee of Safety stopped supplies of fresh beef etc. from reaching the warship, matters came to a head. Barkley announced he must leave for Boston to re-victual. Defenceless, Wentworth and his household had no choice but to go with him, and on August 23rd 1775, John gazed for the last time on the swirling tide of the Piscataqua. Within half an hour the mob had demolished the undefended fort and the humble dwelling within. Wentworth had expected the Scarborough to return. But Admiral Graves had other uses for the frigate.

This made it awkward for Wentworth in many ways, not least because the N.H. Assembly had been summoned to meet Sep. 28th, and since he could not attend in person, it would be necessary to prorogue the Assembly in advance. This must be issued from N.H. soil, so Wentworth and ~~his~~ His devoted secretary Thomas ~~Mac~~ Macdonogh, sailed in a small armed schooner, the Hope, to the fishing hamlet of Gosport on the Isle of Shoals, a few miles S.E. of the mouth of the Piscataqua. There his messenger, by boat, delivered the proclamation to Theodore Atkinson, the senior member of the Council.

There followed a dreary winter in Boston, where supplies were scarce and prospects gloomy. Frances Wentworth had received invitations from friends in England, and on Jan. 19, 1776, she and her infant sailed for England in the Julius Caesar, leaving the Governor to await the outcome of the siege.

When the British army evacuated Boston in the spring of '76, Wentworth engaged a schooner, the Resource, to convey his remaining household, himself and a score of other Loyalists to Halifax. Amongst them was the Rev. Dr. Coker, the rector of King's Chapel.

He remained in Halifax until June '76, when he sailed with the army to Long Island. General Howe made an easy conquest of New York, and Wentworth took up quarters in Flatbush. From friends in New Hampshire he heard that many men there would join the King if a strong force of British troops arrived. But Burgoyne's expedition from the north came to grief at Saratoga in the autumn of 1777, and it was plain that the rebels had got their second wind and the war would drag on a long time.

In February 1778 Wentworth, with the Government's permission, sailed for England and arrived in London after a voyage of 24 days.

Mrs. Wentworth and the boy Charles-Mary had fared very well. Lord and Lady Rockingham had proved friends indeed. The Marquis even insisted that the babe should occupy the apartments which he himself had occupied in childhood. Another good friend was Paul Wentworth (relation ~~of~~ to John unknown, if any), whose austere country residence, Brandenburg House, at Hammersmith, was a second home to John for the next 5 years. Paul was working ardently for the British government; at first in France and later in the Netherlands he watched closely the movements of American agents and reported in cipher to Lord North.

The Prime Minister held Paul in high esteem; but George 3rd insisted Paul was "a dabbler in the Alley" and an "avowed stock-jobber" whose motive was to advance his own interests or those of John Wentworth.

Soⁿ after his arrival in England John Wentworth went to France, where he met his old classmate John Adams at the Comédie Francaise. He seized Adams' hand, and Adams was a little embarrassed, for as he wrote afterwards "The governor and the minister were probably watched by the police, and our interview would^dknown the next morning at Versailles." However, Wentworth asked after his father and friends in America. In a day or two Wentworth journeyed out to Passy to see Benjamin Franklin. Franklin and Adams received him together. "There was no conversation but upon trifles." Adams added, "The governor's motives for this trip to Paris and visit to Passy, I never knew. ... Not an indelicate expression to us, or to our country or our ally, escaped him."

Wentworth spent the greater part of his time in and about London among his American friends and Loyalists. His pension of £ 600 was probably insufficient in such an expensive place, but thanks to Rockingham and opulent Paul Wentworth, he and his

family fared much better than most of their countrymen.

In the autumn of 1777 the Continental Congress, hard pressed for funds, recommended the confiscation and sale of all Loyalist property. New Hampshire promptly passed an act forbidding 75 persons who had left New Hampshire to return without leave from the Provincial Congress. The penalty for a first offense was deportation. For a second offense it was death. The first name on the list was John Wentworth's.

Many of Wentworth's personal effects, including his books, were sold at auction in Exeter; but the Congress voted to exempt his furniture in the Portsmouth house, and the family portraits at Wolfeborough, which were passed over to his father.

In 1781 Andrew Cabot of Beverley, rich through privateering during the war, invested some of his newly-gotten wealth in the famous farm at Wolfeborough. Apparently he and his brother John aspired to be country gentlemen. Together they acquired neighboring tracts of land until their combined holdings formed a magnificent estate; but the death of Andrew Cabot in 1791 seems to have destroyed his brother's interest in their joint enterprise, and before long it passed into other hands.

