

WINTER 2025 • Vol. 26 No. 4

AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST

# HALLOWED GROUND

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## THROUGH THE FROZEN WILDERNESS

- | ARNOLD'S ORDEAL
- | KNOX'S ODYSSEY
- | BATTLE FOR QUEBEC



THROUGH THIS PLACE PASSED  
GENERAL HENRY KNOX  
IN THE WINTER OF  
1775 — 1776  
TO DELIVER TO  
GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON  
AT CAMBRIDGE  
THE TRAIN OF ARTILLERY  
FROM FORT TICONDEROGA USED  
TO FORCE THE BRITISH ARMY  
TO EVACUATE BOSTON  
ERECTED BY THE COMMONWEALTH  
OF MASSACHUSETTS 1927

**HALLOWED  
GROUND**  
A quarterly publication  
of the American  
Battlefield Trust  
Winter 2025  
Vol. 26, No. 4

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2  
Message *from* Headquarters

3  
Web Exclusives

4  
From *the* Trenches

9  
Success Stories

10  
Field Reports

11  
Profiles *in* Preservation

12  
Camp *of* Instruction

13  
Page *from the* Past

14  
*The Troubled Trek North*  
by Benjamin Smith

20  
*Last Siege of the  
American Gibraltar*  
by Luc Nicole-Labrie

26  
*Icy Resolve.  
Icy Determination.*  
by Jonathan C. Lane

32  
Leading *the* Charge

35  
Warrior Legacy

45  
A Parting Shot

THE AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST preserves our nation's hallowed battlegrounds and educates the public about what happened there and why it matters today. We permanently protect these battlefields as a lasting and tangible memorial to the brave soldiers who fought in the American Revolution, the War of 1812 and the Civil War. Thanks to the contributions of more than 300,000 members and supporters nationwide, we have preserved more than 60,000 acres at 160 sites in 25 states. For more information, call 800-298-7878 or visit our website at [www.battlefields.org](http://www.battlefields.org). *Hallowed Ground* is the membership magazine of the American Battlefield Trust. It is produced solely for nonprofit educational purposes and every reasonable attempt is made to provide accurate and appropriate attribution for all elements, including those in the public domain. Contemporary images are reproduced only with permission and appropriate attribution; uncredited images are courtesy the American Battlefield Trust. Feature articles reflect the research and opinion of the bylined author. ©2025 American Battlefield Trust.



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST

PRESERVE. EDUCATE. INSPIRE.

250



**AS THE CALENDAR** turns to 2026, and our thoughts turn to the 250th anniversary of independence, it is easy to focus on retrospective thinking. How far we have come since those 56 statesmen in Philadelphia signed that visionary document!

I hope, however, you are like me in also looking forward. Certainly, I mean that in the broadest sense, envisioning an extraordinary onward trajectory for this great nation. But also regarding what comes next for the Trust. In the last weeks of 2025, we completed one of the most ambitious preservation efforts in our history: the Gaines' Mill–Cold Harbor Saved Forever Campaign, protecting more than 600 acres of those overlapping battlefields.

Each of the two engagements, fought almost two years apart, outside Richmond, is hugely important in its own right. As we described the huge frontal assault at Gaines' Mill when we first introduced the transaction to members, it was "like Pickett's Charge, but five times as large" in terms of troops engaged. And Cold Harbor, the bloody culmination of the Overland Campaign, set the stage for the grudge match Siege of Petersburg. Together, the significance of that landscape was almost beyond estimation.

The price tag placed it among our 10 largest-ever transactions, and since the land was inside the authorized boundary of Richmond National Battlefield Park, it was ineligible for federal matching grants. (More on those in a moment!) The task was daunting, even with a sympathetic landowner willing to let us configure the transaction over the course of several years. I am forever thankful to the thousands of Trust members who rose to the occasion and helped us cross the finish line.

It would be easy to rest on our laurels and bask in the victory. But there is still so much to do and the threats to our historic sites show no sign of easing, as illustrated by the upcoming court date for our lawsuit to stop the world's largest data center at the edge of the Manassas Battlefield. That's why we have begun the process to

secure the future of the battlefield preservation movement for the next decade.

With deep gratitude to our champions in the halls of Congress, we have begun the process of reauthorizing the American Battlefield Protection Program's Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants (BLAG), our primary source of matching funds to secure endangered historic properties. In the past quarter-century, the BLAG program has competitively awarded more than \$235 million in federal funding — which has been matched many times over by your donations, as well as state and local monies — to allow the Trust and its allies to save more than 36,000 acres of battlefield land throughout the nation.

I am hopeful that during this Semiquincentennial year, lawmakers will be inspired to both look back, as they consider the significance of historic battlefield landscapes, and ahead, as they ensure the public-private preservation model behind this wildly successful program through the end of 2035. In the coming months, we will look to secure the same level of widespread bipartisan support that this legislation has enjoyed in the past. To do this, we will provide a mechanism to help members share their support for historic preservation with their congressional delegation. Please keep an eye out in the pages of a future *Hallowed Ground* issue and via the Trust website for how you can be part of this important work.

The continued presence of this funding, coupled with the proactive approach enabled by the Battlefield Readiness Fund being assembled through *Our Enduring Legacy*, the Trust's ongoing capital campaign, stands to make the future of battlefield preservation bright. Complex and ambitious projects will surely come before us, as they did at Gaines' Mill–Cold Harbor, but with these mechanisms in place — and the steadfast support of members like you — we will be empowered to meet them proactively.



