



In Memory of
John Belyea
who departed this
life on the Twelfth day
of December 1813
aged 75

Oldest of several remaining Belyea Family
Monuments in St. Peter's Anglican Church
Cemetery, located at Woodman's Point,
Westfield Parish, Kings County, New
Brunswick.

The “Belyea” name remains a common family name in New Brunswick and a common name to various locations, street names and landscape features in the Province. This large Loyalist family arrived in New Brunswick in 1783, from Westchester County, New York, after being evacuated by the British Fleet at the end of the American Revolution. The family comes from a Huguenot ancestor Louis Boulier, who immigrated to America in the 1680s, arriving at the New Netherland Colony (renamed the New York Colony in 1665). Various spellings of the name have evolved over time to include: Boulier, Beljee, Bolye, Bulyea, Belyea and Bilyea.

GENERATION 1

Louis¹ Boulier or *Bulyea* was born in 1672, in Saintonge, France. The community was one of a few Huguenot strongholds along the French Atlantic seaboard. Louis is said to have fled France to escape persecution after the proclamation of the 1685 Edict of Fontainebleau. This Edict resulted in the revocation of the earlier privileges granted by the Edict of Nantes, issued by King Henry IV in 1598, which had guaranteed freedom to practice religions other than Roman Catholicism in France. Persecution of non-Roman Catholics did continue to varying degrees throughout the intervening period, up until 1685, when the new Edict declared that no one could believe in any religion except Roman Catholicism. The result was mass migrations, including great numbers of Huguenots fleeing the country, despite the King's (Louis XIV) efforts to close the borders to prevent escape.

The New Netherland Colony was originally established along the Atlantic coast between New England and Virginia, consisting of settlements mainly along the Hudson, Delaware and Connecticut Rivers. In 1664 the Dutch surrendered to the English (except for a brief period contested in 1673-74) and the Colony was renamed after the brother to King Charles II, the Duke of York (future King James II). The New York Colony was then divided into 12 counties in 1683: Albany, Dutchess, Orange, Ulster, New York (Manhattan Island), Kings (Brooklyn), Queens (Long Island), Suffolk (east Long Island), Westchester (Bronx) and Richmond (Staten Island).



Map of County boundaries of New York showing the Counties created for the New York Colony at the time of the Revolutionary War. The Croton River is shown near the upper end of Westchester County, near the boundary with Dutchess County.

Louis Boulrier managed to escape from France and made his way to America as a Merchant Mariner. He married Annetje (*Anna*) Konning (*Coning*) in 1697 in Hackensack, (later to be part of New Jersey). They settled on Long Island where their children were born: Jan (1698), Jacob (1706) and Catharina (1712), later moving back up the Hudson River to Westchester County, near Tarrytown on the east bank of the Hudson River in 1706. The community was centred around the Dutch Reformed Church on the 52,000 acre estate of Frederick Flypse (Philipse), which later became known as Philipsburgh. The Manor House known as Philipsburgh Manor was built in 1697 along with the nearby little stone church which remains the oldest church building in what was the New York Colony. The Church records (dating back to the formation of the congregation in 1690 and construction of the church building in 1697) document the evolution of the spelling of many of the local family names from French and Dutch to various English versions.

GENERATION 2

Jan² (Louis¹) **Beljee** or *Bulyea* (1698- 1770)

Jan or *John* married Helena Williamze who was born Aug 2, 1698 in Philipsburgh, Westchester County and they had seven children. Records for their Christenings, also all in the Philipsburgh Church records are shown: Hendrick or *Henry* (19 Apr 1720), Marytie (19 Apr 1720), Raghel or *Rachael* (13 Aug 1726), Helena (27 Apr 1728), Catherina (31 Aug 1731), Jan or *John* (25 Jun 1734), and Robben or *Robert* (23 Apr 1736). Jan's mother, Mrs. Louis Boulrier is recorded as being on a list of members coming from the nearby Van Courtland Manor to the Sleepy Hollow Church. Jan himself was a Deacon and later an Elder of the Old Dutch Church.