The confiscation of Wentworth's properties brought over £ 10,000 into the provincial treasury, but as it was burdened with debts amounting to £ 18,000, the net proceeds to the government ~~was~~ were none. The Governor's father, Mark Hunking Wentworth, withdrew his claim of £ 13,000 until the other creditors had been paid in full.

In the meantime the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown had dislodged Lord North's cabinet. It was supplanted in March 1782 by a Whig ministry with the Marquis of Rockingham at its head. The political cards could not have been shuffled more favorably for John Wentworth. Although Lord Rockingham died in July 1782, it is reasonable to suppose he was responsible for Wentworth's obtaining an appointment to his former office of Surveyor General of His Majesty's Woods in North America. The revolution had contracted the area of the King's woods, but there were splendid pines in Nova Scotia (which then included New Brunswick) and their preservation for the Navy was now doubly important.

In the summer of 1783, therefore, Wentworth left his family in England and crossed the ocean to Halifax.

He arrived there in September. His office now commanded a salary of £ 800, but that meant only " £ 400 neat" according to Wentworth, besides a guinea a day when the surveyor was in active service. Although he was now 46, Wentworth retained his bodily vigor and spent about six months in the year in the woods.

His wife soon followed him to Halifax, leaving her little boy in England. On the shore of Bedford Basin, about 6 miles from Halifax, Wentworth built an unpretentious but attractive country home which he called Friar Lawrence's Cell, after the place where Romeo and Juliet held their meetings.

Here and in Halifax the years passed pleasantly and rapidly amongst many old Loyalist friends. The boy, Charles-Mary, went to school at Westminster. In 1791 he was 16, and John and Frances Wentworth sailed for England in that year to re-acquaint themselves with him. It was a most opportune move.

In the autumn of 1791 John Parr, governor of Nova Scotia for the past 9 years, died in office. The Home Secretary, Henry Dundas, looked about for a successor, and John Wentworth took pains to be in sight. One day during the winter 1791-92 he received the coveted appointment, and in April 1792 sailed for N.S. in the frigate Hussar.

Five weeks later he was welcomed to Halifax by a salute of 15 guns, and was escorted to Government House by a delegation of magistrates and army officers. On the following day, May 14, 1792, Wentworth was sworn into office, and the guns on the Parade proclaimed his inauguration.

Since 1786 the governor of Quebec had been nominally the chief executive of N.S., and so Wentworth's title was Lieutenant-Governor; but he had a free hand in the government of his province.

As in New Hampshire he saw the importance of roads, and within a few months of his inauguration he had brought about the construction of a road between Pictou and Halifax. He wrote, "It was long wanted, but thought impracticable from the expense and the difficulty of the country. Both are overcome, and a good cart-road is cut, made, bridged, by which the inhabitants ~~###~~ of that populous, increasing and fertile district have an easy communication with the capital. The distance is 68 miles, of which I have made 40 entirely, and made the rest comfortable (except 8 miles which was done before) and my funds not diminished £ 150 currency."

In the autumn of 1792 he went to Pictou and with true Wenworthian éclat officially opened the road. Equally characteristic was his scheme to connect Halifax and Minas Basin by a canal along the Shubenacadie valley; but this was not established until 1830, long after Wentworth's time.

The Church of England college which he had hoped to establish at Hanover N.H., he found^{at} Windsor, N.S., and to promote its welfare became one of his fixed policies. He besought the Crown to grant a charter of incorporation, and repeatedly reminded the imperial govt. of its need of financial assistance. In both cases he was successful. The British government supplemented its original grant of £ 4000 by a subsidy of £ 1500 in 1795, and in 1802 Parliament began a series of annual appropriations of £ 1,000 which continued 30 years or more. In 1802 also the charter was issued, and the institution received the name of King's College.

Wentworth was appointed one of the governors of the college. The Bishop of Nova Scotia was another, and the Archbishop of Canterbury was made patron. In 1803 the majority of the governors adopted a statute which compelled every student at matriculation to subscribe to the 39 Articles of Faith of the C. of E. The Bishop of N.S. protested this, on the ground that the sons of Dissenters would now be excluded; and the Archbishop of Canterbury supported him, annulling the illiberal restriction. But the board, on which Wentworth was the highest government official, failed to publish the annulment, and so left the people of N.S. in ignorance of the change in entrance requirements. It seems clear that he was not on the side of the broader-minded bishop.