*David N. Duncan*

DAVID N. DUNCAN  
President, American Battlefield Trust

Portrait by BUDDY SECOR

# *battlefields.org*

THE TRUST WEBSITE

## DO YOU KNOW YOUR HISTORY?

Historically Correct, the Trust's on-location quiz series, is back with a new season along *The Liberty Trail Virginia* with our host, award-winning history teacher Nicholas Ferroni. Tune in for new episodes on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/americanbattlefieldtrust](http://www.youtube.com/americanbattlefieldtrust)

## SPREAD THE WORD

Please take a moment to view our latest video about the work and accomplishments of the American Battlefield Trust. If you are as proud of our successes as we are, please share with your friends and other battlefield organizations. [www.battlefields.org/about](http://www.battlefields.org/about)

## DIVE INTO THE REVOLUTION

Get to know ordinary people who had their lives changed by the American Revolution at the *American Revolution Experience Online*, a joint project of the American Battlefield Trust and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Check it out at [www.americanrevolutionexperience.org](http://www.americanrevolutionexperience.org)

## TRAVEL PLANS? NO PROBLEM!

Plan your trips for 2026 with history in mind using the Trust's personalized itineraries. From preexisting agendas to customizable travels, there's something for you at [www.battlefields.org/visit](http://www.battlefields.org/visit)

## CELEBRATING THE SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL

The Trust is excited to mark 250 years of America with an updated website interface, complete with highlights from the American Revolution, as well as all the materials you know and love. Learn more about the Semiquincentennial and our efforts at [www.battlefields.org](http://www.battlefields.org)

EXPLORE THIS ISSUE



- FACEBOOK.COM/AMERICANBATTLEFIELDTRUST
- X (FORMERLY TWITTER) @BATTLEFIELDS
- YOUTUBE.COM/AMERICANBATTLEFIELDTRUST
- INSTAGRAM @AMERICANBATTLEFIELDTRUST
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Lake George, N.Y., MATTHEW HARTWIG



A full slate of events marked the anniversary, including appearances from Delegates Bonita Anthony, Cliff Hayes, and Jay Leftwich at top.

## INTRODUCING *THE LIBERTY TRAIL VIRGINIA*

*Debut comes during 250th anniversary events for Battle of Great Bridge*

**T**HE AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST'S award-winning program *The Liberty Trail* is expanding to the Old Dominion. *The Liberty Trail Virginia* app, now available to download free from the Apple App Store, Google Play and online, takes users on a Revolutionary journey through the Commonwealth, weaving together battlefields to tell the story of America's founding conflict.

*The Liberty Trail Virginia* invites users to experience this defining chapter of American history through immersive tours of pivotal Revolutionary War sites, including Yorktown, Great Bridge, Kemp's Landing and more. From devoted history enthusiasts to curious travelers, everyone can use *The Liberty Trail Virginia* to discover how independence was won — one battle, one story and one step at a time.

The app, which replaces and expands upon the Trust's popular Yorktown Tour Guide app, was made possible through

partnerships with the Colonial National Historical Park in Yorktown and the Great Bridge Battlefield & Waterways Museum in Chesapeake, Virginia.

History seekers can also use *TheLibertyTrail.org/VA* to help plan their trip to Virginia's Revolutionary sites, including highlighted tours, events and outdoor activities, such as hiking, biking and boating.

*The Liberty Trail* app series began in 2022, with South Carolina the first state featured. *The Liberty Trail* then expanded to New Jersey in late 2024. Massachusetts joined the ranks in April 2025, just in time for the 250th anniversary of the Shot Heard 'Round the World.

*The Liberty Trail* mobile apps are just some of the more than 30 apps for battlefield trails and sites that have now been produced by the Trust, including the Webby Award-winning *The Liberty Trail AR* and the Anthem Award-winning *Medal of Honor Valor Trail*. Learn all the Trust's apps at [www.battlefields.org/visit/mobile-apps](http://www.battlefields.org/visit/mobile-apps)★

## REAUTHORIZATION PROCESS BEGINS

*For key federal program*

**J**UST BEFORE the holidays, U.S. Senators David McCormick (R-PA) and Tim Kaine (D-VA) introduced legislation to reauthorize the nation's most successful heritage land conservation program — the American Battlefield Protection Program's Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants (BLAG). The bill, the *American Battlefield Protection Program Amendment Acts of 2025* (S.3524), will enable public-private battlefield protection through competitively awarded matching grants to continue unabated through 2035.

Since it began, the program has facilitated the protection of more than 36,000 acres, thanks to more than \$235 million appropriated by legislators over the years and matched dollar for dollar by private sources. Each of the properties saved by the Trust and partner organizations is part of a battlefield rated by historians to be among the most critical to deciding the outcome of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 or Civil War, but is outside the boundaries of a national park.

In addition to continuing the program at the same authorized funding level of \$18 million per year, the legislation makes minor adjustments to the awarding of grants in BLAG's two sister programs: the Battlefield Interpretation Modernization Grant Program and the Battlefield Restoration Grant Program. It further instructs the National Park Service to build upon two 2020 reports developed in partnership between the Trust and Michigan State University, via an American Battlefield Protection Program Planning Grant, and consider extending eligibility to include relevant properties from the French and Indian War and the Mexican-American War.

Since its inception, this program has enjoyed broad, bipartisan legislative support, which we expect to continue during the reauthorization process. In the coming months, please look for how you can contact your legislators and urge them to support this important bill in the pages of *Hallowed Ground* or at [www.battlefields.org/news](http://www.battlefields.org/news)★

## TAKE ACTION FOR PRINCETON BATTLEFIELD

*Advocate for new Visitor & Education Center*

**J**ANUARY 3 marked the 249th anniversary of the Battle of Princeton. The Trust is hard at work with local partners to reimagine how visitors experience the battlefield that saved the American Revolution through its multiyear project "Reimagining Princeton." Since the unveiling of new details about the project to the Princeton community at an October 2025 public meeting, support and enthusiasm continue to swell.

A central component of this effort is the creation of a Visitor and Education Center, building upon previous feasibility studies funded by the Trust. The new center will illuminate the site's history, with a focus on the 1777 battle period, and provide spaces and programming for heritage tourism, school field trips and community engagement. This new facility will also elevate the park's profile, provide context for Princeton's role during the war and accommodate larger groups of visitors.

