

Loyalists Women were Like a "Swarm of Locusts"



swarm of locusts

Where there is a will, there is a way. During the Revolutionary War, women improvised when household materials ran out. For instance, women in rural South Carolina substituted thorns for pins. In other areas they made tea from herbs and flowers.

And instead of using salt for the preservation of meat, a concoction of walnut ash was used. But times were tough for those at home. While the war raged on between the armies, in the back countries another war was being fought between Loyalists and Patriots as bands of loyalist marauders looted the countryside. Also, the British Army and its loyal followers was known as a cruel and unforgiving force of soldiers who committed atrocities everywhere they went. When Lord Cornwallis launched his Southern Campaign, black women followers trailed behind his army picking plantations clean.

One British soldier marveled as these women picked a plantation or town clean, like "a swarm of locusts." As the soldiers trampled local towns and communities, the patriot women who refused to leave their homes

sometimes hid in cellars, listening to the sounds of troops moving through the towns. Others hid their valuables and huddled in a bedroom or parlor clinging to their children, hoping that the troops would continue marching by. British soldiers committed atrocious acts. Hannah Ogden Caldwell, the wife of a patriot clergyman, was killed by a British soldier in her bedroom where she and her nine children were hiding when he fired his pistol. The shot tore open her chest and punctured her lung.

There are many exciting and compelling stories told in the pension records by the soldiers who endured hardships and fought the fight for freedom!

Source: Revolutionary Mothers by Carol Berkin (2005).