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# Patriot and Loyalist Women of the American Revolution: How Feminine Figures Dealt with the Challenges of War and the Confines of Gender

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**PATRIOT AND LOYALIST WOMEN OF THE  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION: HOW FEMININE  
FIGURES DEALT WITH THE CHALLENGES OF  
WAR AND THE CONFINES OF THEIR GENDER**

**Honors Thesis**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements**

**For the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in History**  
In the College of Arts and Sciences  
at Salem State University

By

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Commonwealth Honors Program  
Salem State University  
2016

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### **Abstract**

When war broke out between American colonists and the British crown in 1775, the political and social climate of what would become the United States was forever changed. The colonists took up arms and created militias to battle against what they considered to be tyrannical British rule. In the colonies themselves, another battle was being waged between citizens that considered themselves American patriots and those whom remained loyal to the British rule. While the history of this struggle has been told countless times by examining the involvement of men, what was the role for the women who aligned themselves with each side during these wartime affairs? This paper aims to focus on a group of four women, who represented both sides of this internal colonial conflict. These four women are Mercy Otis Warren, Lucy Knox, Grace Growden Galloway, and Elizabeth Murray Inman. By examining these women's journals, diaries, and letters of correspondence, one can see that every action that these women took was defined in some aspect by their femininity and the home itself. They all took on two roles during the war, with their main role being that of a traditional 18<sup>th</sup> century colonial woman and the second, that of a person trying to survive a war torn environment. Their lives were focused around the home and although the war changed aspects of their lives, the importance of domesticity remained.

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank Dr. Michele Louro for taking on the role as my faculty advisor and for having the time to help me with my thesis outside what was expected of our research and writing class. Thank you to Dr. Joanna Gonsalves for guiding me through the requirements and specifications for the Commonwealth Honors Program curriculum and thesis completion, as well as being someone that I could always turn to. Another thank you to Dr. Brad Austin, who has listened to every concern and complaint of mine the past four years and has had an answer for everything. Without his guidance and advising, I would not be where I am today. I would like to thank my family, especially my dad and mom, for always encouraging my education and supporting me through every step of the process. Finally, I would also like to thank my friends for their unconditional support and for keeping me sane.

## Introduction

When looking at the history of war, those in focus are the men. Whether enlisted, volunteered or forced, men donned the uniforms for their country and fought to defend what they believed was right. But what has historically been the role for women? Women have been the defenders of the home, taking over what their husbands, brothers and fathers left behind and maintaining it until they returned. The women that this paper focuses on did not deter from this role as the defender of the home, but by doing so they found alternate means to contribute to the American Revolution. This paper aims to focus on a select group of women, Mercy Otis Warren, Lucy Knox, Grace Growden Galloway, and Elizabeth Murray Inman, who represented both the loyalist and patriot allegiances during the war years of the Revolution.

The historiography of this subject is numerous and there are countless accounts of women who played a role and lived through these chaotic times, but by looking at a smaller group of women there is the ability to analyze what really defines the term “revolutionary mothers.” The role of the republican mother was to uphold the values and morality of the new nation, while teaching children early lessons that would eventually shape their ethics.<sup>1</sup> Most of the historiography of this subject focuses on the women that were patriots, with little to no literature on the loyalist women. Nancy Rubin Stuart is the leading historian for the patriotic women, having written two separate books on the lives of Mercy Otis Warren and Lucy Knox.<sup>2</sup> Stuart argues that women were discouraged from

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<sup>1</sup> Theresa Freda Nicolay, *The Age of Revolution and Romanticism: Interdisciplinary Studies*. Vol 9. *Gender Roles, Literary Authority, and Three American Women Writers: Anne Dudley Bradstreet, Mercy Otis Warren, Margaret Fuller Ossoli*. (New York: P. Lang, 1995), 34.

<sup>2</sup> Nancy Rubin Stuart, *The Muse of the Revolution: The Secret Pen of Mercy Otis Warren and the Founding of a Nation*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2008).

politics and their lives at home as mothers and wives were the only way they could aid their husbands as war erupted. Their sphere was their home and how they ran it dominated the way family life was run in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Stuart argues that the revolution was a chance for women, including Warren, to remain in the sphere of their home while also contributing and expressing their opinions over the actions of war. Other literature speaks of the importance of the women in the revolution and how their contributions were a significant factor in the success of the continental army. In Carol Berlin's *Revolutionary Mothers*, she speaks of how women were not only expected to maintain and continue to perform the domestic duties of the home, but also take on the duties of their husbands as well. Their sphere now included not only the family but also colonial society.<sup>3</sup> Berlin's full scope of colonial society is the towns and communities that these women were apart of and the new wartime atmosphere the colonies had adjusted to. In this sense, Berlin's thesis directly applies to the women at focus in this paper as they took on the additional responsibilities of ensuring their families safety and the prosperity of the men at war.

The historiography does look into loyalist side, but the negative impacts of the war are the main focus. In these works, such as Linda Grant De Pauw's *Founding Mothers*, it stresses that loyalist women were left to their own defenses and had to protect and maintain their residences without any men to assist them. While they struggled the most, they also took on more responsibility, constantly risking their own safety while remaining in the colonies.<sup>4</sup> The argument most prevalent in her work is the concept that

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<sup>3</sup> Carol Berkin, *Revolutionary Mothers: Women in the Struggle for America's Independence*. (New York: Knopf, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Linda Grant De Pauw, *Founding Mothers: Women of America in the Revolutionary Era*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1975).

the decisions and actions made by women were done while they were limited by their femininity. The power that women had within the confines of the female gender was the influence over their husbands through marriage and the ability to defend the home and protect the family through whatever means were available to them. The common factor between all these works is gender and how women were to maintain their familiar domain within the home while a war waged outside their windows. While the men in their lives either fought to defend their freedoms, or fled to avoid retribution, these women maintained their ground while they remained within the confines of their home. More interesting, is the relationship between war and femininity. Instead of denying the truth of their gender, these women realized where they stood within the scheme of wartime affairs. Women contributed to the war effort by making and donating clothes, food and necessary funds.<sup>5</sup> They embraced their femininity and gender and knew the limitations that faced them. Without the home and a family, women were considered to be rejects of society, stuck in a middle state of life where their contributions added up to nothing. Her domain in the house and how she controlled the factors within was how a woman could achieve success and show self-worth in colonial America.<sup>6</sup> As previously noted, the colonial America that these women used to live in would be vastly changed when colonists took up arms during the Revolutionary War.