This ambitious project can only happen with your support. The Trust is urging New Jersey residents and preservation supporters from outside the Garden State to sign our letter supporting the inclusion of state funding in New Jersey's FY 2027 budget for the creation of a Visitor and Education Center at the Princeton Battlefield. Please visit our website at [www.battlefields.org/speak-out](http://www.battlefields.org/speak-out) to use the easy mechanism to make your voice heard! Together, we can ensure that the story of this crucial battle is told for generations to come.★



Princeton Battlefield State Park  
Princeton, N.J.  
DAN KOMODA



## AMERICAN REVOLUTION EXPERIENCE *now extended through 2027!*

**R**ESPONDING to an overwhelming demand for high-quality educational materials to support programming for the American Revolution's upcoming 250th anniversary, the *American Revolution Experience* has been extended by two full years, through 2027. This traveling exhibit, run by the American Battlefield Trust and the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), takes history to all 50 states and has been met with enthusiastic receptions from host sites and visitors alike. Further, two additional copies of the exhibit are being put into circulation to reach the more than 600 sites clamoring to welcome the project, which focuses on the people and the places of the American Revolution, encouraging Americans to experience Revolutionary War sites through the eyes of those who lived through that momentous conflict.

"As Americans eagerly seek out ways to remember the story of our nation's origins during this 250th anniversary period, this exhibit provides an outstanding and accessible way to honor the myriad individual stories of courage, determination and hope that set us on our path," said Trust President David Duncan.

"The overwhelming response to the *American Revolution Experience* perfectly illustrates the passion of DAR members and chapters as they look to introduce their communities to the remarkable men and women who rose to the challenges de-



manded of them along our path to liberty," said DAR President General Ginnie Sebastian Storage.

More than 70,000 visitors from all 50 states have experienced the exhibit so far, which includes 12 panels that spotlight individuals deeply touched by the Revolutionary War — stories that transcend time and connect the viewer to America's Patriot history, brought to life with custom illustrations by artist Dale Watson. The panels are complemented by three digital kiosks containing contextual information about the broader conflict.

Thanks to the extension, additional sites are invited to apply to host the exhibit in the coming months and years. Application details, hosting information and the full tour schedule are available at [www.battlefields.org/ontour](http://www.battlefields.org/ontour) ★



## ANTHEM AWARD TRIUMPH *Trust receives trio of honors*

**W**E ARE THRILLED that the Trust was thrice honored by the 2025 Anthem Awards, a social impact recognition created by the same team behind the Webby Awards, which celebrate the very best of the internet. Our initiatives were selected from more than 2,000 submissions from 42 countries. Now in its fifth year, the Anthem Awards amplify voices that spark global change and inspire others to take action in their communities.

Our **Prince William Digital Gateway Advocacy** received a silver in the local awareness campaign category for strategic, community-driven advocacy against what would be the largest data center complex on the planet, planned to be built directly adjacent to Manassas National Battlefield Park.

**The Medal of Honor Valor Trail™** received a silver in the category for best use of data, recognizing our transformation of Medal of Honor history and geographic data into an engaging national experience that helps audiences explore individual stories of valor.

We also received a bronze in the capital campaign category for the public-phase website for **Our Enduring Legacy** campaign — the largest battlefield preservation philanthropy campaign in American history — which will provide the critical resources needed to expand preservation efforts, meet today's challenges and seize tomorrow's opportunities.

The recent honors add to a robust list of awards earned by the Trust in its nearly 40-year history, including previous recognitions for our video, fundraising and other content creation work. Browse these honors at [www.battlefields.org/awards](http://www.battlefields.org/awards) ★



## BATTLEFIELD BOOKFEST AND GETTYSNERD 2.0

*New Trust event draws crowd with speakers, sparkles*

**T**HE AMERICAN Battlefield Trust's first Battlefield BookFest, held in Gettysburg, Pa., November 14–15, welcomed more than a hundred enthusiastic attendees to celebrate literature, learning and the stories that shape our collective past. Speakers from near and far, including Alan Pell Crawford, recipient of the 2025 American Battlefield Trust Prize for History for his book *This Fierce People: The Untold Story of America's Revolutionary War in the South*, discussed the formative conflicts of the nation.

A highlight of the weekend was the second annual GettysNerd Quiz Show, with co-host Garry Adelman in a sequined jacket and enthusiastic audience participation. Competitors were challenged by nearly impossible Gettysburg trivia until law student Colton Pikovsky claimed the title of "Ultimate GettysNerd" for the year.

Thanks to overwhelming demand, the Second Annual Battlefield BookFest will be back in Gettysburg next year, November 13–14, 2026. Tickets go on sale August 1, 2026. ★



## DATA CENTER LAWSUITS

*Manassas appeal set for late February*

**T**HE LONG FIGHT against data center proposals within the historic boundaries of the Second Manassas and Wilderness Battlefields continued to evolve this autumn, following favorable legal opinions in both cases.

The September decision at the Wilderness that allows our case to advance to trial was followed by a mid-November hearing to determine the final draft order that will be used by the court moving forward. However, the hearing considered additional motions introduced by the defense, principally a Certification Motion that requested the ability to seek an appeal based on the court's letter ruling before that filing is fully finalized. The judge rejected this request out of hand as preemptory, although we do expect that an eventual appeal will occur. Nevertheless, this outcome is a further indication of the strength of our position and the desperation of the defense.

At Manassas, the Trust's suit had thus far proceeded in parallel to one filed by the neighboring Oak Valley Homeowners Association. The latter had won a major victory in August. Since both cases are bringing fundamentally similar charges, and both are next due to be heard by the Virginia Court of Appeals, the court made a decision to unite oral arguments in both cases into a single hearing in late February. This, however, does not prevent the Virginia Court of Appeals from issuing two separate rulings in the cases, since they do not share all counts.

