

July 4 1776 to July 4th 2026

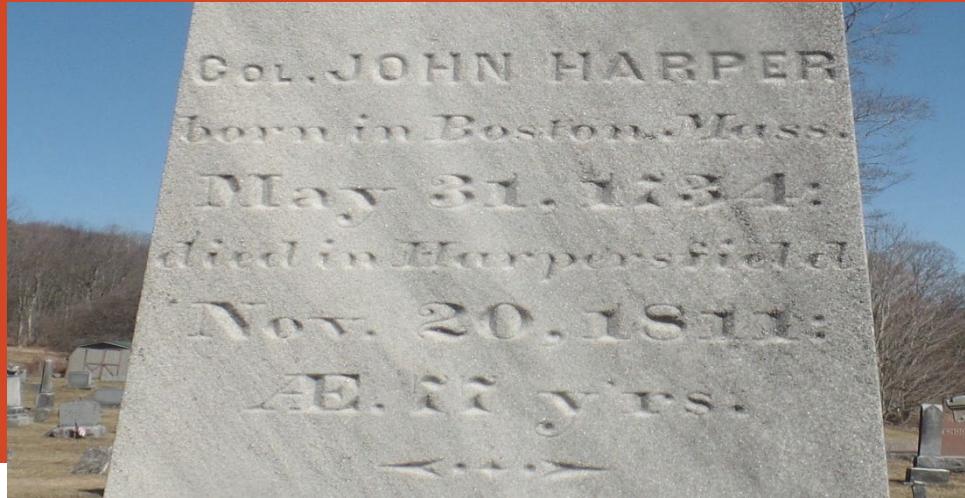
250th year since signing of



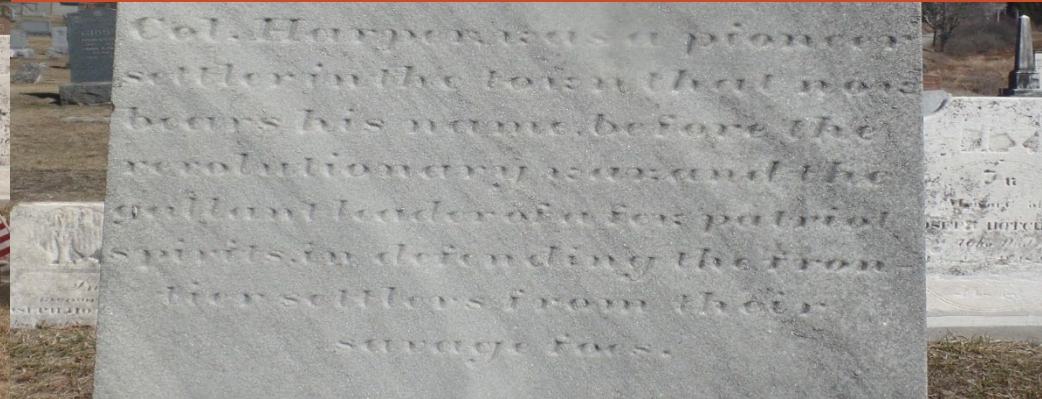
The United States Declaration Of Independence

Harpersfield, New York was a part of the wild west for the periods before, during, and after the American Revolution