The Revolutionary War was fought between the American colonies and the British for eight years, spanning from 1775 to 1783. The rising taxes and restrictions due to the French and Indian War, along with constant military presence from the British,

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<sup>5</sup> Nicolay, *The Age of Revolution and Romanticism*, 41.

<sup>6</sup> Berkin, *Revolutionary Mothers*, 6.



enticed anger within the colonists, as they began to plot against the government that they once believed in. With the “shot heard around the world,” the war began and American colonial militias and the British fought up and down the coast of the colonies.

Independence was achieved in the Battle of Yorktown with the surrender of General Cornwallis in 1781, but the fighting did not end until 1783 with the Treaty of Paris.

While the war was waging throughout the colonies, another conflict arose within the colonists themselves. The division between the patriots, who fought for American independence, and the Tories, also called loyalists, who remained aligned with the British Crown, caused more tension and disruption among the people. Patriots colonists took up arms to fight for the continental army, rationed supplies, created new politics, and wanted to create a new independent nation for themselves. Many loyalists fled the cities and the colonies when war broke out, fearing for their safety and men left their farms behind along with their wives and children in order to go back to England to avoid retribution. The women in this paper will be noted by their allegiance as it greatly impacted their influence and lives throughout the war years. What is evident through their journals, diaries, and letters is that these women faced the revolution in vastly different ways, whether they were loyalist or patriot, but did so while still influenced by the domain that controlled their gender, the home and family.

### **Mercy Otis Warren: Patriot**

The first woman of focus was no stranger to the written word and the power that it gave her. Her name is Mercy Otis Warren and she left a lasting legacy as a writer, playwright, and determined American patriot. While Warren’s involvement in the Revolution reflects that of a domestic woman, her affluent upbringings allowed her

opportunities to extend her boundaries beyond what was expected of women at the time. Her records though do reflect the strong influence of the home on women at the time.

Mercy was born on September 14, 1728 as the first girl of thirteen children. Although not required to educate their daughter, James Otis noted the intelligence of Mercy early on and offered her an education privately by a tutor. Her studies included the classics of Shakespeare, Locke, and Newton.<sup>7</sup> On the estate in which she lived with her mother and father and siblings, they had several Native servants as well as one possible African enslaved person.<sup>8</sup> Stuart suggests that even though Warren grew up with wealth around her, she realized her position of prosperity within the grand scheme of society. While Warren did not allow affluence to define her, it did give her significant advantages over others. Mercy became a female figurehead for the revolution due to her ability to write, critique and create satire about the events going on around her. Without her background and knowledge on how to read and write, she would not have the type of influence that she shows over her husband and the other men in power in this time. As Stuart and other historians argue, women in this time rarely had the opportunity for education and only about fifty percent of women were literate compared to the eighty percent of men that were.<sup>9</sup> This advantage that Warren had made her one of the more influential woman voices of the Revolution, compared to others who could not freely express their opinions in writing.

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<sup>7</sup> Cheryl Z. Oreovicz, "Mercy Otis Warren (1728-1814)." *Legacy* 13, no. 1 (1996): 56 Accessed October 13, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25679185>

<sup>8</sup> Nancy Rubin Stuart, *The Muse of the Revolution: The Secret Pen of Mercy Otis Warren and the Founding of a Nation*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2008), 7-10

<sup>9</sup> Jan Lewis, "Women and the American Revolution." *OAH Magazine of History* 8 no. 4 (Summer, 1994): 24. Accessed October 13, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25162982>

Mercy's ability to write and express her opinions freely allowed for a vast selection of written works penned directly from her. Earliest from the year of 1769 to the year of 1814, Warren had a series of corresponding letters between her husband James, friends, neighbors, the second president of the United States John Adams, as well as fellow patriots and known loyalists. Although Mercy remained at home to maintain her domestic duty as a mother and wife, her letters show that she was willing to go to any lengths to ensure that the patriot cause was sound.

One of the most interesting things is that Mercy understood her position as a woman in colonial America. In a letter to Harriet Shirley Temple, the daughter of the Massachusetts governor, on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1775, she says "But the discussion of political disputes is in better hands---and providence if not nature has pointed out the path of duty to our feebler sex."<sup>10</sup> She understood that as a female, she did not have as much power or sway in the politics of man. Her revelation did not stop her from trying her hardest to push for patriotic ideals and what she believed was right. Her position as a patriot woman still allowed her freedom to engage in political discussion as her thoughts supported the ideals thought by most colonists. Whether or not the men involved in politics listened to her did not matter as much, she was free to speak her mind and hope they took it into consideration. In a separate letter to Hannah Lincoln, she states "But though every mind of the least sensibility, must be greatly affected with the present distress; and even a female pen might be excused for touching on the important subject."<sup>11</sup> This letter, sent even before Mercy expressed her frustration over British policies, shows an heir of

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<sup>10</sup> Mercy Otis Warren, *Selected Letters*. Edited by Jeffrey H. Richards and Sharon M. Harris. (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 51.