Both cases are complex, featuring procedural nuance in how the rezoning applications were handled at the municipal level. The Trust is committed to ensuring that all avenues are pursued as we endeavor to overturn these shortsighted decisions and prevent construction of data centers that will forever change the character of the surrounding historic landscape. Keep abreast of the latest developments at [www.battlefields.org/news](http://www.battlefields.org/news).



Antietam National Battlefield  
Sharpsburg, Md.  
MATT BRANT

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

*Just six months to secure our “Legacy”*



**AS THE CALENDAR** turns to 2026, the American Battlefield Trust enters the final six months of its *Our Enduring Legacy: The Campaign to Preserve, Educate, and Inspire*, the largest and most ambitious fundraising effort in battlefield preservation history. This \$125-million comprehensive campaign will provide the critical resources needed to expand preservation efforts, meet today’s challenges and seize tomorrow’s opportunities.

We are currently 94 percent of the way to our goal, but we can’t let up yet! Your gift will enable us to be more proactive than ever before in how we pursue acquisition of endangered battlefield properties and allow us to bring outstanding educational resources to even more classrooms.

Visit [www.ourenduringlegacy.org](http://www.ourenduringlegacy.org) to learn more about the campaign and its priorities.★

## SITE MANAGERS:

*Register today to celebrate  
30 years of Park Day*



**ON APRIL 25, 2026**, Park Day, one of the Trust’s most beloved programs, turns 30! Even better: This year’s event aligns with Earth Week, National Park Week, National Volunteer Week and the America

Gives initiative, a signature program of America250’s Semiquincentennial celebration.

Participation is free, and sites receive promotional support from the Trust to amplify activities that fall under this nationwide movement. Battlefield parks, museums, historic sites and cultural institutions that help tell America’s story, particularly its military history, are welcome to join.

Project possibilities are endless: reorganizing archives and libraries; restoring fence lines; painting historic structures; clearing trails; digitizing collections; enhancing accessibility features; or tackling conservation work. Whatever your site needs, Park Day provides the framework and visibility to make it happen.

Sites registered before January 22 are entered into a drawing for gift cards to offset project costs and have the greatest opportunity to take advantage of Trust expertise to refine their project goals and process. Visit [www.battlefields.org/parkday](http://www.battlefields.org/parkday) for more details, including deadlines and guidelines.

Please note that one of the strengths of Park Day is the unified date of April 25, 2026, which allows the Trust to focus its promotional work on highlighting the breadth and strength of the historic sites community. Other volunteer stewardship events throughout the year are featured on our overall events calendar under the “Field Duty” banner.★



Park Day in Yorktown, Va.  
LAUREL HOUSDEN PHOTOGRAPHY

## SUCCESS STORIES

LAND SAVED FOREVER

Gaines’ Mill Battlefield  
Hanover County, Va.  
MATTHEW HARTWIG



## GAINES’ MILL – COLD HARBOR SAVED FOREVER!

*Multiyear campaign concludes with permanent protection of more than 600 acres*



**WE DID IT!** The most important unprotected battlefield land in the United States — hundreds of critical acres associated with the overlapping Battle of Gaines’ Mill and the Battle of Cold Harbor — is saved forever.

More than 25 years ago, we at the American Battlefield Trust committed to these hugely significant battlefields. We had already preserved 655 acres when a remarkable opportunity arose in 2020: More than 600 acres across eight tracts of pristine battlefield land became available for preservation. With deep-pocketed developers closing in, we knew we had to act fast, and our members came through.

Our friend and renowned historian Ed Bearss once said: “Even if you have to sell every other piece of battlefield land the

Trust has ever saved in order to preserve this land, you should do it. It’s that important!” Thanks to the incredible generosity of Trust members, and a sympathetic landowner willing to let us configure the transaction over the course of several years, it didn’t come to that. But with the property lying inside the authorized boundary of Richmond National Battlefield Park and ineligible for federal matching grants — and a price tag that placed it among our 10 largest-ever transactions — the task was still daunting.

Thankfully, Trust donors once again demonstrated their devotion to this effort and answered numerous calls for support, pushing us across the finish line in late autumn 2025. This important land is now counted among the more than 1,200 acres we have saved at Gaines’ Mill and Cold Harbor — never mind the 30,000 acres saved across the Commonwealth of Virginia and the 60,000 acres we have saved nationwide. This is an achievement many long years in the making, which makes the victory all the more sweet!★



**I**N THE EARLY HOURS of September 29, 1864, Gen. Benjamin Butler's Army of the James crossed the James River to prepare for a diversionary attack, aimed at distracting Gen. Robert E. Lee from movement against the Southside Railroad. At dawn, the Union troops, including Maj. Gen. David Birney's X Corps, attacked the Confederates' high ground position. The ensuing action resulted in more than 5,000 casualties, with 14 Medals of Honor awarded for the valor demonstrated by Black men in U.S. Colored Troop (USCT) units of the X Corps.

"This battle is arguably the most important moment in African American military history, yet a fitting memorial is missing to remember their service and sacrifice," said Tim Talbot, president of the Battle of New Market Heights Memorial and Education Association. "Few people, even in our own community, know about the battle or what happened here."

Now, thanks to a joint venture between

Henrico County, the Capital Region Land Conservancy, the Battle of New Market Heights Memorial and Education Association, the Richmond Battlefields Association, the National Park Service and the American Battlefield Trust, that's about to change.

The 3.2-mile New Market Heights Trail will follow the path of the USCT soldiers as they advanced to attack the Confederate line. Crossing land owned by the Trust, Henrico County and the Capital Region Land Conservancy, the trail will connect Four Mile Creek Trailhead to Deep Bottom Park, where pontoon bridges brought Union troops across the James River. The trail will feature prominent interpretive signage, telling the story of New Market Heights to all who visit the trail. Also planned is a monument to permanently honor those USCT soldiers awarded the Medal of Honor for their acts of valor during the battle.

