



Two views of uniforms of both Canadian Regiments. The first shows a light infantryman of the regiment (painted by Charles M. Lefferts [1873–1923]) wearing the standard brown coat and white facings that was the units' original attire; and to the right, the brown with red facings pattern, here shown worn by a regular infantryman (as depicted in Kevin F. Kiley and Digby Smith's "The American Revolutionary War: Uniforms From 1775-1783") that was authorized by Congress in 1779.

**“FOR MARS AND HEARTH”:<sup>1</sup>  
The 1st and 2nd Canadian Regiments  
of Washington’s Army.**

In spite of the defeat of Montgomery and Arnold in the assault on Quebec on December 31st, 1775, and as long as the Americans fought the War for independence, Congress never gave a thought of relinquishing Canada. Up until finalization of the Treaty of Paris in 1783, Benjamin Franklin raised the American annexation of that (then) province as a point for negotiation with the British; while prior to that, plans for later invasions had been seriously tabled on several occasions; including one scheme drafted by the Board of War in 1778 in which Lafayette, with Conway second in command, and using both their fluency in the French language and Gallic affiliations, was to attempt to secure support of French-Canadians as a stepping stone to ultimate conquest. Lafayette, however, soon found himself not happy with the arrangement. He had wanted de Kalb as his second in place of Conway, but this request was denied. So that by February he ended up going only as far as Albany before giving the project up entirely and returning to Washington’s army. As a result, the 1778 expedition to take Canada was called off.

It was, nevertheless, not without good reason that Congress had high hopes of French Canadian assistance. For in late 1775 and January 1776 successful efforts had been undertaken to raise Canadian regiments on the Continental establishment. Specifically, on Nov. 10th, 1775, Congress directed Gen. Schuyler to recruit and organize a Canadian battalion. And as early as the 23rd of December, 200 men for this purpose were raised by Amer-Canadian (with parents from New York) Col. James Livingston (1747–1832) -- many of whom, incidentally, were originally recruited by Ethan Allen just prior to his capture at Montreal. Then on January 20th, 1776, as part of a plan to arm 1,000 additional Canadians, Congress authorized a second regiment; with Col. (later Brig. Gen.) Moses Hazen (1733-1803) -- recommended to Congress by his associate Edward Antil; when the latter arrived in Philadelphia to report Montgomery’s repulse at Quebec -- elected to command it. At first this unit numbered some 250, but for most of the subsequent fighting operated at an average strength of about 400-500. Hazen, originally from Haverhill, Mass., had been active in the French and Indian war where he had served as a captain in Rogers’ Rangers; was at the 1758 taking of Louisbourg, the siege of Quebec (though not at the climactic battle there) and at the battle of Sainte-Foy. At the outbreak of the Revolution Hazen held a commission, for which he was receiving half-pay, as a lieutenant in the British 44th Regiment of Foot.

These Canadian regiments were not part of any state quota; were manned by officers directly under the auspices of Congress, and thus acquired the formally adopted nickname of “Congress’ Own.” Initially, they were formed from northern New Yorkers and sympathetic Canadians hailing from Montreal, Quebec and Acadia. In 1777, the 2nd Regt. was reorganized to include two companies from Maryland and

<sup>1</sup> From the units’ motto “Pro Aris et Focis;” and which is also translated “for altars and hearths.”

one from Connecticut. Yet otherwise and later it became to a large extent manned by immigrant Europeans and non-natives; such that in a sense the Canadian regiments, particularly the 2nd, became the American and Revolutionary War equivalent of the French Foreign Legion, and ranked among the elite of Washington's army.

The 1st Canadian Regiment, though probably never at a time numbering more than a couple hundred, served gallantly at the siege of Quebec, Trois-Rivières (June 7th, 1776), the Siege of Fort Stanwix (Aug. 1777), *possibly* the battles of Saratoga (as part of Learned's brigade), and Rhode Island (Aug. 29th, 1778.) Thereafter, they essentially did garrison duty in the Hudson Highlands, and were broken up on Jan. 1, 1781; with what remained of them incorporated into the 2nd Regiment.

