

Prelude to Revolution:

The French and Indian War 1754-1763

The French and Indian War, known in Europe as the Seven Years War, embroiled England and her allies against the French and her allies in what many historians consider the first truly world war. In North America the English and French vied for control of the continent. Closer to the Lake George area Fort Carillon (Ticonderoga), Fort St. Fredric (Crown Point) were French strongholds leading to the English establishing forts at Lake George's southern end, notably Fort George and Fort William Henry.

The War in the Lake George and Queensbury Area

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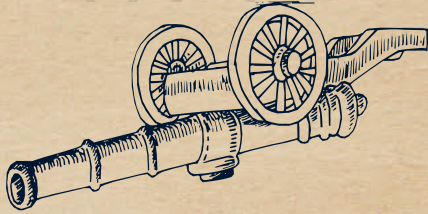
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After the battles General Johnson wanted a stronger position on the lake and ordered Captain William Eyre, an engineer, to construct a fort later named Fort William Henry. In the summer of 1757 French forces numbering around 8,000 under the command of General the Marquis de Montcalm, descended on the fort. British troops under Colonel Munro, and Provincial Militia resisted the attack and the French settled in for a siege. After receiving word that the fort could expect no relief from Colonel Webb at Fort Edward Munro surrendered the fort on August 9th, 1757. Under the terms of the surrender the British, after stacking their arms, were to be allowed to march to Fort Edward. The Indian allies of the French had other plans and attacked the surrendered British scalping, plundering and committing other depredations, killing an estimated 200 persons.

This siege, attack, and massacre was immortalized by James Fenimore Cooper in "The Last of the Mohicans."



"Battle of Lake George", 1904, New York Public Library



In 1755 British forces planned an attack on Fort Carillon to remove the French. A force of 1600 Provincial Militia under Major General William Johnson and 200 Mohawks under Chief Hendrick established a base camp at Lake George for that purpose. French General Baron Dieskau moved on the supply post at Fort Edward to disrupt supplies traveling along the newly constructed Military Road between Fort Edward and Lake George. Finding the fort more heavily defended than thought, Dieskau moved toward Johnson's encampment. On the morning of September 8, 1755, a force of 1200 Militia and Indians under the command of Colonel Ephraim Williams and Chief Hendrick were dispatched to aid Fort Edward.

The French set a trap on the road from Lake George and attacked the British. Despite having both Colonel Williams and Chief Hendrick killed in the attack the remaining British troops were able to retreat to Johnson's fortified encampment. There they stopped the French attack and counterattacked the French driving them from the field and mortally wounding their commander, Baron Dieskau.

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Celebrating 250 years of Revolutionary Spirit in Warren County, NY



In 1759 Fort Amherst was constructed, by what is now called Garrison and Amherst Streets, to protect the road. Many raids and ambushes had been carried out on the supply convoys, with the bloodiest occurring in July 1758. A supply detail was ambushed halfway between the Brook and Blind Rock, on current Route 9, killing over 100 men and 12 women, who after they had been scalped, tortured and raped, were buried in a common grave by troops sent to their aid. After this the fort was built and a permanent garrison of 800 men established to patrol between Halfway Brook and Lake George halting further ambushes and surprises.

Queensbury and Halfway Brook 1755 to 1763

In 1755 General Sir William Johnson commissioned a road to be built from Fort Edward to Lake George to speed the movement of troops and supplies from one area to the other. Referred to as the Military Road, it ran along and parallel in spots to the current Route 9. Its mid-point was at Halfway Brook, at what is now Glenwood Ave. and Hovey Pond. A blockhouse had been constructed in 1755 and in 1758 Generals Amherst and Howe camped with 3,000 troops preparing a second attack on Ft. Carillon.