<sup>11</sup> Warren, *Selected Letters*. 30.

defiance to traditional ideals of the woman's sphere as only the home. Warren could remain a housewife and mother, while engaging in political discussion. As the colonies faced radical injustice for the first time, Warren knew that no one would judge or criticize her for speaking her own opinion. Also, by writing to her friends, she is advocating for the patriot cause and stirring up colonist opinion over British control. In this particular letter, Warren is purposely trying to convince Hannah that the patriot cause is the one to be on, considering it was written before war even broke out in the colonies. These letters to Harriet and Hannah also show that the majority of Warren's letters were sent to women, excluding that of her husband and John Adams. Even though the revolution allowed Warren to express her opinion more freely, her audience was that of the same gender. As a way to express frustration, these letters to each other allowed women to validate that others of their gender shared their patriotic ideals. It was also a way for Warren, who was well known for her written work, to encourage and radicalize other women as to shape the war through their actions.

In fact, she became involved with the patriotic cause indirectly and directly. One of the first things that Warren expressed her opinion about are the intolerable acts imposed on the Massachusetts colonists. She writes to her friend Hannah Fayerwether Winthrop in August 1774, "I think the appointment of the new council will nearly wind up the state farce that has for several years been playing off."<sup>12</sup> This was two months after the closing of Boston Harbor due to the Port Act, and Mercy held faith that their own elected officials would finally take a stand against the tyrannical rule of the British. Again, it is interesting that Mercy spoke to another woman about this issue. As someone

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<sup>12</sup> Warren, *Selected Letters*. 31.

who could not physically do anything to stop the acts, she relies on the hope that other women will support her ideas and therefore persuade their husbands.

Perhaps one of the more comical instances of Mercy's dedication to the patriot cause was in her comments to suspected Loyalist Harriet Shirley Temple. As both the women resided in Plymouth, their close quarters provided for constant interaction. In one letter, Mercy mentions that she went by Temple's house and called it "once beautiful and pleasant" and that she was surprised that Temple still lived in it while surrounded by devastation and danger.<sup>13</sup> It is interesting to note that a way that Mercy retaliated and fought for the patriot cause was to insult and belittle the very people against the cause. This carefully placed comment was not just a form of spitefulness but another small form of victory for the revolutionary woman. She might not have been able to grab a gun and physically fight a loyalist, but instead emotionally damage and chip away at their moral. It is also crucial to note that this comment was about the state of another woman's home. Again, there is evidence that for women, the home was an aspect of great importance and influence in their lives. Rather than insult Temple's cause or loyalty, she chooses to insult the very foundation she based her life on. Although the Revolution started to change women's role in society, their inherent draws towards maintaining the home and what it represented still shaped their opinions and actions.

Partially due to her marriage but also attributed to her intelligence and willingness to write, Mercy had created a credible image and name for herself within the sphere of politics in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. She was no stranger to the politics of man and the ways to influence their decisions. Nothing explains this in more clear ways than in a letter

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<sup>13</sup> Warren, *Selected Letters*. 57.

from Hannah that states “I catch a spark of that heavenly flame which invigorates your breast, knowing that your . . . acquaintance with those in the cabinet must enable you to form a better judgment than those who have not those advantages.”<sup>14</sup> Due to this standing, Mercy had information about the revolution that few knew and it fueled her dedication and willingness towards American independence. She uses this affiliation with political figures quite frequently, starting off with their wives and then dealing directly with them. In a letter to Abigail Adams, Mercy urges her to convince her husband that if something can be done, it should be done.<sup>15</sup> Instead of taking direct action, Warren uses her friendships and alliances with other women to influence those who could create significant change in the war effort. Mercy uses the common aspect of their gender to make this connection with Abigail, in order to bridge the gap between her and her husband. Both are women directly involved with the patriot cause by the way of marriage, but limited in action by their gender.

After this correspondence, Mercy strategically takes another step forward by talking to John Adams directly. She had been in correspondence with the future second president of the United States for a time, but in this particular letter Mercy does not tread lightly on the subject of politics and the ideals that she believes in. With the government and future of politics in the country in peril, Warren urges Adams to do something about the state of unease. She states, “I will only add my fervent wishes that you and the other gentleman appointed to meet in the ensuing Congress may be endowed with wisdom and

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<sup>14</sup> James Warren to Mercy Otis Warren, Warren Family Letters and Papers, 1763-1814, Archives, Pilgrim Hall Museum (August 9, 1775). Quoted in Nancy Rubin Stuart, *The Muse of the Revolution: The Secret Pen of Mercy Otis Warren and the Founding of a Nation*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2008), 89.

<sup>15</sup> Warren, *Selected Letters*. 43.

resolution equal to the difficulties of the day.”<sup>16</sup> Adamant about politics, but held back by the misfortune of her gender, Warren made a connection to the politics of the time by urging and directing others towards the path of liberty and independence from the British crown. These words to Adams do not just tell of the eagerness of Warren’s wishes but attest to the wants and needs of the American people who were fighting for a country that had not yet found its solid grounding.

Writing was part of Mercy’s patriotic duty. James knew the role that Mercy had to play in the revolution and did not try to oppress it. With the knowledge of her intelligence and literary capabilities, he encouraged her to use the written word to “fulfill her duty to herself and her country.”<sup>17</sup> Not only did she accomplish this in her letters to her friends and politicians, but also after the revolution she completed a three volume series documenting the events of the war in detail for future record. The *History of the Rise, Progress and Termination of the American Revolution* was one of Mercy’s greatest contributions to the Revolution even after the fighting had stopped. Although remaining unbiased in the most part, her history does lean in favor of the United States. She writes in response to British reinforcements arriving in Boston that the strength of the people “was never more conspicuous, than in the brave resistance of Americans to the potent and conquering arm of Great Britain, who, in conjunction with her colonies, had long taught the nations to tremble at her strength.”<sup>18</sup> By this time, the war had solidified how Mercy felt as a citizen; she no longer had she any connection to the British crown but instead

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<sup>16</sup> Warren, *Selected Letters*. 46.

<sup>17</sup> Nicolay, *The Age of Revolution and Romanticism*, 40.