The 2nd for its part was at the siege of Quebec, the retreat across New Jersey in the Autumn of 1776, Sullivan's Staten Island Raid (Aug. 22nd, 1777), Brandywine (Sept. 11th, 1777), Germantown (Oct. 4th, 1777), and Yorktown where they played a conspicuous role in the American light infantry assault on Redoubt No. 10 -- all the more fitting as the 2nd was among the very first Continental Army units to include a formal light infantry company. Worth noting as well is that in almost all these actions, the 2nd under Hazen's command incurred relatively significant numbers of casualties in killed and wounded.

The following is Hazen's memorial as submitted to Gen. Washington on Nov. 30th, 1779:

*To his Excellency George Washington, Esq', General and Commander in Chief of the American Army,  
&c, &c, &c.  
Humbly sheweth,*

That the Canadian Regiment your Excellency's Memorialist has the Honour to Command, was by a Resolution of Congress of the 20th of January, 1776, ordered to be raised in Canada for one year or during the then present Disputes; to compose four Battalions of Two Hundred and Fifty Men each, as will, by said Resolution of Congress, more fully appear.

That Four Hundred and Seventy-seven Men only were enlisted for the Term of the War, mustered and carried into Service. The Want of Money to pay the Bounty ordered prevented the Regiment from being completely filled up at that Time, and in that Country.

That a Part of the Officers and Men raised in Canada retreated with Genl. [John] Sullivan's Army on the 17th of June, 1776, from that Country; and that on the 23d of October, in the same year, the Hon. Continental Congress was pleased to order that the said Regiment should remain on the Original Establishment thereof, and be recruited to its Original Complement in any of the Thirteen United States, as the said Regiment did not belong to any particular State, nor was there any Additional Expense in the Mode of Officering the same.

That by the Alacrity and great Attention of the Recruiting Officers, Seven Hundred and Twenty Men were brought into the Field on the opening of the Campaign in the year 1777.

That this Regiment has been employed on hard Services in the Course of this Contest; a Part of it was at the Blockade and Assault of Quebec; the Regiment was with Genl. Sullivan in the Action of Staten Island, of the 22d of August, 1777; at Brandywine the 11th of September, and Germantown the 4th of October following : In all which it has acquitted itself with Honour, and was at the last mentioned Engagement amongst the Troops that were rewarded with your Excellency's Public Thanks.

That in the three several last-mentioned Engagements were killed, wounded and taken Prisoners fifteen Commissioned Officers and One Hundred and Thirty-three Non-commissioned Officers and Private Men:—That detach'd Parties from this Regiment have frequently been in warm Skirmishes with the Enemy, which have been conducted to the Honour of the Officer who commanded, tho' attended with the Loss of many brave Men.

That on the 4th of November, 1778, the Hon. Continental Congress was pleased to order that the said Regiment should remain on its Original Establishment, and that no new Appointments or Promotions of Officers be made therein, until further Orders of Congress.

That on the 15th of March, 1779, the Hon. Continental Congress was pleased to order Returns to be made of this Regiment, and others, setting forth the different States in which the Officers were raised, or the Non-commissioned Officers and Soldiers recruited, and that the said States should have Credit for the Officers and Men so raised or recruited, as a Part of their Quotas to be kept up in the Field. This Resolution

it is presumed was entered into as well to do Justice to the several States, in Point of raising their several Quotas of Men, as to leave it in their Power to take Care of and reward the Officers and Men in the same Manner as they might their own State Battalions, which however just the Intention it can never affect this Regiment, so as to do it Justice in every Part thereof; for as the Officers are raised and the Regiment recruited from North Carolina to Canada, it is impossible that the Officers and Men should have the Benefit of the several and respective State Stores, to which it seems it was intended they should have a Right to in common with their own Troops; nor have they ever received a Farthing value from any one State before or since that Resolution took Place; on the other Hand, sixteen Officers and One Hundred and eleven Non-commissioned Officers and Soldiers are returned Volunteers from Canada, and otherwise belonging to no one of the Thirteen United States, consequently no Kind of Provision is or has been attempted to be made for them : However hard their Case, their Services are deserving of Notice : That the Canadian Soldiers are not inferior to any in the Regiment, in Point of Morality, Bravery, or Attachment to the Cause and Service in which they are engaged; a Proof of which, one Canadian only has deserted since the Regiment retreated out of Canada : Nine different Detachments were sent into that Country the last Summer for Intelligence, and the greater Part of the other Canadians within Sight of and not more than .one Days march of their own Country, Families, Friends, Connections and Estates. -- Four Hundred and Seventy-one Noncommissioned Officers and Soldiers are now on the Muster Rolls and Returns, Four hundred and Sixty of which are inlisted during the War, on Twenty Dollars Bounty only; not a Man has ever received either a Town or State Bounty to the Knowledge of your Memorialist.