John

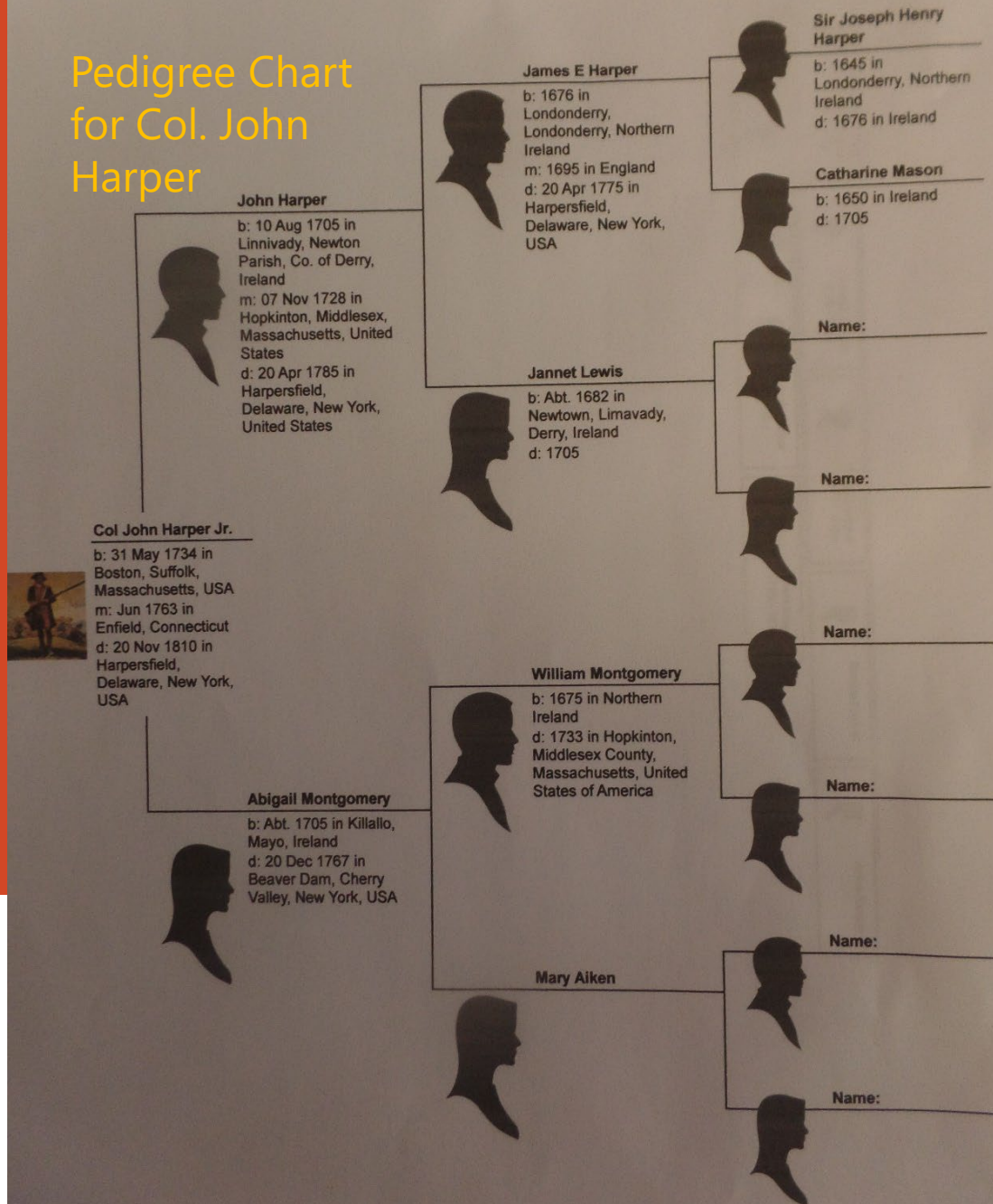


Harper



Colonel John Harper was a major figure and
force during the **American Revolutionary War**
period

Pedigree Chart for Col. John Harper



John Harper Sr. & Abigale Montgomery

went on to have the following children:

Mary Harper was born 1717 in Ireland

William A. Harper was born 14 Sep 1729 Near Boston Mass

James Harper was born 26 March 1731 in Boston Mass

Col. John Harper Jr. was born on 31 May 1734 in Boston Mass.

Margaret Harper was born 1739

Joseph Harper was born on 3 Nov 1741 in Mass

Alexander Harper was born on 22 Feb 1744 in Middletown Connecticut

Abigail Harper was born on July 1745 in Middletown Connecticut

Miriam Harper was born on 14 Feb 1749

From the time they were John Harper Sr. had his three oldest sons work in and study in fields related to his dream of acquiring land.

