

#4. Loyalists: Slaves

Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia was determined to maintain British rule in the southern colonies. On November 7 1775 he issued a proclamation that he would free slaves who came to fight with the British. By December 1775 the British army had 300 slaves wearing a military uniform. Sewn on the breast of the uniform was the inscription "Liberty to Slaves". These slaves were designated as "Lord Dunmore's Ethiopian Regiment."

It is estimated that 80,000 to 100,000 slaves ran away to join the British against the colonists.

Thirty slaves of Thomas Jefferson (who wrote "all men are created equal") ran away to fight on the British side. Founding Fathers, like James Madison (4th president), George Washington (1st present), and Patrick Henry also had slaves who ran away to the British.

Information on Colonel Tye

A 22-year-old runaway slave, named Titus became known as Colonel Tye. Early in his career as a guerrilla leader, Tye captured a captain in the New Jersey militia. His large band, reportedly including up to eight hundred blacks, attacked American fortifications and large slaveholding estates, freeing slaves, and indentured servants.

He believed the British promised a more reliable route out of slavery. George Washington had decided that no slaves would be permitted to serve the American cause by the summer of 1775.

The Americans talked about liberty, but did not believe it extended to slaves.

Most history books do not even mention that runaway slaves fought in the war against the Americans.