Timeline of Events Up to and Including the American Revolution 1764 to 1783

Dear Fellow Residents of Warren County:

As the year 2025 approaches, America is poised to observe the 250th Anniversary of the Revolution and the subsequent founding of our Republic. New York played a pivotal role in the struggle with over one-third of the action taking place within our borders. The years preceding the Revolution were just as important. The French & Indian War was but a prelude of what was to follow, setting the stage for the discords and unrest of what perhaps became our first civil war.

As residents of this richly historic area, we are blessed to have these historic areas at our fingertips. From the Forts at Crown Point and Ticonderoga to the decisive battlegrounds at Saratoga, our area has been witness to some of the most impactful events that led to the creation of a nation unique in freedom and liberty in all the world. To that end, this pamphlet contains both information and sites that the reader can explore and witness them, as well as visiting our website, warrenny250.org for even more details.

We, of the Warren County NY Commission for the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution, invite all residents and visitors to celebrate with us as Americans, and to remember the sacrifice and commitment to an ideal that have enabled us to proudly say "I'm an American."

250th Commission

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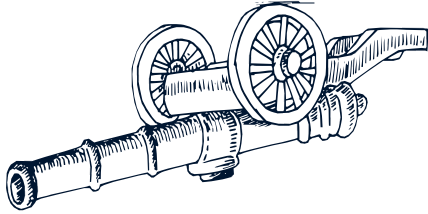
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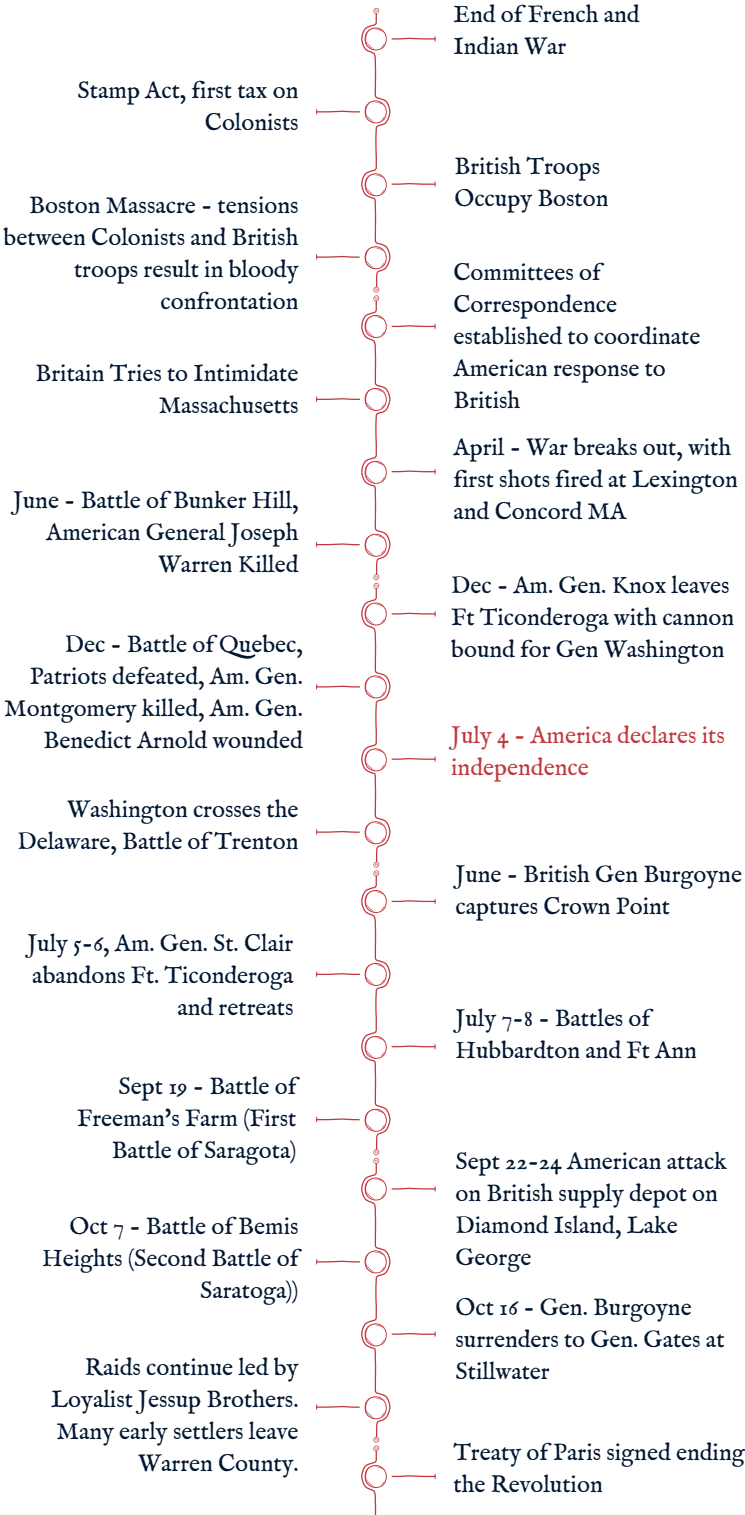