GENERATION 3

Hendrick³ (Jan²,Louis¹) **Bulyea** (1720-1804)

Hendrick or *Henry* Bulyea was born in Phillipsburg, Westchester, New York in 1720. In 1730 Henry married Deborah Carpenter (1720-1754). They had four children: John (1740-1813) (note the monument pictured above), Mary (1741-1765), Judith (1743-?), and Joseph (1746-1845). (Mary married Robert Williams, however both of them died in 1765, leaving four young sons to be raised by Mary's brother John. At least two of these boys came to New Brunswick with the family in 1783).

Henry Bulyea was married for a second time in 1755, to Enjeltie (*Angelica or Annie*) Storm (born in 1730). This was the second marriage for Annie as well, recently widowed by the death of Abraham Yerxa. They were married in the Old Dutch Reform Church (Sleepy Hollow) in Tarrytown. Added to the family was John Yerxa (1751-1828) (step-son from Annie's first marriage), then: James Albert (1755-1840), Deborah (1756-1837), Abraham (1757-pre1783), Lavinia (or Wintie) (1761-1802), Thomas (1762-?), Robert (1765-1830), Henry (1770- pre 1861), William (1771-?).

A (Flewelling) descendant recorded the following on June 12, 1883:

“There is a little romance connected with Henry Bulyea and Annie Storm, where they had originally been engaged to be married, when trouble occurred to break off the match. Annie married Mr. (Abraham) Yerxa and Henry married Deborah Carpenter. When death untied these knots, Henry and Annie returned to their first love.”

“Annie’s” great-grandfather was “old” Dirck Storm, (born in 1630 in Holland and died in 1718 in Tarrytown). In his later years he came to America to settle with his sons and grandsons on the Philipsburgh Estate. His influence was instrumental in starting the first Dutch Church in the neighbouring Township of Tappan, New Jersey (on the opposite side of the Hudson River).

In 1715 Dirck Storm was asked to complete a registry of the initial history of the Tarrytown Dutch Reformed Church. The registry has since been referred to as “Old Dirck’s Book”, recording the earliest baptisms and marriages of the congregation of what is now referred to as the Old Dutch Church, Sleepy Hollow (since 1996).

The family farmed leased lots north of Tarrytown, on the Van Courtland Manor near the confluence of the Croton River and Hudson River in Westchester County. The Van Courtland Manor consisted of 86,000 acres. A Manor House was constructed in 1732, which remains today as a National Historic Landmark property. John Xjerks (Dircks) farmed land between his step-father Henry and step-brother Thomas Bulyea.

The community, centered on the Sleepy Hollow Old Dutch Reformed Church, was made famous by Washington Irving, with his story of Ichabod Crane and the headless horseman set in the fictional tale of Sleepy Hollow and that of the story of Rip Van Winkle. Actually part of North Tarrytown, the Sleepy Hollow village is derived from the Dutch “Slapershaven” or sleeper’s haven and not legally changed to Sleepy Hollow until 1996. It was made famous by Washington Irving’s famous ghost story, The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, written in 1819 (a small excerpt below). It is based on older Dutch and German folk tales and local ghost stories surrounding the Old Burying Ground dating back to 1650.

The dominant spirit, however, that haunts this enchanted region, and seems to be commander-in-chief of all the powers of the air, is the apparition of a figure on horseback, without a head. It is said by some to be the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannon-ball, in some nameless battle during the Revolutionary War, and who is ever and anon seen by the country folk hurrying along in the gloom of night, as if on the wings of the wind. His haunts are not confined to the valley, but extend at times to the adjacent roads, and especially to the vicinity of a church at no great distance.

From: The Legend of Sleepy Hollow by Washington Irving

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION 1779-1783.