"This land communicates what real courage is," said Chuck Laudner, a consultant for the Trust, while speaking at



a public meeting to gather feedback on the project. "This is, for us and future generations, a place for people to go and not just be contemplative, but to learn and get a real sense of the weight these men had to bear." In addition to providing the public with interpretation and access to the county's historic resources, the trail addresses a growing need in the region: The most requested resource to the Henrico County Department of Recreation and Parks was new trails and more connectivity to the county's parks and open spaces. As the project advances, more spur trails are planned to deepen the interconnectivity with other trails in the area. The ADA-compliant project with 10-to-12-foot shared-use paths also addresses an accessibility gap in the county's outdoor amenities.

The New Market Heights Trail will additionally usher in roadway-crossing improvements. This includes improved access across the often busy Route 5, which is adjacent to the planned trail, creating a seamless connection to the 52-mile Capital Trail that runs from Richmond to Williamsburg.

"Public access for recreation and education is important, because if you live here, you love land, you love preservation and you love history," said Varina District Supervisor Tyrone Nelson, who has been involved with the project since its inception.

This fall, Henrico County will debut the complete trail concept. A phased construction is planned for 2026 and 2027, with the trail being fully ready to welcome the public in 2028. The project, which has been in development for the past two years, comes with a price tag of \$16 million. Along with local funding, county officials hope to complete the project with grants, such as those from the federal Transportation Alternatives Program. ★



**SAVING SACRED GROUND:**  
*The American Battlefield Protection Program's role in battlefield preservation*

**T**HE HISTORICAL SITES that bear witness to America's armed conflicts are disappearing. As development pressures, climate change and other threats put these landscapes at risk, the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) serves as a vital resource for communities, organizations, property owners and state, local, and Tribal governments working to preserve them.

Established in 1991 and formally authorized by Congress in 1996, the ABPP focuses on preserving and interpreting historic battlefields and conflict-related sites. Rather than seeking federal ownership, the program works in partnership with local communities and supports preservation through four targeted grant programs.

**FOUR WAYS TO SAVE AMERICA'S BATTLEFIELDS: ABPP GRANTS**

**Preservation Planning Grants:  
Where Good Ideas Get Funded**

The ABPP's most adaptable funding option helps recipients better understand, protect and interpret battlefields and conflict sites nationwide. These grants support early steps in this process, such as archaeological surveys, site documentation, long-range planning, educational programming and community engagement. Many of the program's strongest success stories began with small organizations fueled by passion but lacking resources. Grants range from \$20,000 to \$200,000 with no match required.

**Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants:  
Saving Ground Before It's Gone**

These grants enable the Trust and similar organizations as well as state and local governments to protect and preserve Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War battlefield lands identified in congressionally mandated reports through fee-simple purchases and conservation easements. Funded by the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the program has helped safeguard hallowed ground since 1999. While a dollar-for-dollar match is required, nonprofit partners like the American Battlefield Trust can often help secure local support and matching funds.

**Battlefield Restoration Grants: Turning Back the Clock**

Restoration Grants return Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War landscapes to their day-of-battle appearance. Available for planning and implementation, they provide up to 50-percent matching funds for projects that restore viewsheds, remove modern intrusions and re-create period landscapes, helping visitors better understand the experiences of soldiers on these hallowed grounds.

**Battlefield Interpretation Grants:  
History Meets Technology**

Today's visitors expect more than plaques and cannons: They expect immersive and engaging experiences. Interpretation Grants help sites meet those expectations with mobile apps, augmented reality (AR), videos and updated signage that tell more comprehensive, more inclusive stories. With dollar-for-dollar matching, these grants support both planning and implementation to ensure historic narratives remain accessible, relevant and compelling.

**BEYOND GRANTS: EXPERT GUIDANCE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

The ABPP provides more than funding. It offers resources to landowners, preservation groups and communities navigating the complexities of battlefield stewardship. Through comprehensive studies, the program has identified hundreds of endangered battlefields and assessed their conservation needs, raising awareness and giving communities the evidence needed to spur action.

**A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH**

The ABPP's strength lies in collaboration. The program recognizes that preservation succeeds when federal resources empower local initiative. On-the-ground work — fundraising, volunteer coordination, advocacy and stewardship — is what makes these grants effective. By making available resources to empower private landowners, friends groups, nonprofits, academic institutions and government partners, the ABPP fosters public-private partnerships that save taxpayers millions while protecting sites that tell America's complex story.

For organizations and individuals committed to safeguarding the landscapes that shaped our national experience, the ABPP offers essential resources and expertise. As historic sites face unprecedented development pressures, the program's grants and technical support provide the tools and partnerships needed to ensure that future generations can walk the ground where history unfolded. ★

**REGISTER NOW FOR CONFERENCE *on the* AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

**R**EGISTRATION is now open for the 13th Annual Conference on the American Revolution, convened by America's History LLC. The "nation's premier conference on the American Revolution" will take place at the Virginia Crossings Hotel and Conference Center in Glen Allen, Va., outside Richmond, March 27-29.

Topics cover an array of approaches regarding how to consider the war — from the northern frontier to the southern backcountry and from brownwater naval operations to diplomatic incidents — plus the international contributions of Spaniard Bernardo de Gálvez and the Dutch.

Early registration is encouraged, as the fee rises from \$325 to \$375 on March 1 — and because Friday's bus tour is limited to one coach. Registration includes a cocktail reception, as well as two buffet breakfasts, lunch and refreshment breaks; a room block with special pricing of \$125 per night is available at the host hotel.

Visit [www.americashistoryllc.com](http://www.americashistoryllc.com) or call (703) 785-4373 for more details or to register. ★

## LOVE THROUGH LETTERS

*Before and throughout the American Revolution,  
Lucy Flucker Knox held strong from afar*

**LUCY FLUCKER KNOX** was born in 1756 to a wealthy and well-connected Massachusetts family strongly connected to royal authority in the American colonies. Her father served in the colonial government as Lucy was growing up, serving as the Secretary of Massachusetts in the years immediately prior to the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. The Fluckers were Loyalists with influence and a name to uphold — and Lucy was soon made to choose if she wanted to stay in that life of ease and allegiance to the British crown.

