

Fort Ticonderoga—Education Department

A Letter from Major Persifer Frazer to his wife Polly, written at Ticonderoga on September 21, 1776. Frazer is a major in the Fourth Pennsylvania Battalion under the command of Colonel Anthony Wayne. The Fourth Pennsylvania Battalion was raised in Chester County, southwest of Philadelphia.

I was yesterday with Captain Christy and Captain Robinson upon Mount Independence, the other side of the lake where most of the New Englanders are encamped. Upon our return in the evening we were obliged to wait a short time for a boat that was coming over. When it came to shore and the passengers were landing I espied our servant Jacob Down that ran away from us. I laid hold of him and asked him if he knew me. He said he had never seen me before. When I told him my name, after a considerable time, he thot proper to recollect me. He had enlisted in Massachusetts where I understand he was born. I brot him over with me; his Captain came over shortly after. He and I today have been agreeing on his price. I believe I shall get 51 dollars for him which is the sum he cost me.¹

¹ “Persifer Frazer to his wife Polly,” *Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum* Volume X, Number 6 (January 1962), 450-52, 21 September 1776.

**Fort Ticonderoga—Education Department
An Introduction to Using Primary Sources with Students**

Use this sheet to write down everything you did yesterday from the time you ate lunch until you went to bed. You have seven minutes.

On which side of Lake Champlain is Major Frazer encamped?	
Answer	Cite your evidence
On which side of Lake Champlain is Jacob Down encamped?	
Answer	Cite your evidence
Who was Jacob Down, according to Major Frazer?	
Answer	Cite your evidence
Jacob Down enlisted with a regiment from which state?	
Answer	Cite your evidence
At the time the letter was written, how did troops move back and forth between Ticonderoga and Mount Independence?	
Answer	Cite your evidence

What do you suppose Major Frazer meant by the term “servant?”	
Answer	Cite your evidence
What had Jacob Down done after running away from Major Frazer’s family?	
Answer	Cite your evidence
What does Major Frazer mean by “agreeing on his price?”	
Answer	Cite your evidence
Where do you think the money will come from to pay “his price?”	
Answer	Cite your evidence
Why do you think Major Frazer chose to accept a commission as an officer in the Fourth Pennsylvania Battalion and go to Fort Ticonderoga?	
Answer	Cite your evidence

Why do you think Jacob Down chose to enlist in a Massachusetts Regiment and go to Fort Ticonderoga?

Answer	Cite your evidence
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What do you think Major Frazer and Jacob Down have in common?

Answer	Cite your evidence
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