The largest regiment raised in New York (known as DeLancey's Brigade or Cowboys) was raised by Oliver DeLancey. The following narrative of DeLancey's Brigade was written by [Jack Sherry](#):

DeLancey was a wealthy New York merchant who resided in the Morrisania section of the Bronx (the Bronx was part of Westchester County during the 18th century). Oliver's brother, James, was a chief justice for the colony of New York and at one time was lieutenant governor for the colony. I believe it was James DeLancey who presided over the Zenger trial which was a major case involving freedom of the press. James died before the war. His son, James "Jr." was sheriff of Westchester County prior to the war and knew it like "the back of his hand". James formed a separate unit known as the Westchester Refugees. His unit was not on the regular British army payroll and raised money by selling raided cattle to the British army! Hence their nickname "the Cowboys". James' unit was responsible for the raid on the Davenport house near Pines Bridge where the rebel commander, Christopher Greene, was killed. Historians and researchers sometimes get the two DeLancey units mixed up. DeLancey's Brigade gets blamed for the actions of DeLancey's Westchester Refugees.

DeLancey's Brigade was comprised of three battalions of 500 men each. They were raised from New York City, Long Island, Westchester and Fairfield Counties. I've heard that some of the men in 3rd Bttn. were captured rebels at the Battle of Long Island and given a choice, serve for the British or rot in a prison hulk in New York harbor. Some choice! DeLancey's Brigade began service as a police force in NYC. Later they garrisoned forts at Kings Bridge, Morrisania, and on Long Island's north shore where they were protecting the Loyal Americans who had fled to British controlled territory. Two battalions were later sent with Cornwallis to fight in the Southern Campaign. They fought at Eutaw Springs and Fort Ninety-Six (where they successfully withstood one of the longest sieges of the war).

The Belyea family found itself living in no man's land during the conflict, in the buffer zone between the British and American Continental Army forces. The Croton River was at the upper reaches of the British forces on the Hudson River and both sides raided local farmers for food and supplies.

For contextual purposes on the war years and the relation to Washington Irving's characters, the following is extracted from Wikipedia:

In 1780, five years from the start of the Revolutionary War, the settlements that would later become the Tarrytowns were in the middle of Neutral Ground, the 30-mile (48 km)–wide no man's land between British forces occupying New York City (at the time, what is today Lower Manhattan) and the Continental Army north of the Croton River. Gangs of armed bandits roamed the lightly populated area, raiding farms in a search for livestock and other goods they could sell to the warring armies. Those with Loyalist sympathies were called Cow-boys; their counterparts who sold to the Patriots were known as Skinners.

On the morning of September 24 that year, three young men—John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart and David Williams—set themselves up along the road through Tarrytown, approximately 200 yards (180 m) east of where the Captors' Monument is now. They were part of a group of eight Skinners, hoping to ambush a party of Cow-boys. A rider approached them, and they raised their guns to stop him. It was Major John André of the British Army, returning from a clandestine visit to West Point, where he had been negotiating the terms of a surrender with General Benedict Arnold of the Continental Army.

Paulding, who had recently escaped from British custody, wore a Hessian coat he had taken in the process, which led André to assume, in the ensuing conversation, that the three were Cow-boys who could thus aid him in continuing on to New York. When informed of his mistake, he produced a pass signed by Arnold. The three searched him and found papers in his boots, not only his correspondence with Arnold but diagrams of the defenses at West Point. Paulding, the only literate member of the trio, read them and realized quickly that André was a spy. Williams asked André what money he could pay them, but Paulding quickly ended any talk of a payoff, swearing that not even 10,000 guineas would be enough.

After André was turned over to the Continental command at North Castle, he was taken across the Hudson to Tappan where he was held prisoner. After being convicted of espionage at a military trial in the DeWint House (today a National Historic Landmark), he was hanged by order of George Washington, who had attended the trial. Had André successfully conveyed the information Arnold had given him to New York, the British could have managed to secure the Hudson and cut New England off from the other rebellious colonies, resolving the stalemate of the time in their favor and drastically changing the outcome of the war.