She met Henry Knox at his Boston bookshop in 1772. A merchant man, he was not the type of person Lucy's parents wanted her to marry. Their disapproval did not stop Lucy from falling in love with the headstrong commoner as they discussed books in his small shop. It was a secret relationship for two years, with the young rebels flirting through letters, and they were married without the Fluckers' knowledge in June 1774. When Lucy's parents discovered the marriage, they disowned her.

Less than a year later, the Revolutionary War erupted at Lexington and Concord. Boston was soon besieged, controlled by British General Thomas Gage. The young lovers had to make a choice: Stay in Boston and become loyal subjects to King George III or leave Boston and join the American cause. Fearing for Henry's life, Lucy sewed a sword into his cape in case he encountered danger. But Henry's sympathies lay with the Patriots, and in May 1775, the couple snuck out of the city on horseback and crossed over to the Continental Army encampment in Cambridge. The camp soon became familiar with Lucy as a Patriot and officer's wife as



Henry eventually rose to the rank of chief of artillery.

The marriage would face difficulty when Henry was tasked with the arduous orders to transport cannons and artillery from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston, a journey across rivers and mountains in the middle of a brutal winter. During this time, Lucy gave birth to their first child, a daughter, far away from her husband. Her first months as a mother were spent in isolation, and she reached out to her estranged family for comfort. After reconciling, they remained in close contact.

Lucy was a verbose letter writer, not just to her family, but also to Henry and her close friends. Though she occasionally expressed frustration with Henry's time away from home, her letters reveal deep understanding and affection. In 1777, she wrote: "I love you with a love as true and sacred as ever entered the human heart

— but from a diffidence of my own merit I sometimes fear you will Love me less — after being so long from me." No matter how much she missed her husband, Lucy stood strong in the quest for American freedom.

In May 1778, Lucy joined Henry at Valley Forge, where he had spent the previous winter with General George Washington preparing troops for organized battle. She quickly became close friends with Martha Washington, as they hosted lively parties and kept each other company while the men were away attending to military duties. Both came from wealthy families and had changed their lives by choosing to join the Revolution, bringing comfort and understanding to their relationship. They traveled to Mount Vernon together as Henry and George marched south for the Siege of Yorktown and subsequent end of the war in 1781.

With the American victory, Lucy's life changed yet again. She and Henry settled down slowly, moving between West Point, Boston, Philadelphia and New York City as Henry's service to the new country continued.

When Henry retired in 1795, the family moved one last time to claim Lucy's inheritance from her wealthy family — land in present-day Maine. They built a 19-room mansion on the St. George River, where they lived together quietly until their deaths.

Lucy Flucker Knox's story is one of many showcased in the recently extended traveling exhibition, the *American Revolution Experience*. This project highlights the Revolutionary experiences of those sometimes overlooked by the history books on both sides of the conflict — ordinary people who, just like Lucy, faced a difficult choice: to pledge loyalty to the Patriot cause and the prospect of a new nation, or remain loyal to the King as subjects of the British Empire. Explore more stories at [www.americanrevolutionexperience.org](http://www.americanrevolutionexperience.org) and see if the traveling exhibit is coming somewhere near you.★

## TRACKING THE TRAIN OF ARTILLERY

*Knox took his noble trek from New York to Boston, but what happened next?*

**HENRY KNOX** and his train of artillery trekked from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston in a brutal winter, that much everyone agrees on. But what happened to the cannons? Most scholars say that Knox didn't lose a single piece of artillery on the way south, which is a remarkable feat on top of the unlikely journey itself. Letters from Knox to George Washington outline the inventory of artillery he decided to transport, including a total of 60 cannons, mortars and howitzers. Between centuries-old rumors, cannons found on riverbeds and the question of where the weapons went after the British scattered from Boston, there's more than meets the eye to this story that's already fit for an action movie.

There's one issue with the claim that every cannon made it to Boston — the British six-pound cannon with the cypher of King George III found at the bottom of the Mohawk River. The iron cannon was recovered around 1853, near a crossing point that Henry Knox's Noble Train of Artillery is understood to have taken. We know from Knox's journal and letters that multiple cannons broke through the ice on the long journey, but he wrote that all were recovered. It's possible that one slipped away, but a cannon is hard to misplace. The recovered artillery bears the cypher of King George III, who ruled from 1760 to 1820, which supports the idea that it was, at one point, at Fort Ticonderoga when it was controlled by the British. But the Revolution saw years of battles near the Hudson River Valley, so other explanations are possible as well.

The legacy of the "lost" cannon wasn't confined to its possible loss from the Noble Train of Artillery but continued well into the 20th century. After it was recovered, it was taken to Cohoes, New York, where it became a political symbol when a local political party began firing it to celebrate its victories. When the opposing party came into power, the cannon was pushed back into the Mohawk River, either by the original party in



protest or by the opposition in an act of triumph. It remained in the river until 1907, when the city historian of Cohoes had it removed and displayed. If being thrown into the river twice weren't enough, the cannon was donated to become scrap metal when America entered World War II in 1941. Fortunately, the staff at Fort Ticonderoga learned of its fate and tracked down the doomed cannon with help from the community. They found it in a scrap yard, smashed to pieces. The cannon was welded back together from the few remaining fragments, new supports were cast, and the gun was returned to Ticonderoga, where it resides to this day.

The sunken cannon isn't the only piece of lore from Cohoes, though: There are centuries-old rumors of buried treasure in a brass cannon off the Mohawk River. The story goes that the Continental Army hid the gold to prevent it from falling into British hands while retreating. While it's true that Knox's train passed by and General Philip Schuyler had his troops in fortifications on the Mohawk in the 1777 Saratoga Campaign, the buried artillery and accompanying riches have yet to be discovered.

