

Case for Reinstatement of Weston (Western) Allen (Allan)

As the name “Western Allen” is shown in the Loyalist Directory as “suspended” from the Executive List and presumably was not reinstated, I suppose that this letter comes under the general heading of trying one on. However, I think that there is a case to be made for including some reference to Weston Allen in the Loyalist Directory other than the mere statement of expungement. There is reason to think that, whether or not he met the strict Dorchester test, he performed substantially as a Loyalist and would be so described in ordinary English usage.

First, the name Weston Allen. The report saying that he and many others should be required to prove that they conformed to the Dorchester definition, which led to the expungement, did refer to him as “Western Allen”. However, it was “Weston Allen” who was designated: the petition and letters I will refer to make it clear that that was his name and that he was the one whose name had been suspended.

I do not have formal evidentiary material to prove his Loyalty, but I will describe what is available.

I am told that he was actually suspended in 1804. That is on the statement of a descendant. I think that I could get from her the evidentiary basis of this statement.

In 1807, he petitioned for reinstatement. His petition says:

That your petitioner joined the Royal Standard in the year AD 1777 and he being a lame man did not join as a soldier but went with his team and assisted his Majesty's army under General Burgoinne all that lay in his power and at other times assisted and victualled those of his Majesty's troops when on Secret Service and was one of the first settlers in the town where I now live nearly twenty three years ago and had his name once inserted upon the U.E. list but by some means unknown to your petitioner has been struck off that list which he humbly conceives himself intitled to.

A copy of the petition is available. Between 1807 and 1809 he produced an affidavit of William Lamson (the copy of which I have mislaid), who was an engineer in the army corps and letters from Nicholas Mosher (who is in the Loyalist Directory) and Rice Honeywell, both the latter having the advantages and disadvantages for this purpose of being sons in law of Weston Allen. Honeywell makes two specific statements: one, that

after the defeat of General Burgoin he was stripped of his property, put under bonds of two thousand pounds with two sufficient sureties that he should keep within certain bounds and that he should not join the British forces any more – the place of his residence was in Cambridge in the State of New York – until the year 1788 when he immediately came to Canada.

Nicholas Mosher also confirmed Allen's story.

There was one recorded reaction to the petition. It was that “before the Committee can recommend the prayer of the Petition it is necessary that proofs should be produced of the place of residence of the petitioner from the time he left General Burgoyne’s Army until he arrived in the Township where he now resides”. Saying that he “left General Burgoyne’s army” sounds like acceptance that he had in some sense been in that army or with it, that is, that it was accepted that he had “joined the Royal Standard” before 1783, and that the remaining concern was whether he had come to Canada immediately after the war, probably because he did not get there until 1788, the date mentioned by Honeywell and for the reason given by Honeywell, that is, the bond with sureties for what would have been an enormous sum in those days.

I am told that in 1799, Nicholas Mosher applied for a land grant on behalf of his wife Sarah through Weston Allen as a Loyalist. I don’t know what resulted from this, and it was, of course, before the suspension. I think that documentary evidence could be provided for this statement if it would be useful to do so.

The *Data on United Empire Loyalists* collected by W.D. Reid, while on the staff of the Ontario Archives Department, shows an entry for “Mosher, Nicholas of Augusta and Hope, m. Sarah, dau. Of Weston Allen, U.E. of Augusta”. While my understanding is that Reid is not considered by UELAC to be a reliable authority, this is a statement by an official that Weston Allen was a Loyalist, and I put it forward for what it is worth.

I appreciate that much of what I have been saying is not buttressed by information in official records. However, I do suggest that, if the documents I have mentioned are produced, there is enough to justify giving Weston Allen some sort of honourable mention in the Loyalist Directory. If you think there is any point in it, I will get copies of the documents, which have been collected by a another descendant, who gave me copies, some of which I have mislaid, for consideration.

The honourable mention could, for example, be a statement in the Status of Loyalist slot:

“Though his name was expunged from the Executive List, there is evidence that, though physically handicapped and unable to join the British Army or a Loyalist unit as a fighter, he was in fact a Loyalist who gave the British forces such assistance as he could at the time of the Burgoyne campaign, for which his property was taken from him, and he emigrated to Canada after the Treaty of Separation.”

I would appreciate your advice as to whether, on production of copies of the documents mentioned, consideration would be given to including a statement about Weston Allen in the Loyalist Directory.

Yours truly,
W. H. Hurlburt