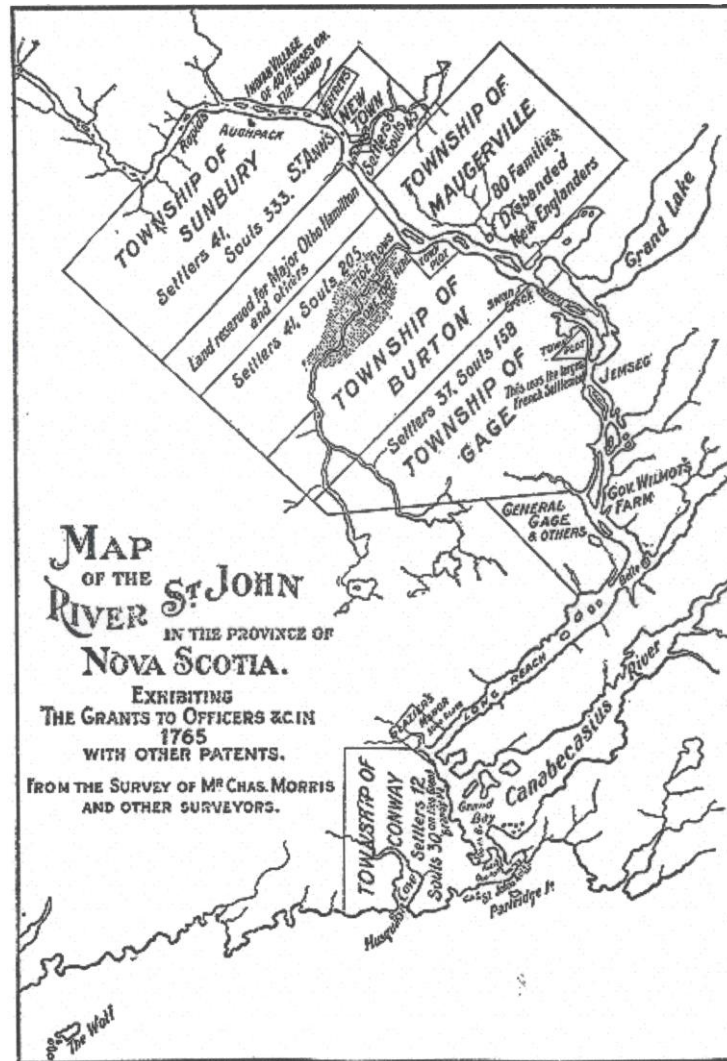
TRANSPORT TO NOVA SCOTIA 1783

The Revolution divided families and communities, leading to the exile of families such as the Bulyea, Yerxa, Carpenter, Van Tassel, Van Wort and others from Philipsburgh and the Courtland Manors served by the Old Dutch Church of Sleepy Hollow. Between the signing of the Treaty of Paris in September 1782 and Ratification by Congress in January 1783, the terms of surrender did not provide much protection for Loyalist's property. Land was confiscated, and lives were threatened, with many families caught between different sides of political loyalties. Many considered the conflict as being against their religion and Quaker families in particular where reviled just as any of those who actually took up arms to defend the British government. Many simply did not want the established government overthrown by the rebellion. The Rebels (or Patriots) in turn were then rewarded at the end of the war with land confiscated from the Loyalist land owners.

By the end of the Revolutionary War, Hendrick (Henry) Bulyea and Angelina (Annie) Storm and their family were forced to leave their home at Courtland Manor near Tarrytown and take refuge in New York City where many refugees were forced to go during the fighting and particularly once the fighting stopped. They had to take shelter in the British garrison and await transport as the British forces retreated from New York. The Bulyeas were one of the first Loyalist families to arrive in New Brunswick by July 1783.

Nearly 15,000 out of the roughly 35,000 refugees sent to the Maritimes were directed to Sunbury and Cumberland Counties of Nova Scotia. Shortly after landing in the summer of 1783, petitions were made to Britain to separate out these two counties to create a new Colony of New Brunswick on the north side of the Bay of Fundy. From a resident population of less than 400 people prior to their arrival, the small military presence at Fort Frederick and Fort Howe now swelled to form two new communities of Parr Town and Carleton on opposing sides of the Saint John River Harbour.

