



## Fort Fraser Despatches : July 2020

05 January 1757:



GENERAL SIMON FRASER OF LOVAT.

Simon Fraser, Master of Lovat, was commissioned Lieutenant Colonel Commandant of the 78th Regiment or 2nd Highland Battalion of Foot. Without estate, money or influence beyond the hereditary attachment of his clan, Fraser raised 800 men within a few weeks, and his gentlemen friends of the district soon raised another 700 hundred.

### HAPPY 263rd BIRTHDAY 78<sup>th</sup>!

**distinguished in action at: SEIGE  
of LOUISBOURG, June - July 1758**

**BATTLES for QUEBEC Sept. 1759 – August 1760**

**CAPTURE of MONTREAL September 1760**

**BATTLE for ST. JOHN'S, September 1761**

**quartered in Québec and Nova Scotia, 1759 – 63**

**Disbanded in Canada December, 1763 (Re-raised  
in 1966 as *The 78th Fraser Highlanders*)**



## Fort Fraser Garrison

All members of the “garrison” should be aware of its dual nature as it applies to membership.

- The **Fort Fraser Garrison** is an independent branch of The Fraser Highlanders (Headquarters) Inc., operating as an Historical Society under the guidance of the objects of the organization’s headquarters in Montréal; paraphrased here as **“to preserve the memory of the 78<sup>th</sup> Highland Regiment, its officers and men and its adversaries during the years 1757 – 1763.”**
- The **78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders Association of Vancouver** is a Registered Canadian Charity (No. 83143 9922) and a Registered BC Society (Incorporation No. S-51436) operating under the rules & regulations of the Canada Revenue Agency and the Society Act BC.

Members of the one are automatically members of the other. Our AGM is actually for the Association.

Membership in Fort Fraser carries a responsibility to know and understand the history of the organization and the 78<sup>th</sup> Highland Regiment of Foot, and to actively support the Garrison’s aims and activities.



The objects of The Fraser Highlanders (Headquarters) Inc. are:

1. To research and promote 18<sup>th</sup> century military history, especially the role played by the 78<sup>th</sup> Regiment (Fraser's), other Scottish regiments and Scots in general, on the development of North America.
2. To promote and research the historical interplay between Scots, French soldiers and French Canadians in order to foster a better understanding of this history.
3. To develop programs to disseminate this historical research along with an appreciation of Scottish culture and military traditions to the general public, but in particular to youth.

*"pride in the tradition"*



## Causes of the Seven Years War

The writer is neither a scholar nor an historian. I leave that to the more talented members of the Garrison and Regiment. I thought it might be of interest to our members to hear of the Seven Years War from an American perspective on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. All this information comes from a cursory review of Internet sources and is offered to heighten the interests of the Garrison. We tend to concentrate on the affairs of the Regiment in New France.

Our Regiment was raised in January 1757 to provide British forces in North America to fight the French incursions into the Colonies. These hostilities commenced in 1753/1754 when the Colonies, particularly Virginia, began to expand westward. The Regiment was originally deployed piecemeal into Vermont, Connecticut and New York State as defence from French incursions throughout the Mohawk, Hudson and Champlain Valleys. It is doubtful that Wolfes expedition to Louisbourg and Quebec was being actively considered at that time.

Here's some background:

In 1749 the Royal Governor of Virginia and the Fairfax Family founded the Ohio Company with a grant of 500,000 acres to encourage development of the Ohio River Valley. In 1753 the Governor of Virginia and the shareholders were alarmed by French incursions into the Ohio Valley. In October 1753 a newly minted 21 year old Major of the Virginia Militia Regiment named George Washington was sent with an interpreter and a guide and one companion to present the Governors demands to the French that the French should cease operations and withdraw from the area where they were harassing English traders.

On 11 December, 1753 Washington met with a Capt. Saint-Pierre at Fort LeBoeuf (Erie, Pennsylvania). Virginia's demands were rejected and the French maintained that their claims to the area were incontestable.

Following this meeting the French began to build forts throughout the area.

In 1754 Washington returned to the Ohio Valley to assist in constructing a fort near what would become Pittsburgh. Some of Washington's party ambushed a French scouting party killing its leader. Some say this was the shot that started the Seven Years War. The French responded by successfully capturing the fortifications that Washington had built.

