

## James Rogers 1 – Military History Attachment

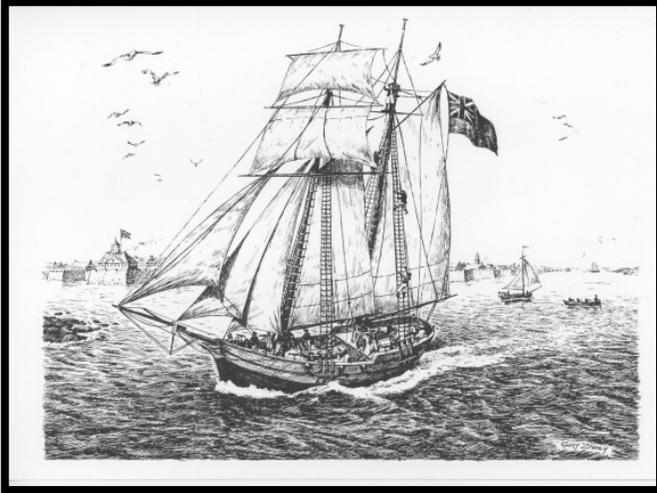
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James Rogers, born 1728, had an active military career though often eclipsed by his younger brother Robert. During King George's War (1744-1748), he likely stayed home to help defend the homestead against marauding French and their Indian allies. In 1755, he answered the call to arms and volunteered for service in a provincial corps although not in one of his brother's ranger companies. When the third company of Rogers' Rangers was formed in 1756, James was appointed as Ensign and was present at the Battle of La Barbut Creek when the rangers were almost destroyed. The following year he was promoted to First Lieutenant of the third company. With this company, he was present at the abortive attempt to capture Louisbourg in 1757. In 1758, James was promoted to Captain in command of one of the new ranger companies then formed. Later that year he was present at the second assault on Louisbourg and, with his and three other companies, was instrumental in the landing at Freshwater Cove, which subsequently became the key to the success of the operation. During the remainder of the siege, James was active in patrolling areas to the west of Louisbourg. In 1759, these four companies were assigned to General Wolfe's army with James as the senior Captain. He was subsequently present at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. In the painting "The Death of General Wolfe" by Benjamin West, the ranger in green uniform in the left foreground near the Indian was representative of the Rangers under the command of James and perhaps James himself. The following year he joined his brother Robert for the final assault up the Richelieu River to Montreal with the army of General Amherst. After the French surrender, Robert was ordered by Amherst to proceed west to accept the surrender of the French forces and forts on the Upper Great Lakes. James accompanied him as far as Niagara then returned to Montreal to assumed command of the remaining companies and proceed with them to New York for demobilization. For his services, James was awarded a Captaincy in the regular army and retired on half pay.



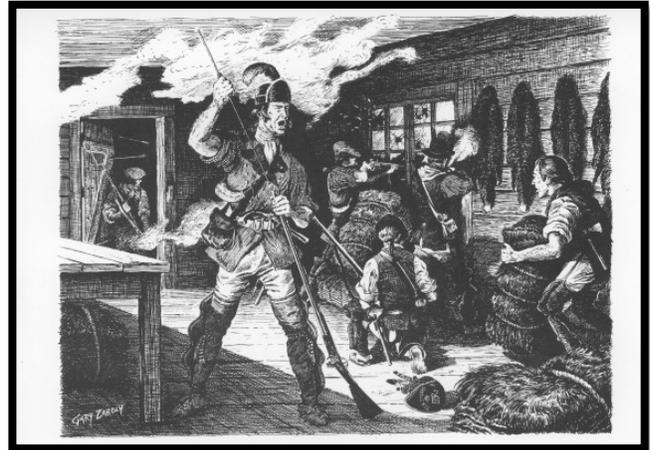
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Returning home, James married Margaret McGregor in Londonderry, New Hampshire, and engaged in land speculation as well as caring for his prosperous farm. In 1762, he purchased a schooner and had it fitted out as a privateer. Named the Major Rogers after his brother Robert, the vessel mounted six carriage and twelve swivel guns. In May, the Rogers captured a French sloop and brought her into Charleston as a prize. Later that year she went aground and was lost on the Abacoa Keys.

In 1763, Robert was ordered west again to deal with the War Chief Pontiac and requested James as his second in command. The two left for Fort Detroit with forty rangers and were subsequently engaged in the Battle of Bloody Run. After this action, the war was ended and James returned to New Hampshire.