Henry and Annie Bulyea arrived in Saint John in the Summer of 1783 along with their adult children, together with their own families, including step-son John Yerxa and his family. They travelled in a fleet of 20 ships carrying 7000 evacuees from New York to the Saint John Harbour. Henry sent his claim for compensation from the Crown through Captain Vandenberg, noting that he had lived at Courtland Manor, Westchester County, sharing a 180 acre farm with his son Joseph and that 5 of his sons had been enlisted in the British Army. The rebel militia took all his stock- 2 cows, 2 horses, 2 two-year old horses, 2 calves, 2 sheep, and 7 hogs. Lost improvements to his farm were valued at 300 £.



Map of the River St. John based on 1765 survey information for the 1783 Studhom Report

What they found in New Brunswick was not completely foreign to the family, although not as settled as Westchester County (where they had lived for over 100 years), the new surroundings found along the Saint John River Valley, was based on a British base protecting the entrance to the river at the St. John Harbour. Their Land Grants were located up river. Similar in nature to their previous home located at the junction of the Croton and Hudson Rivers, they chose land near the confluence of the Washedmoak Lake and the Saint John River.

For their first winter, Henry Bulyea's family settled on the Lower Musquash Island, Queen's County, along the shore of the St. John River. When the ice broke up the next spring, they were flooded out by the Freshet. Later they moved to Sugar Island, above Fredericton.

OUR LOYALIST STORIES...

And then finally the family packed their belongings into boats and made their way back down river to Henry's third Crown Land Grant (Lot #42, Greenwich Parish, King's County). The lot at Greenwich Hill (now called Glenwood) looks out onto the Long Reach of the St. John River, near Brown's Flats, opposite Caton's Island. He farmed there until his death in 1804.



Library & Archives Canada Acc. No R9266-1332 Meeting of the Officers of the Garrisons of St. John and Fredricton on Long Island in the River St. John, New Brunswick. Also known as the Blizzard Inn, this 1824 painting by John Hewitt captures an early scene of post revolutionary settlement. The location is on Long Island, adjacent to one of Henry Bulyea's Grant Lots. Travel was easiest by boat but also on the winter ice. It is noted that spring freshet conditions would permit boats to moor themselves directly to the buildings!

New Brunswick Land Grants issued in 1786 are recorded to Henry Bulyea in Greenwich Parish, opposite Caton's Island, Lot no. 42 (200 acres) with Abraham Belyea being Granted Lot no. 45 (198 acres). Henry Bulyea received grants on Long Island, Lot Nos. 7, 61 and 62, with Joseph Bulyea assigned Lot no.19. Further grants in 1787 were located in Wickham Parish, Queens Co., near Lower Musquash Island. Henry received Lot no. 19 (195 acres) and Second tier Lot no. 13 (330 acres); Thomas received Second tier Lot no. 1 (79 acres), James received Lot nos. 16/17 (370 acres), Nehemiah Belyea later received Second tier Lot nos. 41/42 (200 acres).



NB Land Grant map showing Henry (and Abraham) Bulyea's Lots (opposite Caton's Island)

In 1802, **Henry Bulyea** recorded the following in his will:

I Bequeath to my Dearly Beloved Wife one third of all profits arising by or from my real estate together with all my household goods and one cow, Also I bequeath to my beloved son William Belyea... all lands laying between the Kings Road and the River and the land above or westerly of the road to be divided lengthwise equally between said William and my beloved son Thomas Belyea. Also I give my beloved son Robert Belyea the privilege of a road in the most convenient place for him to get off his land to the river, also the land where his barn stands on so long as said barn shall last. Also to my other sons, John, Joseph, Abraham, James, Robert and Henry Belyea I give each of them one shilling, money of New Brunswick. Also to my daughter Deborah, I give one shilling money aforesaid to be levied raised out of my estate.