<sup>18</sup> Warren, Mercy Otis. *History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution*. Vol 1. Edited by Lester H. Cohen. (Indianapolis, Indiana: Liberty Fund Inc. 1988), 177.

considered herself a United States citizen fully. Interestingly enough, Britain became an ungodly place where she considered those confined there unwillingly, to be less fortunate and unable to practice their patriotic freedoms.<sup>19</sup> Once a citizen of the colonies, the war ultimately changed her allegiance for good and her opinions of the Empire are clearly stated in her literature. Not only were these sentiments true for Mercy, but also reflected the majority of the colonists who finally felt free from Britain's tightening grip on their lives. Mercy put the pen to paper and represented an entire new nation wanting to express the suffering and growth that they went through. Her writing was a form of expression that allowed her to remain in the sphere of housewife and mother, but become a direct influence and voice for the society. In this sense, she truly became a revolutionary mother, taking on two roles in her life: one as the head of home and the other a mother of society.

One thing that connects Mercy to her feminine attributes is her marriage to James Warren. As women in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was expected to be married, have a family, and take care of the issues at home. Mercy was very impacted by her familial needs during the war and while it held her back some, it did provide some advantages as well. The most significant positional boost for Mercy was her appointment as her husband's private secretary. Since he became too busy with the war, while monitoring movements, gaining recruits and obtaining weapons, Mercy stepped in to take over his other personal affairs that he could not take time to address. For example, she wrote to an acquaintance "In compliance with Mr. Warren's request...his application to public affairs leaves him little time to attend to the demands of private friendship...could you look into a certain

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<sup>19</sup> Warren. *Selected Letters*. 94.



assembly you would not wonder that his time is wholly engrossed.”<sup>20</sup> The war allowed Mercy to take a position not available to her due to her gender, but with James Warren’s time entirely consumed, it became hers. Taking on the role again of the revolutionary mother, she wrote letters and dealt with James’ personal affairs, which allowed her to work one on one with her husband, fulfilling her duties as a dutiful wife, while also contributing to the war effort in an indirect way. Her marriage had also restricted her when it came to wartime matters. While James was away dealing with battlefield decisions, Mercy was to remain in Plymouth with her family. Plymouth was not remotely the place that she wanted to live, due to townspeople who lacked education and had bitter temperament. If “not the interest of the best of husbands to reside there,” Mercy would have left Plymouth in an instant but as a loyal wife, she remains for his sake and wishes.<sup>21</sup> This sacrifice seems small, but is a lot to ask of a woman who is alone in the middle of a war to take care of her children in a place that she deems not kind. The home had an importance in a woman’s life and the fact that Mercy willingly stayed in a place that made her uncomfortable details how the revolution affected not only Warren, but also other women.

Through both direct and indirect ways, Mercy’s pen became one of the many voices of the revolution. Her writings reflected not only her own opinions, but captured the emotions of patriotic citizens throughout the colonies and showed the influence of her home and the roles that she took on. Due to her social standing and political influence, Mercy was granted with the ability to make a name for herself in a time that normally,

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<sup>20</sup> Mercy Otis Warren, “Adams Family Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.” II (June 16, 1776): 2. Quoted in Nancy Rubin Stuart, *The Muse of the Revolution: The Secret Pen of Mercy Otis Warren and the Founding of a Nation*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2008),

<sup>21</sup> Warren. *Selected Letters*. 96.

she would be restricted. Even with new opportunities presented to her, her experiences as a mother, wife, and homemaker swayed her works and actions.

### **Lucy Knox: Patriot**

Lucy Knox is another woman who represented the patriot side for the revolutionary women. She was the wife of American general Henry Knox and played an influential role in his political and military career. Knox's role as a general's wife was to "lift the morale of her husband, his officers, and his troops."<sup>22</sup> In her case, not only did she do such but she also tried to maintain the ideals of her home life even if not in the home itself. As she did much traveling with Henry and their children, she still enforced her influence over any aspect that would be considered hers such as sewing, cooking, and taking care of the children. Although the Revolution drastically changed the way the Knox's lived their life, she used her role as a women to assist the war effort.

Lucy grew up in an affluent lifestyle and when war struck, she had difficult decisions to make. Lucy was born to parents Thomas Flucker and Hannah Waldo Flucker, both affluent high society members of Massachusetts. They were hardly excited when Lucy became intrigued by her soon-to-be husband, Henry Knox, on Boston Common where he sat on horseback in 1773 as the officer of the local militia.<sup>23</sup> Her family members were strict loyalists and Henry was becoming well known as another Boston patriot. They warned her that he had a lowly trade as a bookstore owner and that they did not approve of his radical views towards British rule. If Lucy married Henry, they told her, she would not enjoy the riches of the elite class and that "she would 'eat the

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<sup>22</sup> Berkin, *Revolutionary Mothers*, 68.

<sup>23</sup> Nancy Rubin Stuart, "Rebellion, Love and Revolution: Young and Vivacious, Lucy Knox surrendered privilege and comfort to be with her lover, Henry, on the long journey to revolution and victory." *American History: U.S History in Context*. October 2013

bread of poverty and dependence”<sup>24</sup> Although half-reluctant, her parents allowed her to marry Henry and Lucy’s life was set to change indefinitely. In an effort to get along with their new son-in-law after their marriage, Thomas offered Henry a spot in the British military, in which Knox, who was dedicated to the patriot cause, denied. Shortly after the shots at Lexington and Concord, Henry reported to service with General Artemus Ward. Knox was later introduced to Washington and gained his respect, leading to him becoming in charge of an expedition, although he was only in his 20s.<sup>25</sup> Henry’s involvement with Washington would directly involve Lucy later on in the war, when Knox would become a leading military figure for the continental army. In the meanwhile, while Henry was away on expeditions, Lucy was to remain at home as her parents returned back to England.