William in the area of Law

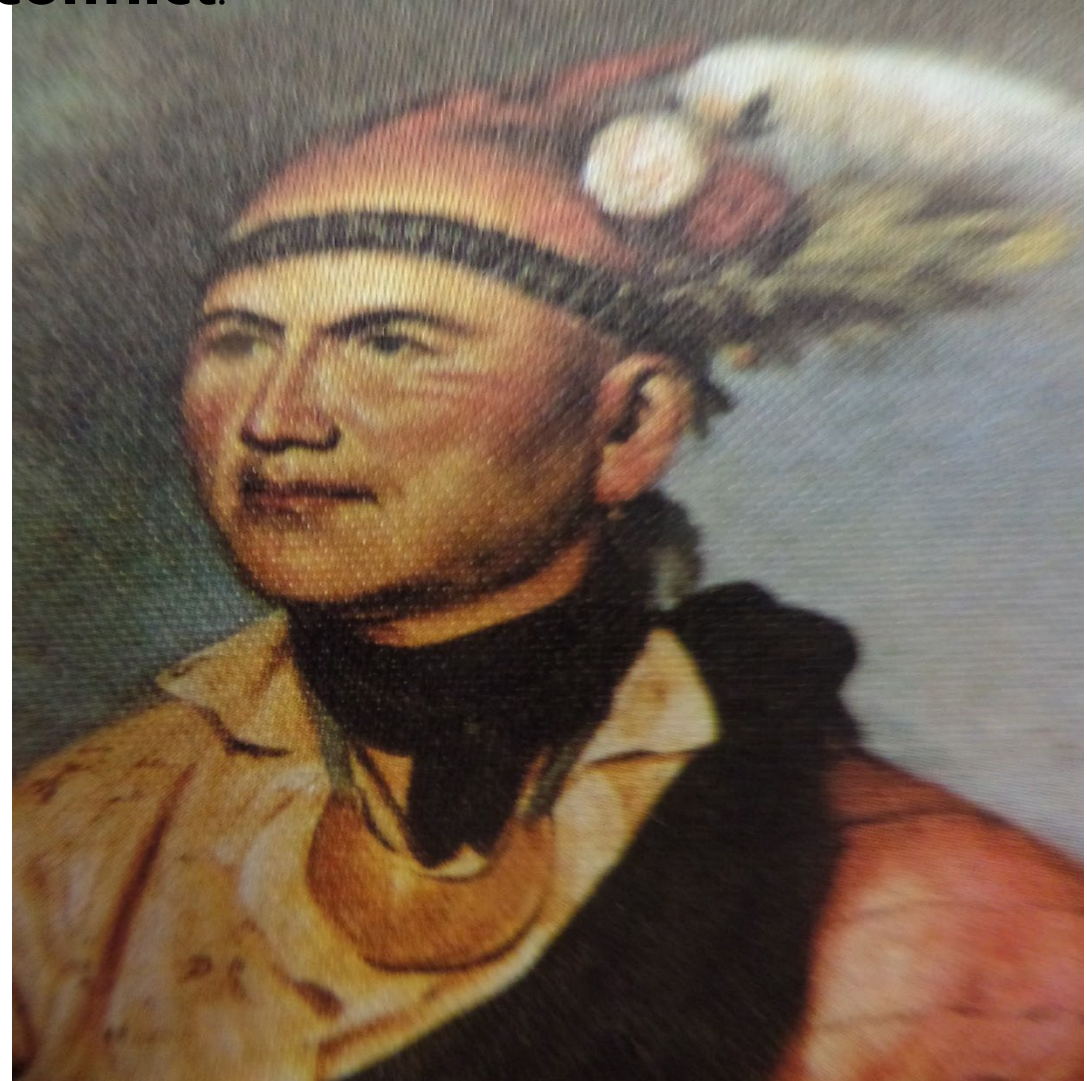
James in the area of political connections

John Harper Jr in the area of Indian ways, laws, and language.