That neither Officer or Soldier in the Regiment has ever received a Farthing's Value of Cloathing, or other Supplies whatever, out of any State or Continental Store, otherwise than a Dividend of coarse Clothes, with the other Troops at Hartford, by Order of Genl. Gates, the whole of which did not compose an Assortment that would have made up one Regimental Coat: That under the present Hardships, and many Difficulties herein enumerated, it is impossible to expect this Regiment can continue in the service unless some proper Provision of Cloathing for the Officers and Supplies for them and the Men, may, by some Means or other, be obtained so as to leave this Regiment on a footing with the Army.

Your Memorialist has the Pleasure to assure your Excellency, That notwithstanding the different States, Countries and Nations from which this Regiment has been raised, yet a perfect Harmony and a general Unanimity has always subsisted amongst the Officers as well as a most passive obedience cultivated among the Soldiers: -- and further, your Memorialist begs Leave to assure your Excellency, that he should not do Justice to the Regiment, if he did not add on this Occasion, that he has the Honour to command as good a Corps as any in the American Army. It is hoped and really wished that the Period may not be far off when this Regiment may be adopted by their own -- a fourteenth State in America. -- Your Memorialist therefore humbly prays your Excellency will please to take the Case of this Regiment into Consideration, and direct or recommend to Congress a remedy by which the Officers and Soldiers may be on a footing with the Army.

That in Point of Clothing and Supplies for the Regiment your Memorialist begs Leave to propose,

That the Commanding Officer, Paymaster, or some other Person, may be empowered to purchase such Articles of Clothing and Supplies, or Refreshments as are or may be furnished to the other Troops, and in like Proportion, and that they may be issued out or delivered to the Officers and Men in the same Manner as have been, now are, or may hereafter be, to other Continental Troops, at the same or like Discounts; -- that the Extra Prices and Amount of all such Cloathing and Supplies may be paid from Time to Time from the Military Chest; -- that a particular Account may be kept of all such Issues or Deliveries, and rendered to such Persons, and as often, as may be directed, in order that the Amount of the Extra Cost of all such Goods so delivered may be by the Public a Charge against the several and respective States, as issued to the Officers and Men which they have Credit for in their several and respective Quotas; and that such a Part as may be issued and delivered to the Canadian Volunteers be a Charge against the Public at large until a final Settlement, which appears to your Memorialist the only Method by which common Justice may be done to the whole, and that all the Soldiers of the Regiment may be served at one and the same Time with such Refreshment as may be allowed them, which will naturally tend to Quiet the Minds of the Soldiers, and promote Harmony in the Regiment; for Soldiers who serve together ought to serve on one and the same footing; any Thing to the contrary has been found by Experience to be Subversive of that good Order and Military Discipline which ought to be preserved; for these Reasons, your Excellency's Memorialist was obliged to stop, by the Advice of the Officers of the Regiment, four Months Pay to the Officers raised and Soldiers inlisted from Connecticut, and by the Legislative Body of that State ordered to

be paid to them, which remains yet in the hands of the Paymaster. Your Excellency's Memorialist will, as in Duty bound, ever pray,

MOSES HAZEN.  
Camp, Peeks-Kill, Nov 30th, 1779.

[As found in *The Pennsylvania Archives*, vol. VIII, edited by Samuel Hazard. Joseph Severns & Co., Philadelphia, 1853. pp. 17-20.]

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For further on the Canadian Regiments --

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William Thomas Sherman

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