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Imagine yourself in 1776, trapped in your house, either alone, or with your children. The thought of dying because a bullet came through your home, and hit you, or your children is constantly on your mind. You can't leave your home to run from the situation, since the chances of dying or getting seriously injured, is even higher outside. This was the American Revolutionary War in my eyes, and if we wanted independence, the idea of backing out of war was nonexistent. For now, let me introduce myself. I'm Grace Lucky, the so called "spirited homemaker," and today I'll be telling you about my experience during the American Revolutionary War.

It was on April 23, 1775 when a mounted courier, who was heading to Philadelphia, broke the news to us. The British had fired, "the shot heard round the world", and killed our Patriots on the green in Lexington. The first blood was shed. We didn't know the war was about to happen right then and there. When we realized, men joined militias and regiments, while Committees of Correspondence increased their letter writing. Each night townsmen went to Taverns to discuss the issues, and listen closely to travelers, who were spending the night, telling their tales. An ardent Patriot, Dr. Moses Bloomfield reported that the colonists in Woodbridge were, "determined to stand or fall with the liberties of America." Washington ended up passing through Woodbridge and Perth Amboy. In order to check out Staten Island as a place for fortifications, he had to use the coastal route. Woodbridge later became a thoroughfare for both forces, Colonial and British, at the beginning of summer in 1776. Woodbridge was

considered a strategic location to them. We sadly lost battles on three different spots in New York: Long Island, White Plains, and Fort Washington, and we ended up retreating through Woodbridge, en route to the Delaware River and Trenton. It then became a regular thing for British troops, which involved numerous Hessian mercenaries, to march through our township to Perth Amboy and New Brunswick. Later on in December, the Red Coats gathered four hundred cattle and two hundred sheep in town, to use for food for the troops during the winter. That was only until the middle of the night on December 11th, when a wily militia gathered "John Bull's beef and mutton into a colonial camp."

Now that you have a good idea of how the war went, we can talk about my situation. I was considered a spirited homemaker at the time when all of this happened. Back then, the thought of Hessian soldiers entering my home and stealing anything they could carry was the one thing I was worried about the most. I needed to keep them away from my home, and teach them a lesson about breaking into houses and stealing. I thought more and more about it and finally, I had an idea. If the soldiers thought I was sick, maybe they'd stay away from my house. In that case, I wrote "small pox," on the front of my door in large letters, and it worked!

That's not all though. On or around May 20, 1777, I was passing a deserted house in a nearby village. I looked into the window and saw a Hessian soldier lying on the floor. He seemed to be intoxicated, so I assumed he slipped away from his party and came to this home to sleep everything off. I didn't really know what to do in all honesty. I couldn't see any American forces in sight, nor any Continental principles. I decided that I wasn't going to just forget it and move on, or be a coward, I had to do something. I went home, changed into men's clothes, and walked back to the house. When I got there, I carefully took the soldiers gun and demanded an immediate surrender. He stumbled to his feet and walked out of the house and down the road

heading towards the American quarters. New Jersey's regiment Patrol Guard was stationed near our township, so I met him with the Hessian and he was placed in the custody of the soldiers. I had never felt this way before, it was almost like I was a new person.

Many other battles or skirmishes between Continentals and Red Coats took place on Woodbridge soil around the same time as the Forage Wars. One of those fights happen to be the Battle of Spanktown. When the British were getting close to defeat, they sent sent messengers to Woodbridge to ask for additional troops. Two regiments, most likely from Perth Amboy, proceeded toward the battlefield. Unlike the Hessians in Woodbridge, who refused to go, because they were sure that a huge New Jersey militia expected them in Spanktown. The British then went back to Spanktown after the battle to capture Maxwell, only to find out the Americans followed them there. The Americans reported that the British lost five hundred men, while only three men of their own were killed and twelve were injured. The British say different though, as to them four officers were killed and only one hundred men were hurt or killed.

With that being said, that concludes my long, dreadful experience during the American Revolutionary War. Try to imagine yourself in my shoes now, going through all of those experiences. Or maybe try being a soldier fighting for our country to get the independence we deserved. No matter who you were or what you did, life was tough during that war. Luckily, all that hard work paid off and we finally started to get treated better, and we finally got the independence we deserved after winning that war. My community was safe again, at last...

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