

United Baptist Church

Rev. James D. Davison, Pastor
Springhill - Nova Scotia

21, March, 1945.

Mr. Thomas H. Raddall,
Liverpool, N.S.

Dear Sir:

Your admirable treatment of early Nova Scotia history in your books 'His Majesty's Yankees' and 'Roger Sudden' suggests the possibility that you might be willing to enlighten me on a little matter concerning my ancestors who came from New England in 1758 as "Early Settlers".

However, first I would like to commend you for your excellent contribution to an increased historical knowledge of this Province's settlement and early years, and to thank you for producing "clean" novels that do not stoop to that present-day literary emphasis upon profanity and sexual vulgarity. It is refreshing to have read your books.

If you care not to bother with my request for information I shall understand, for undoubtedly you are busy and bored with many similar requests.

John Davison came to Falmouth in 1758 with his nephews Jonathan (my ancestor who is buried at River Philip), Cyprian (buried at Wolfville) and Samuel (presumably killed as a spy in a skirmish on the New Brunswick border). Jonathan, Cyprian and Samuel drew lots 62, 58 and 24 respectively, presumably? from land formerly held by the Acadians.

Around 1780 Jonathan moved to Amherst and River Philip, apparently employed as an iron-worker (blacksmith). My question is-- Did many others change their residence at this time and were there political or economic reasons to encourage or to necessitate this change? Might they have had unpopular Yankee sympathies?

If you will enlighten me on this situation I shall greatly appreciate your assistance.

Sincerely,

James D. Davison.

March 23rd, 1945.

Dear Mr. Davison,

I'm afraid I can't help you very much in your search for information about Jonathan Davison. As you will readily understand, my own research in connection with "His Majesty's Yankees" was held to the general state of affairs and to the particular persons involved in my tale.

The inhabitants of Falmouth undoubtedly were sympathetic to the rebel cause, but so were nearly all the "Yankee" settlers of Nova Scotia, and so far as I know there was no persecution of a local sort except in Cumberland where the settlers of New England origin were harried and in many cases driven out of the country after the abortive revolt of '76.

War creates a certain restlessness, as we see today, and we can assume that by 1780 there must have been a good deal of it in Nova Scotia -- men in search of new occupations or better land or merely seeking a home away from the Fundy shore which was exposed to the raids of American privateers. Falmouth then, as now, was a farming district. Asherst was occupied chiefly by graziers and River Philip by lumbermen. A blacksmith would have found plenty of work at Falmouth, less at Asherst, more at River Philip. The type of blacksmith work would have been different at each place. Perhaps Jonathan preferred sawmill machinery to ploughshares or horseshoes. There is no knowing where an active and ambitious man may turn his steps.

Sincerely,

Rev. James D. Davison,
Springhill, N.S.