War with France broke out in 1793, and as there was some doubt of the attitude of the U.S. in this struggle, extensive military preparations became necessary in N.S. Wentworth threw himself into this work with his usual energy. At the direction of the British Govt. he raised the King's Nova Scotia Regiment, 600 men, which acquitted itself well; and equal success attended his efforts to organise an efficient and mobile militia. There were about 9,000 men in N.S. capable of bearing arms, and the Governor's zeal was transmitted to them all.

He used common sense however; and when the commander of the Halifax garrison called on Wentworth to supply 600 provincials to work on the fortifications, Wentworth replied that it was planting time and in the absence of an emergency he did not feel justified in taking the men from their fields. Yet on an alarm that a French fleet was descending upon Halifax, 1,000 or more marched into town from the country, and Wentworth wrote of them, "Perhaps a finer body of athletic, healthy young men were never assembled in any country, nor men more determined to do their duty."

In June 1793 Wentworth asked to be created a baronet. On April 11th, 1795, this was conferred upon him. In the ten years that followed the American Revolution, Halifax had grown rapidly (due to the influx of Loyalists chiefly.) The town's population had increased from 1200 to almost 5,000, and the social life of the capital had become more interesting in the same ratio.

After 1792 Governor and Mrs. Wentworth were of course the recognised king and queen in the local court, and they played their parts well. Their dinners and other entertainments exhausted the adjectives of the Halifax newspaper. In a single year more than 2500 people dined at Government House.

Unexpected lustre was added to Halifax society in May 1794 when H.R.H. Prince Edward arrived in N.S. The Governor wisely cultivated his favor. After spending several months at Government House with Sir John and Lady Wentworth the Prince established himself in Wentworth's country seat, Friar Lawrence's Cell, which he reconstructed,

at the same time developing the beautiful grounds in accordance with the tastes of himself and his beloved Madame de St. Laurent. On his final departure in 1800 he returned to the owner a far more pretentious country seat than Wentworth had enjoyed since days at Wolfeborough.

In 1795 Wentworth and the Prince hatched a little plot together. It was rumored that Lord Dorchester, originally Guy Carleton, was about to resign the governorship of Quebec, and it occurred to the Prince and Wentworth that it would be very agreeable if they could be promoted to Quebec with the same division of powers, Military and civil, which they had wielded in N.S. But although Dorchester left Canada in 1796 the two aspirants remained at Halifax.

In the summer of 1798 the Prince fell from his horse and returned to England for treatment. He was absent about a year, and Wentworth saw to it that a subscription of \$500 guineas was raised in N.S. for the purchase of a token of provincial regard. In January 1799, at Kensington Palace, the token, a diamond star of the Order of the Garter, was presented to the Prince by Charles-Mary Wentworth and Mr. Hartshorne, a Halifax merchant.

In 1798, in the summer, Lady Wentworth went to England and was presented to Queen Charlotte, who was so captivated by her personality and good breeding that she made Frances a lady in waiting, with a salary of £ 500 per annum and permission to reside abroad. Probably few incidents in his life gave John Wentworth greater joy than this honor to his lady.

(And yet according to Dyott's diary, Lady Wentworth was so fond of the other sex that the ladies of Halifax refused to visit her. His entries for October and November 1787 reveal that Prince William Henry had an affair with her, although he would not be seen in the same carriage with her. She was then 42. Dyott nevertheless considered her "the best-bred lady in the province." Of course Dyott was a snob.

And on the other hand it is known that some time between 1796 and 1799 Sir John kept a mistress, a pretty Maroon, on or near his farm at Preston; he had issue by her, and there are colored people in Preston to this day (1944) who trace their descent from the wild governor. It would seem that the love of John and Frances was far from perfect; their true tie was their mutual ambition and love of grandeur.)

Whatever his inner feelings, Wentworth never displayed resentment towards the inhabitants of his native state, although he never revisited the scenes of his youth and greatest happiness. One of his correspondents was Jeremy Belknap, the historian of New Hampshire, whom, as the wide-awake young minister of Dover, had often been a welcome guest at Wolfeborough. Belknap submitted the M/S of his history to Wentworth for criticism, ~~in 1774~~ in 1774, and Wentworth was able to supply much information owing to the important part played by his family in New Hampshire affairs for almost a century. At a later time, when Belknap was interested in the Norse discovery of America while preparing his "American Biography", John Wentworth "employed a proper person to search for any vestige or ~~tradition~~ tradition" of the Northmen on the coast of Newfoundland, and to the apparent disappointment of Belknap reported that there was on the island no trace of the ancient colony and "no appearance of grape vines or of anything that could be mistaken for them."

