

ALEXANDER JOHN THOMSON.

Alexander John Thomson, United Empire Loyalist, son of Alexander Thomson Bute Pursuivant, was born at or near Edinburgh about the year 1745. He married about 1768 Jennett Furnace who, according to family traditions, was a descendant of Sir William Wallace.

Some time previous to the American Revolution, he left Scotland and settled at New York. Little is known of his life in that city, but tradition says that he was well-to-do, and owned considerable property there, which was subsequently confiscated by the State.

During the war New York was the Loyalist stronghold and headquarters of the British army in America. But the troops were to be withdrawn in 1783, and the Loyalists realized the necessity of leaving before them. About three thousand persons, among whom were Alexander John Thomson and his family, set out in the spring of 1783 for the Mouth of the St. John river. They were conveyed thither in twenty vessels under the command of Sir Guy Carleton, and reached their destination May 10th. The Loyalist's son John has related that the first frame house was being erected at the time of their landing; also that the family remained at St. John only about a week, and left in disgust, as it was foggy all the time. They then sailed for Digby, and from thence proceeded to Shelburne.

This town was founded by some five thousand Loyalists, mostly from New York, who landed there in the spring of 1783; and in the autumn of the same year about five thousand more arrived. Substantial houses were built, and the streets were regularly laid out and paved. But the site of Shelburne had been injudiciously chosen: the harbour, though beautiful in summer, was ice-bound in winter, and the surrounding country