With the war waging on, Lucy continued to have children and attempt to fulfill her womanly duties. As a woman in colonial times, Lucy’s duties would seem to be pretty clear: take care of the children, cook, and clean, but Lucy did all these things plus much more. Lucy is noted as being a tremendously good mother and what made her a strong woman is the amount of children that she was able to have. By 1791, eighteen years after they had first met, Lucy presented a tenth child, Caroline, to Henry. Lucy was trying to make up with the death of many of her previous children by giving birth to as many children as she could.<sup>26</sup> Lucy was determined to be a mother and keep true to pre-revolutionary ideals about motherhood even though she was traveled throughout encampments and was constantly away from her husband, leading her to take care of the

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<sup>24</sup> Stuart, “Rebellion, Love and Revolution..”.

<sup>25</sup> David McCullough. *1776*. (New York, New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2005), 59-60

<sup>26</sup> Nancy Rubin Stuart. *Defiant Brides: The Untold Story of Two Revolutionary Women and the Radical Men They Married*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2013),165.

children by herself. She did visit Henry on the battlefield while in various stages of motherhood. Essentially, during the war Lucy was homeless and traveled between the camps with her husband and under the roofs of friends. This loss of home led her to try and accomplish the tasks that would be completed at home out in the fields. She traveled to Valley Forge with her young daughter and helped in many tasks while there, such as sewing shirts and watching other children.<sup>27</sup> Another time she visited Henry when she had just suffered through the death of another child. Heartbroken, Lucy refused to write anymore, and eventually joined Henry on the Hudson River with their daughter.<sup>28</sup> Lucy's luck with motherhood was not pleasant though, for out of thirteen children that she gave birth to, only three of them survived into adulthood, one of her oldest even dying at the age of fourteen.<sup>29</sup> Although she was surrounded by pain, Lucy's role as hostess is what kept her going through even the toughest points in the war and Lucy was a good hostess at that. To keep up her image as the Secretary of War's wife, Lucy was constantly attending parties, even having one while pregnant for the eleventh time and shortly after the death of one of her sons.<sup>30</sup> Although this might have been a painful experience, it was what was expected of her as a General's wife. Like Mercy Otis Warren, Knox was expected to maintain two roles during the Revolution: one of them being the caring mother and wife and the other as the role of the woman willing to do anything for the moral and support of the army.

Lucy was also very confident in her endeavors. Not only was she not afraid to meet George and Martha Washington, she took the gory details of war with ease. In one

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<sup>27</sup> Stuart. *Defiant Brides*. 37.

<sup>28</sup> Stuart. *Defiant Brides*. 60

<sup>29</sup> Stuart. *Defiant Brides*. 187.

<sup>30</sup> Stuart. *Defiant Brides*. 167.

letter that Henry sends to Lucy in the middle of war, he tells Lucy everything that he has seen, including the murder of innocent women and children.<sup>31</sup> Since Henry is comfortable enough to send this letter to her, it shows the connection between husband and wife and how the war had made things more acceptable to tell. Besides her ability to hear about military details, she was able to see them first hand and be knowledgeable about them. Again, Henry tends to send Lucy very detailed letters about all the battles he's fought in. On January 7, 1777 Henry describes to her in detail the American retreat from Trenton, New Jersey; the letter is almost a play-by-play recap of what happened.<sup>32</sup> The letter uses military terms and describes geography, insinuating that Lucy had an extensive knowledge of both things. Her military knowledge and her personality were actually a main reason why Henry was a general in the Revolutionary War. Washington was originally impressed with Henry's engineering talent, but he did not know if Henry, in his young twenties, was fit to take the responsibility of creating the Army's artillery corps. When asked to a private dinner with Washington and other generals, Lucy's "wit and spirit charmed the reticent Virginia as much as Henry's skills had impressed him."<sup>33</sup> He got the position and worked his way through the military hierarchy all with Lucy's help; without it Henry might have not been able to impress Washington.

When Lucy lived on her own for a while, she set clear standards on how she wanted things done. She makes one thing very clear to Henry and that is that they would share equal authority in the home when he returned. She says to Henry in a letter, "I don't

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<sup>31</sup> Knox, Henry. Henry Knox to Lucy Knox. January 10, 1777. *In American Revolution 1763-1783*. The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

<sup>32</sup> Henry Knox. Henry Knox to Lucy Knox, January 7, 1777. *In American Revolution 1763-1783*. The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

<sup>33</sup> Stuart. *Defiant Brides*. Page 22.

know what you will do, you being long accustomed to command--will make you too haughty for mercantile matters--tho I hope you will not consider yourself as commander in chief of your own house, but be convinced that there is such a thing as equal command."<sup>34</sup> Lucy makes it clear to Henry that when he returns from the war, that he will not be able to take over full control of the home; she is equal to him when it comes to duties of the house. By asserting control over the situation, Lucy showed that she was not afraid of being in charge and she earned her husband's respect that way rather than staying quiet and obedient. She took control over what was considered hers and that was how the home was run and maintained. Even though she took on a new role as a military wife, she did not let the other side of her life crumble. Like mentioned earlier, Lucy's stubborn personality is another example of defying standards. Lucy doesn't listen to orders or what people tell her to do, and she goes where she wants. Henry constantly worries about her safety when she did things like this, but all he could do was ask that she return to a safer place.<sup>35</sup> In a time where women listened to their husbands and did what they were told, Lucy defied what society standards were. She knew that in order to be an independent woman in a time of war that she had to bend the rules.

Women also took control of the business affairs of the household and bargained in town for different items. Lucy, for example, bargained her horses for a large purchase of tea and she had no problem with dealing with merchants.<sup>36</sup> Henry depended on Lucy for

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<sup>34</sup> Lucy Knox. Lucy Knox to her Husband General Henry Knox, 1777, in *The Impact of the Revolution on the Homefront*. <http://www.digitalhistory.un.edu>

<sup>35</sup> Henry Knox. Henry Knox to Lucy Knox, July 8, 1776. In *American Revolution 1763-1783*. The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Accessed November 21, 2015.