On the other hand, Belknap was useful to Sir John, for when Wentworth became a baronet it was necessary to prove his connection with the English family if he were to assume their heraldic devices. Belknap traced his American ancestry for him and thus aided in establishing his claim, which ultimately was recognised by the King. And to Sir John's pleasure, two keys were added to the chevron of the Wentworth arms for his own use "signifying ability and fidelity in the public service."

Although Wentworth never went back to his native country, his son Charles-Mary made an extensive tour of the U.S. in 1800. After graduating at Oxford, where his college was Brasenose, C-M was for 1 or 2 years private secretary to Earl FitzWilliam, a nephew of the late Marquis of Rockingham, whose estates he had inherited. Thus C-M was as much at home at Wentworth House as his father had been.

Lady Wentworth was a frequent guest at Wentworth House in 1798 and 1799. When she returned to Nova Scotia in the summer of 1799, C-M came with her, and went on to

visit the U.S. sailing to Boston in the sloop-of-war "Fly" on Dec. 9, 1799. In the spring of 1800 he was in Philadelphia, where he was received cordially by his father's old friend and classmate John Adams, the second president of the United States, then in the stormiest period of his administration.

C-M's travels carried him as far south as Georgia, whence he returned to Halifax in November, 1800. The Governor now appointed his son a member of the Council. He had already made his brother-in-law Benning Wentworth secretary of the province, a member of the Council, and master of the rolls and register in chancery. But C-M did not remain long in N.S. England was more congenial to him, naturally, and he returned there in 1805 and spent the rest of his life in that island.

During the winter of 1807-08 shadows began to fall across the path of Sir John. In December his lady was seriously ill. In February his steadfast cousin and brother-in-law Benning died. A few weeks later Sir George Prevost arrived in N.S. with a commission dated Jan. 15, 1808, appointing him lieutenant-governor in Wentworth's place.

As a result of the "Chesapeake-Leopold" affair, war ~~was~~ with the United States seemed imminent, and apparently Downing Street had decided that a soldier must have charge in Nova Scotia.

As soon as he could reasonably do so Sir John withdrew from Government House and established himself and his family at The Lodge, where he and Lady Wentworth resided for the next year and a half. At the suggestion of the British Government, the Assembly granted Wentworth a pension of £ 500 per annum for life, to which Parliament added £ 600, thus securing an honorable retirement for their faithful servant.

In February 1800 Sir John and Lady Wentworth crossed the ocean to England. Their voyage was described by Lady Wentworth in a letter written March 1, 1810 to Samuel Henry Wentworth:-

" We had a tremendous voyage and twice the ship was given up. The storm was terrible for 3 days and nights, and drowned 35 chickens we brought from the Lodge, which I had fed from the shell, all our turkeys, killed our cow, milch goat and pigs, some sheep, and washed a man overboard whose cries were dreadful. No one could assist him as the seas ran mountain high, when it was decreed by the Almighty that a returning sea should return him on deck almost suffocated. He was secured and attended to, and the next day was at his usual duty. The ship leaked the whole way, the men were sick and we had a short complement. A woman, whose husband was weak, took his turn at the pump, which was always going. The deadlights were knocked off several times, and 5 times hogheads of water burst into our cabin. We lay in a salt water bath most of the way, but thank God we arrived safe and in a better state of health than our fears.

... We are still at a hotel where our expenses are excessive. Your uncle and cousins have wearied themselves in search for a house which is still unsettled; the rents are terrible; nothing fit for us under £ 400 a year, and everything in proportion. I don't know how we are to get on, but at any rate with rigid economy.

You asked after the game-cock. When he was molting and sick, Muffle took advantage of him and beat him most cruelly, picked out his other eye, tore off one spur and left him senseless. I nursed him several days in my room; but he used to crow so violently at the first dawn of light that it was impossible to endure it; and I committed the poor blind veteran to the kitchen care, where he survived only 2 days. Muffle then became Sultan; and when we came away we gave him to the commissioner. Mr. and Mrs. Gray live at the Lodge. I felt sorry to leave it when the moment came, but I am now so very happy in being with (my son) that I forget all regrets of every sort."

1810

Lady Wentworth was never in good health for any length of time after leaving N.S. In April 1812 she wrote, " There is to be a court on the 30th, but I shall never be well enough to attend a court again, nor have the inclination at present -- or money to buy clothes, if I had everything else."

In February 1813 she died at Sunning Hill, a watering place not far from Windsor.

