

Replied Nov. 22
See back

VASSAR COLLEGE

POUGHKEEPSIE · NEW YORK

Department of Greek

November 16, 1943.

Thomas H. Raddall, esq.
Liverpool, Nova Scotia.

Dear Mr. Raddall,

Your book "His Majesty's Yankees" has given me keen enjoyment. It is a thrilling and poignant story which has moved me as no other historical novel has. You have pictured with such imagination and truthfulness the bewilderment of these people caught in the net of circumstances. My forebears were such Yankees from Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Averys, Bradfords, and Baxters, pre-Loyalists and Loyalists, mixed with one Scotch-Irish great-grandfather and one Scotch. My grandmother, Harriet Hayes Mc Curdy was the grand-daughter of a well-known Tory, Simon Baxter, for whom she named my father. My fifth cousin, Chief Justice Baxter of New Brunswick, has just written Simon Baxter's life. And my grandfather Mc Curdy's mother was Ruth Avery,

Grace H. Macurdy
Vassar College
Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

Dear Miss Macurdy,

It was most kind of you to write and give me such a heart-warming appreciation of my book. "H.M.Y." really began with a short story which I wrote for Blackwoods Magazine. Col. (now Brigadier General) Theodore Roosevelt ^{read it} and urged me to do a history of N.S. during the Revolution, pointing out that this was a phase of American history little known in the U.S. But ~~I felt that~~ I was a ~~fiction~~ ^{story} writer with a love of history, rather than a historian, and decided I should stick to ~~something~~ ^{writing} ~~refused~~. Then Kenneth Roberts wrote urging me to do an historical novel on the subject, setting forth the facts accurately and as fully as possible. This struck a responsive chord in me & I undertook "His Majesty's Yankees". The story more or less told itself as I went along because for ten years my hobby had been a study of ~~eighteenth~~ ^{seventeenth} century Nova Scotia with particular reference to the Revolutionary period, and I had long felt that Canadians and Americans should know the immense significance of the ^{small and} obscure struggle which resulted in two separate nations in the ^{great mass of} North American continent.

If the notes you enclose about the Averys are most interesting. I shall keep an eye for anything referring to the family in my periodical visits to the U.S. Archives, & if I find anything of interest I shall let you and Commander Avery know.

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sister of James Avery.

of his account

I venture to enclose a copy_x of a visit paid my great-grandmother Ruth by the missionary David Avery, of the Groton Averys. She tells about her sisters, but gives only the names of her brothers and I have very much desired to know what became of Robert, John and Josiah. Commander Avery sent me a copy of your letter, in which you speak of John's imprisonment. The only reference to him which I have succeeded in finding is in the Documentary History of Maine, XV, p.361, in which "Mr. John Avery of Windsor" is quoted in the case of Capt. Littlefield, (1778) as owning a share in the Sloop Elizabeth. My great-grandmother is quoted by David Avery as speaking of her brothers in the present tense. If that is to be taken as exact, it means that it was Robert Avery senior, who was killed at Machias in 1775.

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My great-grandparents were

Benjamin Bradford, Lucy Russell

John Hayes, Dorothy Baxter

Neal Mc Curdy, Ruth Avery

Dugald Thomson, Experience Wescott.

all eventually at least of St. Andrews, N.B.

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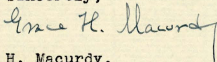
3,-

John Avery received lands from his father in Horton in 1765 and had a grant of 2000 acres (with others) at Parrsborough and Partridge Island in 1777.

I should not write at such length, but my attempts to find out some facts about my Nova Scotia and New Brunswick ancestors have familiarized ^{me} partially with the events on which your book has thrown such an amazing light. It should be made "required reading" in every course in American history and that part of ~~that~~ history should be re-written by you.

I am

Yours sincerely,



Grace H. Macurdy.

Professor Emeritus in
Vassar College.

Avery

The Rev. David Avery (see NOTES AND QUERIES, pages 29 and 630,) went as a missionary to Maine in 1802. His diary during that period is very interesting. Among the many items is found the following:

September 22, Wednesday, 1802. - "visited at Mr Mc Curdy's - N. B. I find by Mrs. McCurdy, that her father, Mr. Robert Avery, was a brother of the Rev. Ephraim Avery late of Brooklynⁱⁿ Connecticut, and of John Avery, esq., late of Boston. Soon after the French war, when many, from N. E. moved to the farms of the Neutral French, he moved from Lebanon in Connecticut, to Horton, at the Bason of Menus, on Windsor River in Novascotia. He married Miss Anna Cushman, near Plymouth. His children are Robert, John, Josiah, James, Anna, Susanna, Sarah, Ruth. Anna married Capt. Geo. Hallyburton of Exeter, New Hampshire; Susa married Major Lem'l Trescott of Soward's Neck, opposite Moose Island at the mouth of the Passamaquoddy Bay; Sarah married Mr. John Burnet of Scotland Society in Windham, C.; Ruth married Mr. Neal McCurdy of St. Andrews on the Schoodick, Newbrunswick. I was urged vehemently to tarry and preach at this settlement, which is 3 m. N. by W. of the town of St. Andrews. Here are many families as needy of missionary charity as any people on the continent. N. B. Mrs. Anna Avery now lives at Scotland with Mr. Burnet. Capt. Samuel Avery, son of Rev. Ephraim Avery, now lives at Horton on the Avery place, Bason of Menus."
(Avery Notes and Queries. A Quarterly Magazine. No. 4, November, 1898, page 55, in the possession of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Mass.)

"Of the many new sources of information concerning Avery genealogy that have been opened to me, the richest 'find' is the 'Manuscript of the Rev. David Avery,' written in the first years of the present century. This good minister 'rode the circuit' from Long Island Sound to Vermont, staying over night with different members of the Avery clan, preaching in their homes, burying their dead, 'supping with the mourners,' and writing down their family records. So far as I know; he was the first genealogist of the family. His record appears on page 422 of Sweet's 'The Averys of Groton.' The document is in the possession of Mrs. Hannah Chaplin (Avery) Partridge, of Jewett City, Conn., a granddaughter of the author, and was copied and forwarded to me by Miss Helen Morgan Avery of Groton, Conn. It adds hundreds of items and is of untold value. It fills gaps, correct errors and solves riddles, in a way that would delight any genealogist." etc.

(Ibid, Pages 29, 30).