<sup>36</sup> Knox, Flucker Lucy. Lucy Flucker Knox to Henry Knox. June 3-8, 1777. In *American Revolution, 1763-1783*. The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Accessed November 21, 2015.

extra clothes and supplies when he was on the battlefield and sent her many letters requesting her assistance. He requested at one point that she make more waistcoats and britches similar to the one's she had made before, insinuating that she has been making them for him for a while.<sup>37</sup> Even though most women were still stuck back in their homes, their husbands and the men in their lives depended on their aid. This needed attention from the men gave women the opportunity to help the war effort and broaden their options from beyond the household. At that same time, Lucy aided more to the patriot cause by doing such a thing. The continental army was not properly funded and did not have the proper supplies to maintain the amount of men that were fighting. By supplying coats and pants to these men, Lucy assured that the patriot army would succeed and prosper throughout cold nights and long campaigns across the colonies.

As the wife of a general, Lucy had much more standing and involvement within the war itself compared to other women. She defines what it meant to be a patriot woman, one who advocated for the cause and the army even though she could not directly fight for it. She was a hostess that entertained the likes of Washington and other important generals. She maintained her household and fulfilled the duties of a good wife while sending relief and aid to her husband and the army. Although her status as a woman halted her from doing more, Lucy used her husband's status and her own skill to contribute and fight for the patriotic army.

### **Grace Growden Galloway: Loyalist**

Compared to these women, Grace Growden Galloway experienced a very different reality in the American Revolution. As a loyalist, Galloway was not given the

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<sup>37</sup> Knox, Henry. Henry Knox to Lucy Knox. March 23, 1777. In *American Revolution, 1763-1783*. The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Accessed November 21, 2015.

same freedoms of expression and opinions as the patriot women were. Similarly to these women though, the home was something that defined her life and was altered by the ways of the Revolution. Instead of maintaining her home and making sure it ran smoothly, Galloway fought to even keep ownership over what was hers and seemingly lost everything that defined her as a mother, wife, and a colonial woman.

One of the main sources of her experiences is her diary, written from 1777 to 1779. As a day-to-day account of her life events, some days simply pass by as if nothing is happening right outside her doors. While writing this diary, Grace lived in Philadelphia, a very different setting from Massachusetts but still a battlefield nonetheless. She grew up in the pinnacle of rich and affluent society, daughter to one of the city's wealthiest men and married a powerful politician; Grace did not really understand the concept of hardship and the everyday struggles that everyone below her stature went through.<sup>38</sup> This is reflected in her diary, in which everything that happens to her, gives her reason to complain. She was an adamant loyalist in a society who hid from the principles of such ideology due to fear of retribution and arrest. In no doubt did this fact keep people from constantly interacting with her and aiding her in any way. In some of her most dire hours of need, people turned their backs, afraid to associate with her. She mentions "I have people by dozens that will not get me to their houses but let me dine at home so I can give them a dish of tea tis all they care, for the whole town are a mean

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<sup>38</sup> Beverley Baxter, "Grace Growden Galloway: Survival of a Loyalist 1778-89." *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 3, no 1 (Spring 1978):63. Accessed November 20, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3345995>



pack and as such I despise them.”<sup>39</sup> When it really counted, people used Grace for her material items, but gave nothing in return. In a sense, her complaint has everything to do with her self-proclaimed status as a tory and the influence of her once affluent lifestyle. It also can be seen as an insult to her and her domain, as they appreciate the use of the objects inside it but do not hold the same respect for the woman who runs it and makes sure it stays well stocked. As reflected with the patriot women, the home was something that was in the center of a woman’s life and was held in high respect.

As her diary began in 1777, her husband fled back to England with their only daughter in order to assure his and her own safety, leaving Grace behind to deal with the estate and their affairs. It was only until much later that Grace even knew that her family was safe. As a mother in the revolution, Galloway was not as fortunate as the other patriot women who got to take care of their children in peace and receive the full protection of the continental army. She was separated from her child by an entire ocean and forced to be apart from her for years on end. In her diary, Grace constantly refers to her daughter and how she misses her every day and is always in worry over her safety. She spends most of her off days writing to her Elizabeth, in order to pass the time away and to tend her thoughts away from her constant sickness and ill health.<sup>40</sup> As a person who was defined by their role as a mother and protector of family, this is a version of self-failure in a sense. The one role that Galloway should be able to excel in is taken away from her and put into the hands of someone who had left her behind to defend themselves.

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<sup>39</sup> Grace Growden Galloway, “Diary of Grace Growden Galloway.” Edited by Raymond C. Wener Ph.D. *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 55, No 1 (1931): 78. Accessed September 27, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20086760>

<sup>40</sup> Grace Growden Galloway. “Diary of Grace Growden Galloway.” 49.

American history books will deem the patriots in a positive light at war's end; they were heroic for standing up to tyrannical rule, creating their own army at a moment's notice, creating a system of government, and essentially creating something out of nothing. Although this narrative is the most popular, Grace's life reflects a different view of those fighting for independence. Although Galloway wisely chose not to reveal her own personal alliance towards either side in fear of retribution or accusations of treason, her marriage and connection to Joseph Galloway condemned her to the abuses of the continental army.<sup>41</sup> Being her father's heir, she was privy to the estate and the responsibility that came with it; it is one of the main reasons that Grace remained behind in the colonies while the rest of her family retreated to England. Grace believed the estate to be in her name but when Joseph was accused of treason however, the estate was to be seized by order of the Pennsylvanian court. The name of the estate had been transferred to Joseph due to their marriage, thus giving the courts legitimate claim to the property.<sup>42</sup> Galloway did not take this lightly and she showed defiance and resilience towards the events that unfolded. One of her lengthier diary entries reflects the first time the court came to take her away from the property. She writes,

“I told him I was at home and in my house and nothing but force shou'd drive me out of it he said it was not ye first time he had taken a Lady by the Hand... I answer'd indeed I will not nor will I go out of my house but by force. He then took hold of my arm and I rose and he took me to the door I then took hold on one side and looked round and said pray notice I do not leave my house of my own accord or with my own inclination but by force and nothing but force shou'd have mad me give up possession.”<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Baxter. “Grace Growden Galloway: Survival of a Loyalist 1778-89.” 63.