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"Montcalm Trying to Stop the Massacre", Felix Darley, c. 1780, Library of Congress



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1 Colonel Ephraim Williams Monument

Colonel Ephraim Williams and King Hendrick (a Mohawk Chief) died near here when ambushed by a French force at the onset of the Battle of Lake George (September 8, 1755), one of the first important battles of the French and Indian War. The British ended the day victoriously, halting further southward French advancement. This memorial is maintained by Williams College in Massachusetts, founded by Colonel Williams.



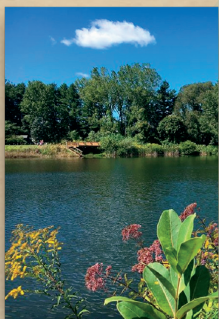
2 The Military Road

The Military Road was a strategic part of the Great Warpath, a Hudson River-Lake George-Lake Champlain water route tying the Atlantic to interior Canada. Therefore, north- or southbound travelers had to portage between the Hudson River and Lake George. Whoever controlled this sixteen mile portage controlled the Great Warpath and this fact explains why so many forts were built along its passage. This significant and strategic carry bisected the Town of Queensbury. In 1755, at the onset of the French and Indian War, William Johnson was sent to this area to build fortifications and a road to ensure the portage of advancing soldiers and artillery. The road was heavily used by military forces. For example, at least 15,000 troops traversed its length as part of Gen. Abercrombie's failed attack on Fort Carillon. Gen. Jeffrey Amherst also used the road, in 1759, in taking Fort Ticonderoga. In the American Revolution the Military Road was key to the success of Gen. Henry Knox's delivery of Fort Ticonderoga's cannons and artillery to Gen. Washington in Boston. The road was used again as a staging area for the successful defeat of the British at the turning point battle in Saratoga.

3 Blind Rock

This cleaved gneiss remnant deposit of the last Ice Age stood alongside the military Road. The rock, well known to natives and visitors, was declared to be the boundary marker between the French and British claims, as noted by Gen. Jeffrey Amherst. Legend has it that the site was "associated with scenes and tales of diabolical and inventive torture, suffered by unfortunate victims." Earliest residents referred to Blind Rock as a common well-known point to orient surveys for roads and property alignments.

4 Hovey Pond Park



Long used by British and American troops as a garrison grounds, the current park occupies those grounds. It was a rest stop on the Military Road built by Johnson, and has seen the assemblage of troops under the command of Abercrombie, Amherst, Baron Riedesel, and various American commanders. It was also the site of several outposts, fortifications, and blockhouses.

5 Halfway Brook

The brook inherited its title because of its location midway between Forts Edward and William Henry along the Military Road. Here, during the French and Indian War, the French and Indians inflicted horrible massacres upon the English and colonials.