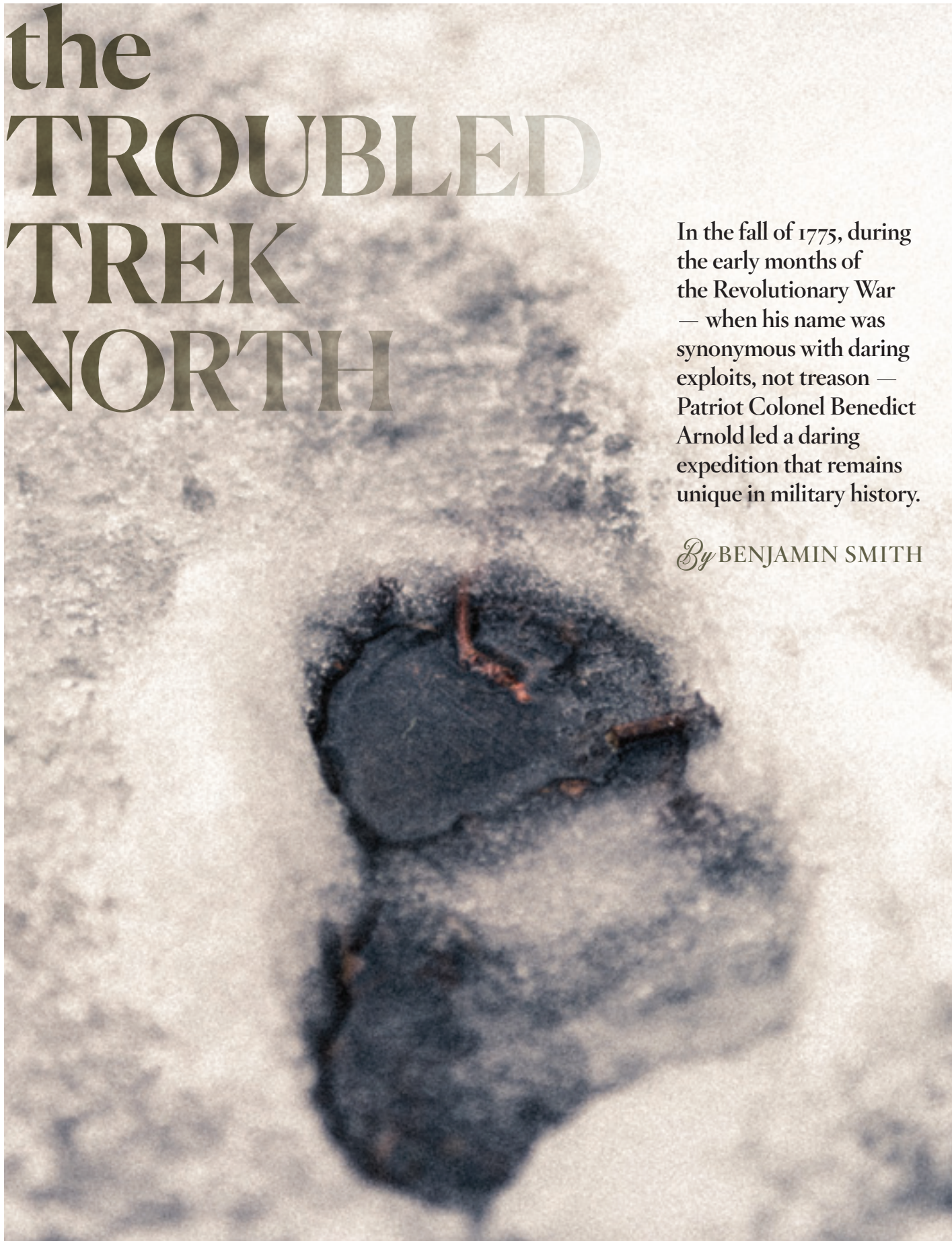
After the Americans retook Boston, General Washington ordered Knox to take all available artillery to the New York City area to prepare for the next conflict, which he did successfully. Knox moved 121 cannons, ranging in size from three-pounders to 32-pounders, to batteries and redoubts around the city. It was most likely a much simpler endeavor without the bitter winter, as Knox reported to Washington in a letter on June 10, 1776, that the cannons were "mounted and fit for action."

Henry Knox continued rising through the ranks as a leader, thanks to his military genius, and became the youngest major general in the army on March 22, 1782. This came after a wildly successful Siege of Yorktown, with Knox directing artillery, and his creation of the first artillery training camp in the Continental Army. His understanding of troop leadership and the art of logistics is woven throughout victories in the American Revolution, but no feat was greater than dragging nearly 60 tons of artillery through that snowy New York winter in 1775.★

# the TROUBLED TREK NORTH

In the fall of 1775, during the early months of the Revolutionary War — when his name was synonymous with daring exploits, not treason — Patriot Colonel Benedict Arnold led a daring expedition that remains unique in military history.

*By* BENJAMIN SMITH





**SAILING FROM MASSACHUSETTS**, the expedition first travelled up the Kennebec River and across the Maine wilderness. Their goal: the capture of Quebec City, depriving the British of a strategic base to the north. And, perhaps, French Canadians in Quebec would be inspired to join the rebellion.

**The Embarkment**

On September 19, 1775, Benedict Arnold's army — consisting of two battalions of musketeers, led by Lieutenant Colonel Roger Enos and Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Greene, and three rifle companies led by Captain Daniel Morgan — departed Newburyport, Massachusetts, for Maine. As Joseph Ware, a private from Needham, Massachusetts, recorded in his journal: “[O]ur fleet consisted of eleven sail of vessels,—sloops and schooners; our number of troops, consisted of 1300 and 11 companies of musketeers and three of riflemen.”

Sailing up the Kennebec River to Pittston, the expedition reached the home of boatbuilder Reuben Colburn on September 22. Back in August, Arnold himself had contacted Colburn, writing: “[W]ithout Delay proceed to The Constructing of Two Hundred Batteaux, to row with Four Oars each; Two Paddles and Two setting Poles to be also provided for each Batteau.”