Sir John remained in England for a short time after ^{her} death and then returned to Nova Scotia to spend the rest of his days. The Lodge was too large for his needs now, and probably for his income. He was content to make his home ~~at~~ in Halifax with his sister-in-law Mrs. Brinley; and after her death with a Mrs. Fleigher.

(From Murdoch's History. Vol. 3 Page 452, 453.)

On Friday April 7, 1820, at Halifax, the Prince George, who had been Regent for 9 years, was proclaimed King George 4th. Cannon were fired, and the proclamation was read in various parts of the town. At 1 p.m. the Royal Standard was lowered to half mast on the Citadel and minute guns from the fort on George's Island were fired for the remainder of the day, in honor of the deceased sovereign. (George 3rd had died on Jan. 29th) (The Duke of Kent had died on Jan. 22nd.)

On the evening of Sunday, April 8th Sir John Wentworth died in (Mrs. Fleigher's apartments on) Hollis Street. He was in his 84th year. His latter days were spent in solitude and retirement. On the day before his death the city was excited with the ceremonial attendant on the (proclamation of George 4th) mingled with the respect due to a monarch who had for nearly 60 years (ruled) our nation.

To an eminent loyalist like Wentworth, who through chequered scenes of prosperity and adversity, had been the trusted and honored servant of the crown from an early period of this long reign, if he were then conscious of what was passing around him, the reflections he would make on the dropping of the curtain on royalty -- the unlooked-for loss of Prince Edward, so long his intimate friend, and the exit of his venerated master, must have been exceedingly affecting.

Sir John proved ... his strong attachment to N.S. by spending his last days here. His baronetcy devolved upon his son, Sir Charles-Mary Wentworth, who resided in England, and on whose death without issue the title became extinct.

(Resuming from " John Wentworth ", by Mayo)

Sir John's remains were buried under St. Paul's Church, where there is a tablet bearing the following inscription:

" In memory of Sir John Wentworth, Baronet, who administered the Government of this Province for nearly 16 years, from May 1792 to April 1808. With what success the public records of that period and His Majesty's gracious approbation will testify. His unshaken attachment to his Sovereign and the British constitution was conspicuous throughout his long life."

The year 1820 witnessed also the burning of Wentworth House on the morning of September 12, 1820. The fire started on the roof and spread with astonishing rapidity in spite of the exertions of the neighbors to extinguish it. In about three hours nothing of the celebrated (New Hampshire) mansion remained except a heap of embers.

Smith's Pond, which bordered the farm at Wolfeborough, has come to be known as Lake Wentworth. Governor's Island in Lake Winnepesaukee preserves the memory of its early owner; and for nearly a century Wentworth Hall at Hanover has reminded the fleeting college generations of one ~~of~~ to whose zealous efforts the existence of the alma mater is largely due.

Whether or not the people of New Hampshire have appreciated the fact, their commonwealth, both as a province and as a state, never had a more loyal friend than John Wentworth, who within 15 years of the day when his person was proscribed and his property confiscated, gave it his benediction in these words:

" I do most cordially wish the most extensive, great and permanent blessings to the United States, and of course rejoice at the establishment of their federal Constitution as a probable means of their happiness. If there is anything partial in my heart in this case, it is that New Hampshire, my native country, may arise to be among the most brilliant members of the Confederation; as it was my zealous wish, ambition and unremitting endeavor to have led her to, among the provinces, while under my administration. For this object nothing appeared to me too much. My whole heart and fortune were devoted to it."

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Among the distinguished visitors to Halifax during Sir John's administration was the Duke of Orleans, whom the revolution of 1830 later transformed into Louis Philippe, the citizen king of the French. (The Duke of Orleans, known like his father as " Philippe Egalité ", had thrown in his lot with the republicans and served with distinction in the French campaigns until 1796, when he fell out of favor. He consented to go to America in that year, provided his brothers, the Duke of Montpensier and the Count of Beaujolie, were released from prison where they had been ever since the Terror. Apparently the brothers called at Halifax on the way, for Prince Edward entertained them and gave Philippe £ 200 -- a gift which Philippe never forgot.. In 1799, hearing of a coup d'etat in France, the brothers returned to France, only to find Napoleon firmly in the saddle. It was on this return journey that Sir John and Prince Edward entertained them at Halifax in 1799)

Another distinguished visitor was the Irish poet Thomas Moore, who in September 1804 ended his American travels in the Nova Scotia capital. Wentworth entertained him by a trip to the college at Windsor where, according to Moore, they attended the first examination held in that institution. (Moore also presented the college library with a copy of one of the classics.)