Joseph Brant later to become military leader of the six tribes of the Mohawk Nation during the American Revolution and who fought on the side with the British during this conflict.

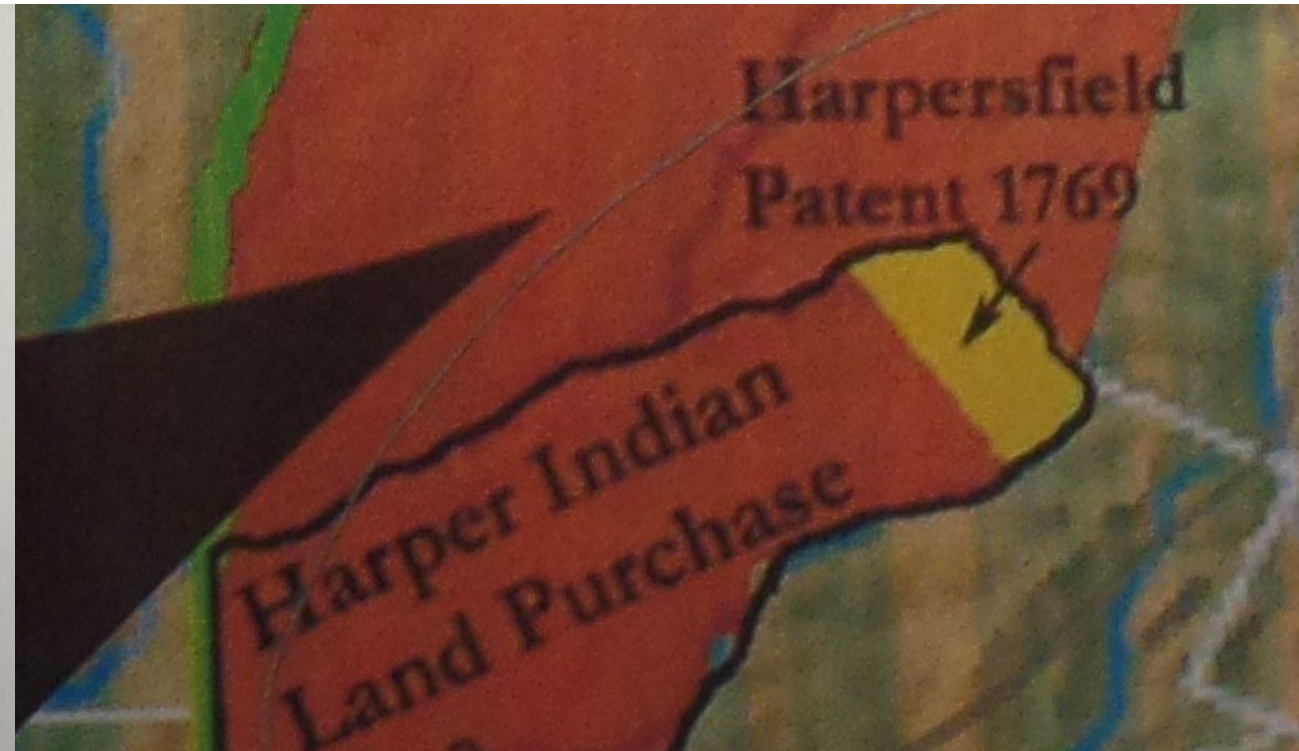
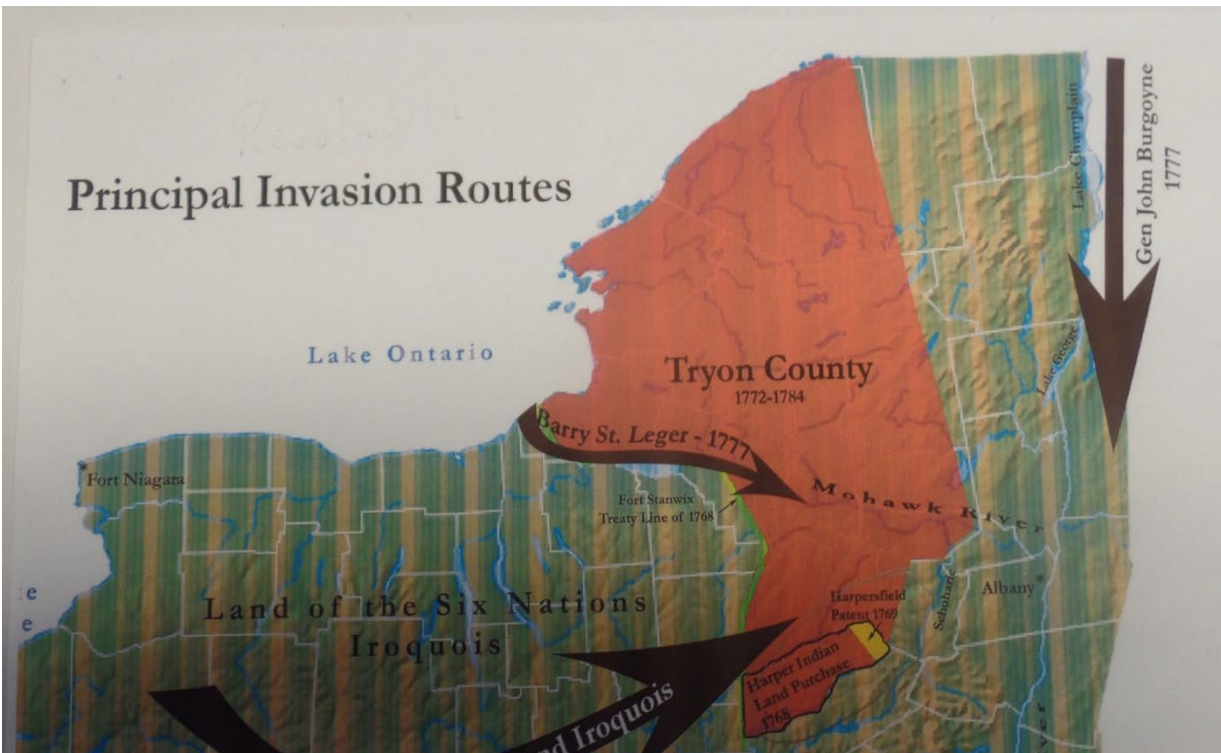
As a young man in Middleburg Connecticut John Harper Jr. attended an Indian school run by Reverend Wilcox mainly for young Indian boys who showed leadership qualities. Among the Indian boys was a young man who was given the English name of **Joseph Brant**. Who's Indian name was Thayendanegea