Adjacent to the intersection of Halfway Brook and the Military Road was Fort Amherst, the Halfway blockhouse, and a garrison grounds. The convenience of cleared ground, adjacent to a brook, became the practical reason for the location of the area's first permanent, non-native settlement. Here Jeffrey Cowper, proprietor of the blockhouse/trading post, was also the town's first permanent colonial settler and first assessor in 1766.

6 Bloody Pond

A stagnant pool in the woods near the location of the Battles of the Bloody Morning Scout and Lake George, it gained its name after Canadians and Native Americans were ambushed while resting by Colonial troops from Fort Edward. Around 300 of them were killed or wounded, with the dead being thrown into the pond, hence the name.

7 Battles of Lake George & Bloody Morning Scout

The Bloody Morning Scout was an ambush by French and Native Americans against English and Colonial troops before the attack at Lake George. The Colonial troops retreated to their defensive positions, where, under the leadership of Colonel William Johnson, they defeated a French and Native American force that had followed retreating Colonials from the earlier ambush.

8 Fort George

Begun in 1759 under General Amherst, it was never fully constructed. Garrisoned by a token British force after the French & Indian War, it was captured by the Americans in 1775, just prior to the expedition to Ticonderoga. It was abandoned to the British, under Burgoyne in 1777, and was again re-occupied by American troops after Burgoyne's defeat at Saratoga in October of 1777. It changed hands again when it was taken by a British raiding party under Major Christopher Carleton in 1780.

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10 Diamond Island, Lake George

Established as a British supply depot, under the command of Captain Aubrey, it was used during Burgoyne's fateful advance toward Saratoga in 1777. On September 22, 1777, an American force, under the command of Captain John Brown, was returning from raids on the Fort Ticonderoga area. The decision was made to try and capture the troops and supplies on the island, but Aubrey, having been warned by a Loyalist sympathizer, drove the Americans away, destroying many of their bateaux and forcing the Americans to scuttle the rest on the east shore of the lake. They were rediscovered in the 20th Century and are an Underwater Historic site.

11 Fort Carillon (Ticonderoga - North end of Lake George)

Originally constructed by the French, it commanded the intersection of Lakes Champlain and George. Commanded by the Marquis de Montcalm it was attacked in 1758 by a superior British force under General Abercrombie, where the French totally defeated the English, inflicting heavy casualties. In 1758, the British again attacked, led by General Amherst, and were successful, opening the way for the British to capture Montreal and Quebec. The next assault was by the Americans on May 10, 1775, led by Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold. Retaken in 1777 by the British, it remained in their hands until the wars end in 1783.

12 Skenesborough (Whitehall)

Occupied by American forces under Benedict Arnold in 1776, Arnold built a fleet of sloops, gunboats, and bateaux, to meet the British on Lake Champlain. At the Battle of Valcour Island, Arnold had most all of his little fleet destroyed, but the battle, fought in October of 1776, forced the British to withdraw to Canada for the winter, buying time for American forces. The building of this little fleet earns Whitehall the consideration of being the birthplace of the U.S. Navy.

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Fought on July 6, 1776, retreating American troops, commanded by Colonel Seth Warner, stopped briefly to rest. They were attacked by pursuing British troops on July 7th, and in a daylong fight in which their ammunition ran out, were forced to abandon the field to the British, who did not pursue them due to their losses.