<sup>42</sup> Joan R. Gundersen, “Independence, Citizenship, and the American Revolution.” *Signs* 13, no. 1 (Autumn 1987): 70. Accessed October 13, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3174027>

<sup>43</sup> Galloway. “Diary of Grace Growden Galloway.” 52

Although influenced by privilege, Galloway was faced with the restrictions of her gender and the limitations that it imposed on her. Much different from the experiences of patriot women, Grace was forced to summon the bravery to fight for what was rightfully hers, regardless of what side she supported. As a woman, this was a display of taking responsibility and fighting for what others claimed was not hers. Even though she did not gain this property by her own means, it was passed down to her with the hope that it would be maintained within the family. This homestead to her was something that still connected her to the idea of domesticity and the last remaining instance of having a family. With her daughter taken from her, the estate was the last thing that tied her to her role of a woman. This experience shows first hand the struggle that Loyalist women like Grace went through; treated like second class citizens compared to the other colonists and forced out of their homes and torn from their possessions. This was not the first encounter that Grace would have first hand with wartime matters and the continental army.

Galloway lived in fear of what would happen to her after she was removed from her house. While staying with the neighbors, instances of retaliation against the tory populations of the colonies were becoming rampant. As she heard reports from those who came to call on her, mobs were rising and taking those who were loyalists. In Philadelphia, citizens were afraid of mobs entering the houses looking for different goods and resources, to the point where they hid all their valuables to avoid such a thing. In one instance, Grace mentions that on one day most people were released from prison except for an acquaintance, Levy Hollandsworth. She wrote “they keep close and say he shall be tried for his life another town meeting held today they propose to send all ye tories out

of ye lines nothing but distress and distraction.”<sup>44</sup> Grace and her other companions lived in constant fear of being rounded up and either sent to jail or out of the country; She had nightmares of being hung.<sup>45</sup> To be alone in this situation, Galloway faced a great deal of stress and uncertainty. Even though being sent away to be with her husband and daughter would seem ideal, it would also mean leaving behind everything that she had ever known. Although she held loyalty to the British crown, she was still a citizen of the colonies and it was her home. Nothing reflects her resilience more than her declaration of her defiance to the patriot ideals. She writes

“I had been stripped and turn’d out of doors yet I was still ye same and must be Joseph Galloways Wife and Lawrence Growdens daughter and that it was not in their power to humble me for I shou’d be Grace Growden Galloway to ye last and as I had now suffer’d all that they can inflict upon me I shou’d now act as on a rock to look on ye wrack of others and see them tost by the tempestuous billows while I was safe ashore.”<sup>46</sup>

Even though the war had taken nearly everything away from Grace, she learned a sense of independence and responsibility for herself. She realized that although she did not have a family or a home to call her own, she did not still have to be defined by the men in her life who did not experience what she had. She defined herself as a person who had gone through it all and could now look upon others as they faced the same struggle. No matter what happened to Grace or whatever was thrown at her, she persisted through. As a loyalist, she wanted nothing to do with the revolution but it affected her anyway. As a woman, she dealt with her family torn apart and the threat of death looming over her. Although at times pretentious, Galloway did her best with the situation at hand and

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<sup>44</sup> Galloway. *Diary of Grace Growden Galloway*. Page 53.

<sup>45</sup> Galloway. *Diary of Grace Growden Galloway*. Page 72.

<sup>46</sup> Galloway. “*Diary of Grace Growden Galloway*.” 76.

sought to survive the times. Near the end of her diary, Galloway becomes very ill and never fully recovers from her sickness. She continued to lose everything that she once owned and saw her past life evaporate before her eyes and the most heartbreaking ordeal in which she would never see her daughter again.<sup>47</sup> The war was not kind to Grace Growden Galloway, but she did the best that she could.

### **Elizabeth Murray Inman: Loyalist**

Quite different from Grace Galloway, Elizabeth Murray Inman worked her way up and acquired all of her possessions through her own labor and effort. She was originally born in Scotland in 1726 and was orphaned around ten years later. When she was 22, she decided to stop traveling around the British Atlantic and live in Boston.<sup>48</sup> While in the city, she owned a small shop in which she sold things that were imported from London. The shop itself sold everything from food items to clothing and jewelry.<sup>49</sup> In her personal life, Murray was actually married three different times, two of them with prenuptials, and her third marriage to Ralph Inman being her last. It was with Ralph that she experienced the Revolution first hand.

Throughout the war years, Elizabeth and her husband Ralph maintained contact through their letters, checking in on each other's whereabouts and ensuring their safety. Elizabeth was in Cambridge when the first bullet was shot at Lexington and Concord, while her husband was in Boston. She was forced to take action in order to protect herself and her house. In a note to her husband she writes " I have acted many parts in life but

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<sup>47</sup> Baxter. "Grace Growden Galloway: Survival of a Loyalist 1778-89." 67.