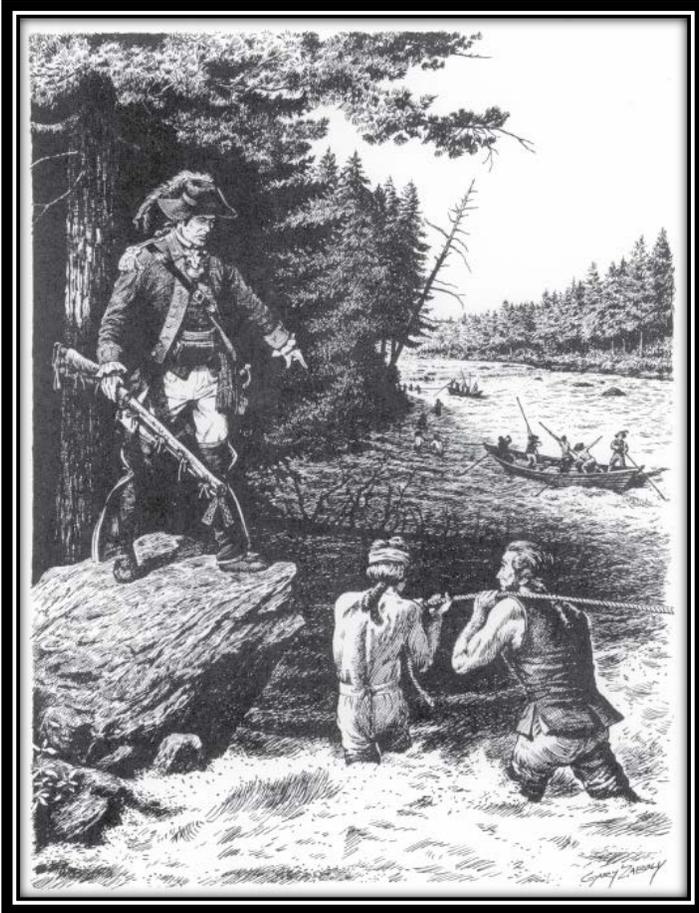


Over the following twelve years, James managed his farm and applied for a land grant in the New Hampshire Grants area (later to become the State of Vermont). He was successful and by July 1772, was appointed Lieutenant Colonel of militia for Cumberland County, New York. He was active in politics endeavouring for the establishment of a new province out of the area between New York and New Hampshire. In February 1774, James was appointed to the Committee of Correspondence for his area. In April 1775, the local militia at Lexington fired on British troops, an action which sparked open rebellion. The following month James was offered a commission of Brigadier General of the Cumberland, Gloucester and Charlotte Brigade, which he declined. His subsequent refusal to sign the oath of allegiance forced him to abandon his family and flee north to Montreal in April 1777. He joined the forces of General Burgoyne as part of an irregular provincial corps and was released by the General to escape possible severe treatment at the hands of the rebels shortly before the surrender of the British forces at Saratoga in October.

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In the spring of 1778, James was appointed Major of the Royal American Reformers; a New York Provincial Corps formed of deserters from the Continental Army and commanded by Colonel Rudolphus Ritzema. Sir Henry Clinton approved the creation of the regiment on the proviso that the major appointed be of unquestioned trustworthiness and loyalty. Over the ensuing months it was determined the understrength companies were not viable and the regiment was disbanded. The companies were drafted into various other regiments including the British Legion, Queen's Rangers and DeLancey's Brigade.



On 1 May 1779, Robert received a warrant from General Sir Henry Clinton to raise a new regiment to be known as the King's American Rangers and James was gazetted Major Commandant of the Second Battalion. Although the regiment was to be part of the Central Department, James was sent to Montreal to receive troops sent overland. This area was in the Northern Department under the command of General Frederick Haldimand and the King's Rangers were treated as unwelcome guests. The Second Battalion was subsequently taken into the Northern Department and saw service in patrolling and in the secret service. By 1783, it had become clear that the Loyalists would be unable to return home and provision for settlement in the west was undertaken. James retrieved his family over the winter and in the spring of 1784, he led remnants his regiment, a party of some 299 persons,

to the shores of Lake Ontario to lands allotted near Cataraqui. He continued to handle the affairs of his regiment and those of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, King's Royal Regiment of New York at the request of Sir John Johnson. He was appointed Lieutenant Colonel of Militia and eventually received some 1900 acres in compensation for his service and the loss of some 50,000 acres of land to the south. He died in Fredericksburg on 23 September 1790, at the age of 62 years.