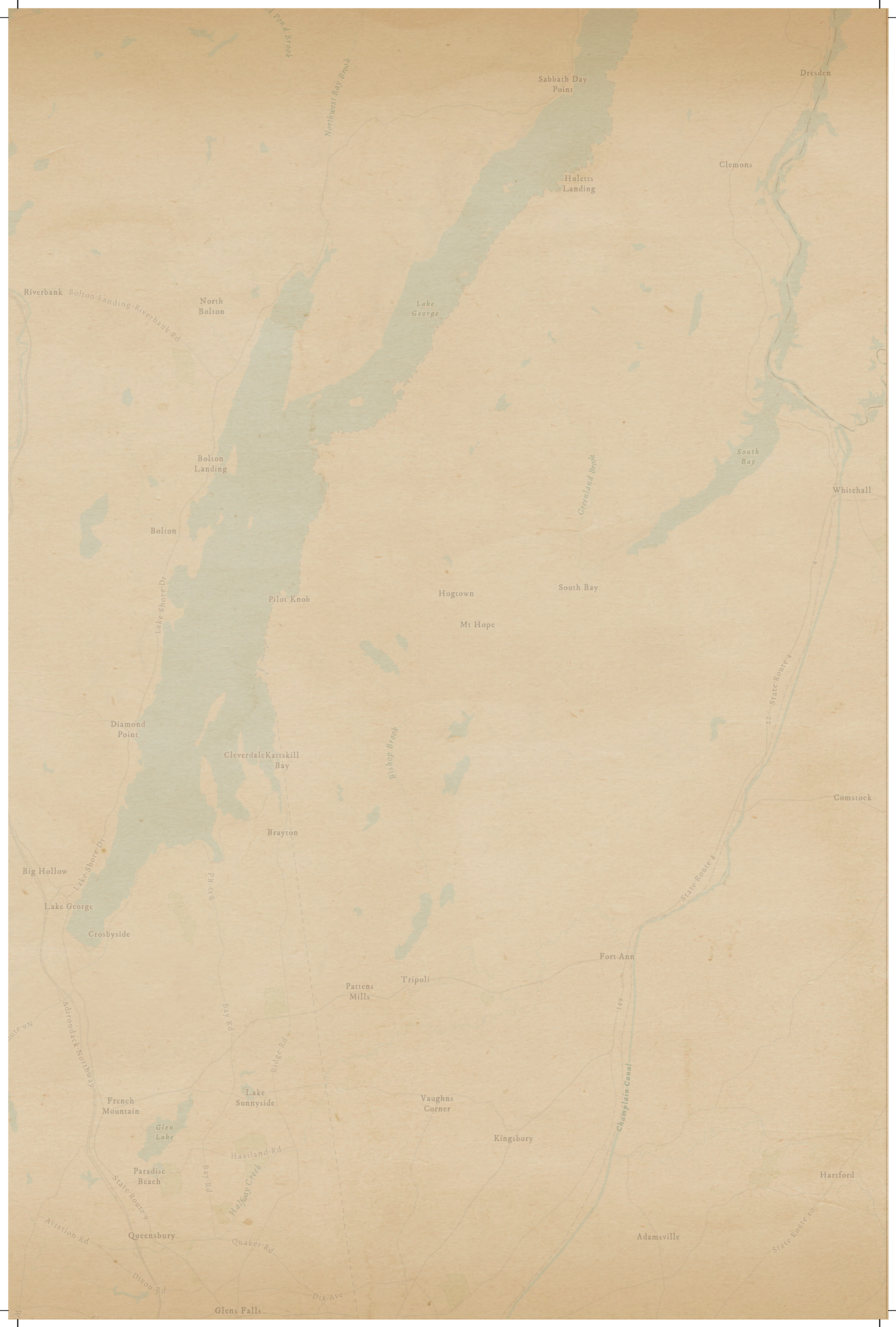
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On the same day as the engagement at Hubbardton was being fought, British troops caught up with American sick and wounded troops from the retreat from Fort Ticonderoga. The next day, July 8th, the Americans, under the command of Colonel Pierce Long, attacked the British, surprising them, and were on the verge of forcing the British to surrender when a war whoop from the woods convinced them that the British Indian allies were close. Long, being short of ammunition, determined discretion the better part of valor, retreated from the field. It was later discovered that the war whoop was a trick by a British officer, knowing how the Americans feared the Indians.



1780 Map detail: John Burgoyne's 1777 Saratoga campaign





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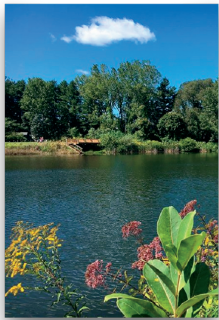
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