Dr. Harold Cahill Belyea (of Cumberland, RI) has noted that his research suggests that Henry Bulyea was also buried in St. Peter's Cemetery in 1804.

GENERATION 4

James Albert⁴ (Henry³, Jan², Louis¹) **Belyea** (1755-1840)

Henry Bulyea and Annie Storm's eldest son James Albert Bulyea married Jemimah Purdy in Tarrytown, Westchester County prior to the Revolution. An anecdote from James' role in the War is noted as beginning with his being stripped of his clothes, being ill-used and imprisoned when caught trying to cross Rebel lines while visiting his parents Henry and Annie Bulyea. James did manage to escape, and after coming into British Lines he joined forces under Colonel DeLancy. James was granted 200 acres fronting onto Washademoak Lake at Belyea's Cove, Wickham Parish, Queen's County, New Brunswick. There is a monument dating from 1950, replacing an original stone marking his life (1755-1840), in the nearby McDonald's Point Cemetery.

One of James and Jemimah's large family included **Henry**⁵ **Belyea** (1791-1853) who married Elizabeth Purdy (a cousin on his mother's side). They married in 1813 in Gagetown, New Brunswick. When Elizabeth died, Henry⁵ married a second time to Jane Nilan or *Lannan* and they moved to a farm near Birr, London Township, Ontario in 1853.

Two children from Henry⁵ Belyea's first marriage were: **Frederick**⁶ **Archelaus Belyea** (who married Margaret Hobbs), and **James Albert**⁶ **Belyea Jr.** (who married Jane Blizzard). Frederick Archelaus⁶ Belyea's family included **George Hedley Vicars**⁷ **Belyea**, became the first Lt. Governor for the Province of Alberta and **Henry**⁷ **L. Bilyea** who's son **Wilfred**⁸ **Bilyea** married **Clara Armitage**.

John⁴ (Henry³, Jan², Louis¹) **Belyea** (1740-1813)

Henry Bulyea's eldest son (by his first wife Deborah Carpenter) was John Belyea who served the British Army from 1776 through 1779 with Col. Fanning at New York. John Belyea is noted as being a Volunteer in Delaney's Brigade (cowboys), having also signed up in 1780. From 1780 to 1783 he served with Colonel Beverly Robinson, commander of the Loyal American Regiment. John (Jr.) and his family arrived in Saint John Harbour in September 1773. He received his discharge from Captain Halebe's Company on October 10th. John Belyea was the eldest brother of the extended family of at least eight brothers and three sisters from the family of Henry³ Bulyea. His family remained in the area and is remembered by his stone marker placed in St. Peter's Anglican Church Cemetery, located at Woodman's Point, Westfield Parish. He and his wife Susan had 6 children, Susan Belyea, herself a Loyalist, is listed on the UEL Association of Canada's website as having survived to the age of 99 at the time of her death on January 27, 1843.



Belyea's Point light house is easily seen from Westfield Crescent in **Grand Bay-Westfield**. It is located along a wide body of water running to the west of the Kingston Peninsula, and situated as a guide to vessels to stay clear of "Purdy's shoal" located along the opposite shore. The structure is an 11 m high square pyramid shape, originally built in 1881-1882. The first light keeper was **Spafford Barker⁷ Belyea**, who at the age of 28 began his 17 year career on June 1, 1882, with a salary of \$80.00/year. Due to damage from extreme flooding in the 1930's, the tower was rebuilt on raised pylons, further back from the shore line (at a higher elevation). **Spafford⁶ Barker Belyea** was one of **John⁴ Bulyea's** 27 great grandchildren, through his father **Squire Nathaniel⁶ Belyea** and his father, **Jacob⁵ Belyea**. This family lived near Belyea's Point, Morrisdale, NB, with the point of land and then later, the lighthouse, named in honour of their Loyalist family.

Various family and internet reference sources were used in compiling this narrative, not including the many branches of this extended family that can be found throughout Canada and the United States, and beyond.

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