<sup>48</sup> The Elizabeth Murray Project. "The Elizabeth Murray Project: A Resource Site for Early American History." California State University. Last modified November 21, 2013. Accessed November 20, 2015. <http://web.csulb.edu/projects/elizabethmurray/EM/index.html>

<sup>49</sup> Elizabeth Murray, Elizabeth Murray Broadside, in The Elizabeth Murray Project, accessed November 21, 2015, <http://web.csulb.edu/projects/elizabethmurray/EM/tradebill.html>

never imagend I shou'd arrive at the muckle honor of being a Generall that is now the case..." As she directed men around to different stations and began to board up the rest of her home, Inman took control of the domain that was most suited to her. Like the other women in this paper, the home was something that defined Elizabeth and it was her duty to protect and guard it from those that threatened it. While other women and children began to flee from Cambridge to avoid the fighting, she was one of the few to remain.<sup>50</sup> Although not directly involved, Inman became a participant in war the moment she defended her house and the meaning behind it. To give up her home would be to give up the fight for her cause. Even though she could have left like the many women who did before her, she chose to remain and fight for what was important. Like many loyalist women who lived in the colonies, it became a great danger to remain at their homes in fear of rebel attack or ransacking. As was just the start of the war, Elizabeth had nothing to fear yet except what was the unknown. All she knew for certain was that as the woman of the house, it was her responsibility to take care of it and its inhabitants. She writes "...if I go poor creatures they depdnd on me for protection and I do not churse to disapoint them as far as it is in my power I will protect them."<sup>51</sup> Taking care of the home and protecting those there would become a larger responsibility than she anticipated, as Ralph would remain stuck in the occupied city of Boston. She, not unlike the others, took on the role as the mother and caregiver as well as the role of the woman that refused to give up what was hers.

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<sup>50</sup> Elizabeth Murray Inman to her husband, James Inman, (April 22, 1775), in The Elizabeth Murray Project, accessed November 21, 2015, <http://web.csulb.edu/projects/elizabethmurray/EM/eitori1775.html>

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

Their separation caused many more difficulties as their allegiances to the British crown could risk the seizure of their estate by the rebels. If Elizabeth were to leave the farm and make her way to the city to join Ralph, they would immediately be identified as loyalists by the patriots and their property would be taken from them. Ralph thought it well worth the risk as one of his letters to her notes how he misses her absence and urges her to flee from Cambridge. He pens “Pray leave the farm to take its chance, your creatures are of no consequence, you hay the same, carry none to Brush Hill but hasten your way to Boston where we shall be as happy as those about us...”<sup>52</sup> Although, he greatly urged her to join him so they can be together, Elizabeth had other plans and wished to uphold the estate as best as she could. Instead in a letter of response, Elizabeth took responsibility for the family’s finances and explained why leaving the farm would ruin them and waste everything they had worked for.<sup>53</sup> She is put into a very interesting position, in which she is wanted by her husband but knows what is best for all involved. Not only did the war force Elizabeth to take control of what her husband could not, it lead to direct conflict within their marriage itself.

By their earliest correspondence, it would nice to suggest that Ralph Inman was one of the few loyalist husbands who chose to remain in the colonies but unfortunately the threat to loyalists would seem too much for Ralph to bear. After the first three months of being separated, Elizabeth heard word of his planned departure to England. She writes “it was if Mrs Hooper came out of town you wou’d go to London with Mr and Mrs

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<sup>52</sup> Ralph Inman to his wife, Elizabeth Murray Inman, (June 13, 1775), in The Elizabeth Murray Project, accessed November 21, 2015,

<http://web.csulb.edu/projects/elizabethmurray/EM/ritoei1775.html>

<sup>53</sup> Elizabeth Murray Inman to her husband, James Inman, (June 14, 1775), in The Elizabeth Murray Project, accessed November 21, 2015,

[http://web.csulb.edu/projects/elizabethmurray/EM/emitiori\\_14\\_6\\_1775.html](http://web.csulb.edu/projects/elizabethmurray/EM/emitiori_14_6_1775.html)

Rowe, if this is a return for the many anxious and fatiguing days I have had I leave it to your better judgement and will endeavour to submit.”<sup>54</sup> Due to the war, Elizabeth’s marriage started to crumble as the months went on. The tension in the writing between her and her husband is tangible as rumors continued to spread about each others suspected actions. In this same letter, Elizabeth refutes the possibility that she was aiding the rebel armies with supplies. Not only does this correspondence show the miscommunication between the couple but also asserts Elizabeth’s position as a tory.

As a loyalist trapped in the middle of the fighting, Elizabeth did as much as she could to maintain her life as it had been. Denying her husbands wishes, she attempted to run her household and farm in order to properly take care of her family and ensure their financial stability. She faced abandonment by her husband and the constant risk of revealing where her loyalties lied.

## **Conclusion**

By looking into the lives of four specific women, there is the ability to see the range of struggles and changes each had to make over the course of the American Revolution. Their perspectives and actions were impacted by whether they chose to identify themselves as a loyalist or a patriot; the patriots treated with respect and lived freely and cooperatively in colonial society, while the loyalists spoke their voice and opinions, but were threatened with violence and backlash. Although they experienced differences in the way they were treated, these women faced a similar struggle. Political affiliations aside, these women had to find ways to live their lives, although still confined to what they had previously known. When the revolution began, these women had more

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<sup>54</sup> Elizabeth Murray to her husband, Ralph Inman, in The Elizabeth Murray Project, accessed November 21, 2015, [http://web.csulb.edu/projects/elizabethmurray/EM/emitori\\_30\\_7\\_1775.html](http://web.csulb.edu/projects/elizabethmurray/EM/emitori_30_7_1775.html)



opportunities to voice their opinions and attempt to sway the war to their side. Also, they all took on two roles during the war, with their main role being that of a traditional 18<sup>th</sup> century colonial woman and the second, that of a person trying to survive a war torn environment. Their lives were focused around the home and although the war changed aspects of their lives, the importance of domestic life remained. Mercy Otis Warren knew the limitations that she faced as a woman and did not let them hold her back. She used her position in society as well as her tremendous literary skill to aid the patriot cause. Lucy Knox was the dutiful general's wife, taking care of the home, children and becoming the perfect spokesperson for her husband. She aided the war effort by contributing supplies as well as talked strategy. On the other side, Grace Galloway was faced with tremendous struggle and experienced the worst of the rebel army, having her home taken away and left to fend for herself. Elizabeth Inman had everything before the war started and at its end, faced separation from her husband and the loss of all of her property. In these women's stories alone, it is evident that the patriots were the ones to gain their independence over the British crown, while the loyalists fell into the shadows of society. These women show all different aspects of how women were impacted by the war in the sphere of their home and domesticity.

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