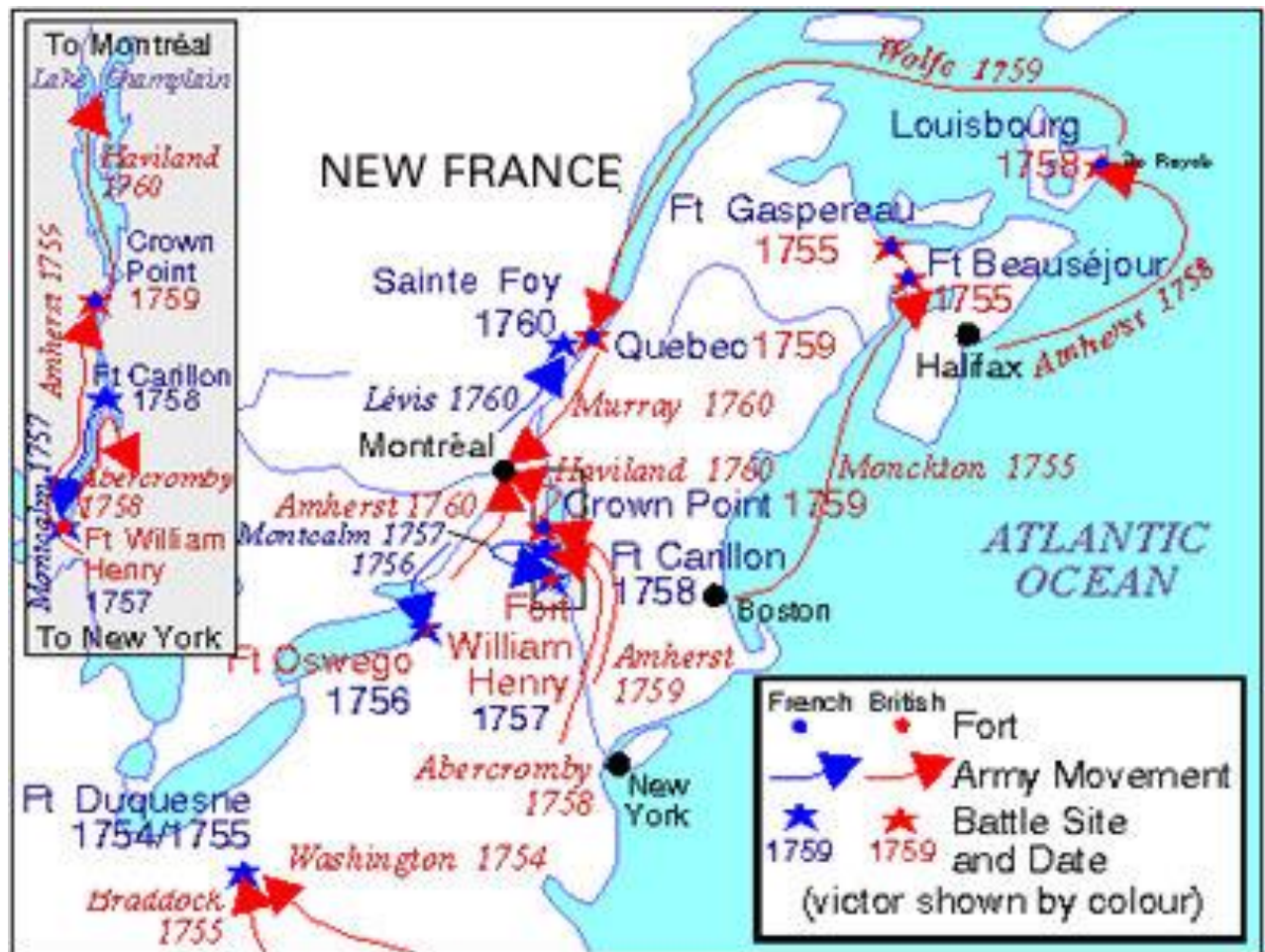
Washington himself surrendered and was paroled to return to Virginia.

In 1755 Washington served as volunteer aide with Braddock's unsuccessful expedition into the Ohio that ended in heavy defeat at Monongahela near Pittsburgh.

Washington was promoted colonel and commanded the Virginia Regiment defending Virginia's frontiers until he took up a plantation in 1759. It is said that when he was unable to obtain a commission in the British Army he took up farming. We usually don't think of western New York and Pennsylvania as a battleground in the Seven Years War.

The French were not able to travel along the north shores of Lakes Ontario, Erie and Huron. The Huron and Six Nations occupants of the area were not hostile to the French, but made them unwelcome. The French had to work from Fort Frontenac (Kingston) and Fort Niagara on the south side of the mouth of the Niagara River. To access the Ohio River they had to either work along the south shores of the Lakes or come south from Michilimackinac via Lake Nipissing to what is now Detroit.

Meanwhile in 1756 war was declared in Europe with Britain and Prussia against France and Spain. There was fighting in Europe, India, the Caribbean and America. By January of 1757 when the Regiment was raised, Britain was desperate for troops. Readers are cautioned that this is a very brief summary and just to pique your interest.



And Now the News:

The Victoria Highland Games Association also operates Craigflower Manor, an historical site. They have a very happy announcement. They are building a new community centre on the site.

“It is with great pleasure that I announce the VHGA has received a significant Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program grant that will allow us to construct the new Craigflower Community Centre.

Since the vision of the new Centre was initiated over a decade ago, I and several Board members have worked with BC Heritage Branch, the Town of View Royal, and D'Ambrosio Architects to finalize the property tenure, receive rezoning and environmental developmental permits, confirm the building design and pull together the funding package.

With the joint federal/provincial grant, the vision has become the reality! The schedule is to have the new building open in early 2022. A new website for the Centre will be available next week with more information.”

Stay tuned for further updates.

Jim Maxwell, President  
Victoria Highland Games Association

Garrison events remain in limbo due to Covid 19 restrictions.  
All armouries are closed to the public.