Young **John Harper and Joseph Brant** became lifelong friends even though they were enemies during the American Revolution.



**The original Harper Indian land purchase in 1768 went from lake Utsyantha south along the West Branch of the Delaware River almost to the Pennsylvania border
Shown on the map on the Right. It was 27,000 acres of land.**

John Harper Jr. purchased the land in 1768 from the Oneida Indians who he knew well and spoke their language and followed the ways of the shaman. He also had to make this purchase along with permission from the British Indian Affairs agent who was protecting the Indians against land hungry settlers.



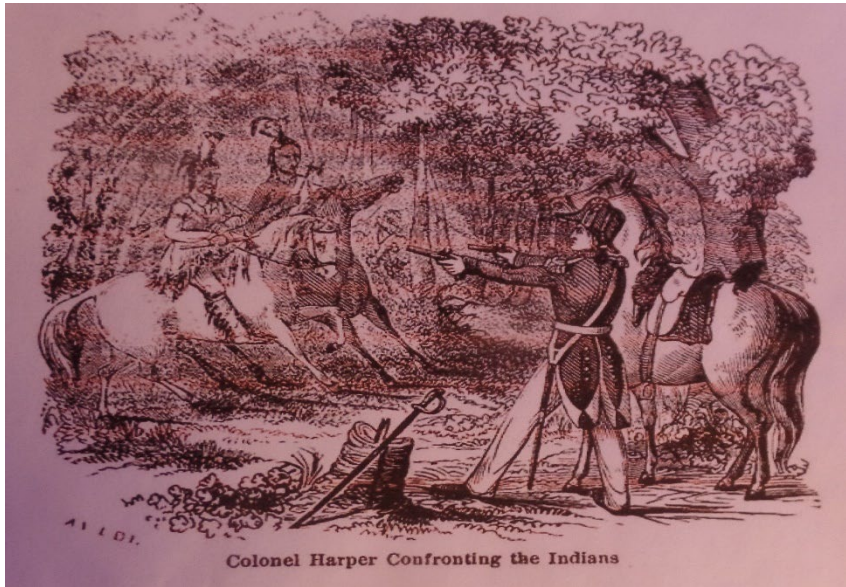
1777

THE DESTRUCTION OF HARPERSFIELD

Colonel John Harper was warned by friendly Indians that a large war party of Tories and Indians was prepared to attack the next day. Most of the two dozen families fled the town to the Middleburgh area. The next day the war party entered the empty town and burned it to the ground.

Colonel Harper on the dash to Albany to obtain reinforcements for the Schoharie forts and Colonel Vrooman

In 1777 Schoharie county was the next area under attack after Harpersfield. This area had three forts under the command of Colonel Vrooman. Colonel Harper went to Albany to obtain reinforcements for the Schoharie area which was under attack from two Tory groups. George Mann's Tory Tavern group and Spanish Peters a much larger group of Tories and Indians.



Colonel Harper returned from Albany with a French brigade of 28 horsemen just in time to meet and defeat a larger force of Tories and Indians. This was known as the battle of "Foxescreek".

The battle was won and Colonel Harper became a legendary hero in the area.

This is also the first time in U.S. military history that a cavalry charge took place.

OCTOBER 1777

THE BATTLES OF SARATOGA

Major John Harper was noted for his regiment of scouts or rangers who were present for the Battles of Saratoga. This unit consisted of militia from Harpersfield, Oneida Indian Scouts and several other individuals recruited from the Schoharie area. One person of note was Pvt. Timothy Murphy a famous marksman.

The American forces were lead by General Horatio Gates and the British forces were lead by General John Burgoyne. Gates during the battle had not assigned another, very well respected America General Benedict Arnold, to the field.

When the battle started, Arnold joined the fray. He took command of Major Harpers unit and directed sharpshooter Timothy Murphy to Kill A German Col. working for the British. This is said to have been the turning point of the battle and perhaps even the war. Gates got credit for winning the battle. Arnold was seriously wounded twice during the fray.

General Sullivan from the south and general Clinton from the north were to attack the six indian nations.

General George Washington was very much aware of the Indian threat to the settlers along the western front of the new nation. In 1779 he assigned General Sullivan of the Continental army to move north from Stony Point into the Indian territory of the six nations. General James Clinton of the New York militia would move south from Canajoharie.

Washington had charged that the Generals use a scorched-earth policy to wipe out all Indian towns and villages and to burn, their crops. Captain John Harper with his own regiment of Oneida Indian Scouts and militia volunteers would lead General Clinton's army south. Harper's rangers were volunteers on this mission since the Governor Clinton's militia did not have the funds to pay Captain Harper. Harper himself paid the troops out of his own pocket and supplied the provisions for his troops.

PROMOTION OF JOHN HARPER BY GENERAL JAMES CLINTON

Capt John Harper was recommissioned to Colonel of the 5th Tryon County Regiment of Militia by General James Clinton.

Harper,s former company of rangers and scouts joined his militia regiment along with nearly all of Harper Patent's homesteaders and Scotch-Irish kinsmen.

On the 3rd of March 1780 he was commissioned Lieutenant Colonel of the 2nd Regiment of New York Levies. Very few of the Colonel's former rangers and militiamen transferred to his new regiment.

Presented by:

“The Harpersfield Historical Society”

Harpersfield, New York