Arnold and his officers met with Colburn to inspect the bateaux, but all was not



well. As Arnold wrote to George Washington toward the end of September: “I found the Batteaux compleated, but many of them smaller than the Directions given, & very badly built. of Course I have been obliged to order twenty more, to bring on the Remainder of the Provisions, which will be finished in three Days.”

Today, the Colburn House stands as a testament to this historic expedition. In 1969, a 501(c)(3) corporation called The Arnold Expedition Historical Society (AEHS) was formed to preserve sites and trails along the Arnold Trail to Quebec. The AEHS established its headquarters at the Colburn House State Historic Site in Pittston, Maine — the very location where the expedition's bateaux were built.

Managed by Maine's Bureau of Parks and Lands, the Colburn House is one of the region's oldest structures. The AEHS has transformed the site's barn into a seasonal bateau workshop and museum. In 2025, with funding from the Americana Corner Preserving America Grant program, the AEHS built a new bateau display — featuring a replica of an 18th-century bateau — on-site.

**Up the Kennebec**

Moving upriver, the expedition arrived at Fort Western — an old wooden stockade in what is now Augusta, Maine.

As remembered by Caleb Haskell, a soldier from Newburyport: “September 24th, Sunday.—This morning I took my pack, travelled to Fort Weston, where we encamped on the ground. Several of the companies have no tents here. We are very uncomfortable, it being rainy and cold and nothing to cover us.”

On September 25, Arnold re-organized the two battalions into four divisions, reasoning that smaller units could be staggered to prevent bottlenecks at portages and campsites along the route. (Arnold would later direct Enos' division, which carried most of the expedition's supplies, to act as the rear guard.) The units planned to rendezvous at Chaudière Pond and proceed to Quebec as one army.

Over the next few days, members of the expedition headed north, by land and by bateaux, to Fort Halifax, perched at



the confluence of the Kennebec and Sebasticook Rivers in present-day Winslow. The troops paused to rest and resupply before continuing their arduous journey upriver.

Old Fort Western still stands as the oldest surviving wooden fort in the United States. Each year, visitors explore its barracks, trading post and blockhouses — small, enclosed fortifications with openings

for defense. In time for the 250th anniversary of the Arnold expedition in 2025 and the United States Semiquincentennial in 2026, various artifacts found along the Arnold Trail to Quebec and collected by the AEHS — including ax heads, buttons and cutlery — are being displayed to the general public at Old Fort Western.

The sole remaining blockhouse at Fort Halifax State Park in Winslow — the oldest blockhouse in the nation — continues to attract the curious. The site's appeal was enhanced in 2025 by a new bateau display built by the AEHS and The Friends of Fort Halifax, with grant funding from the Elsie & William Viles Foundation in Augusta.

**Painful Portages**

Heading upriver, the bateaux began to reveal serious flaws. As recorded by Dr. Issac Senter, the expedition's surgeon: “[S]everal of our batteaux began to leak profusely, [being] made of green pine, and that in the most slight manner. Water being shoal and rocks plenty, with a very swift current most of the way, soon ground out many of the bottoms.” After navigating several smaller portages, members of the expedition reached the infamous Great Carrying Place portage on October 6.

This brutal portage covered nearly 12 miles across boggy terrain and rocky ridges, with the expedition threading its way past East, Middle and West Carry Ponds. The landscape was unforgiving: Dense spruce and hemlock crowded the narrow path, while slippery roots and fallen logs turned every step into a trial.

On October 14, Dr. Issac Senter wrote: “The army was so much fatigued, being obliged to carry all the bateaux, barrels of provisions, warlike stores, &c., over on their

backs through a most terrible piece of woods conceivable. Sometimes in the mud knee-deep, then over ledgy hills, &c.”

The suffering multiplied as exposure, hunger and exhaustion took their toll. With the ranks thinned by sickness and injury, the officers ordered the construction of a small log hospital near East Carry Pond to shelter the increasing numbers of sick and disabled men.

The portages slowed progress to a crawl and depleted stores much faster than anticipated. Provisions spoiled in the leaking boats, and the men, already exhausted, now faced the stark reality of dwindling food. The soldiers caught trout, hunted game and foraged for whatever they could find.

On October 13, Arnold wrote George Washington, updating him on the expedition's slow progress: “Your Excellency may possibly think we have been tardy in our March, as we have gained so little, but when you consider the badness & weight of the Batteaus and large Quantity of Provisions &c. we have been obliged to force up against a very rapid Stream, where you would have taken the Men for amphibious Animals, as they were great Part of the Time under Water, add to this the great Fatigue in Portage, you will think I have pushed the Men as fast as they could possibly bear. The Officers, Volunteers and privates in general have acted with the greatest Spirit & Industry.”

In the summer of 2011, AEHS members surveyed the site of the hospital with metal detectors and found various artifacts, including musket balls, musket parts, a broad axe and parts of a cast-iron kettle.

Today, the AEHS works to clear, preserve and promote the Great Carrying Place portage trail — and in the summer and autumn of 2025, the organization led members of the public on guided hikes along the trail in honor of the 250th anniversary of the expedition.

#### The Dead River and Beyond

On October 16, Arnold's party crossed the “Savanna,” an extensive open marsh with scattered islands of spruce. After much struggle, they reached a small stream, Bog Brook. Then, canoeing for less than a mile, they arrived at the Dead River.

On October 19, the weather took a turn for the worse. Rain began to fall heavily, and the river swelled from the downpour.

Two days later, at 4:00 a.m., Arnold woke to the sound of rushing water. He and



Arnold Trail marker  
Bingham, Me.  
ANNE RICHARD/SHUTTERSTOCK

## On October 23, with hunger mounting and supplies running low, Arnold considered ending the expedition.



his men scrambled to higher ground as the river overflowed its banks. A wall of water rushed down the river. Casks of food, gear and bateaux washed away. Dr. Senter recalled how “the number of bateaux were now much decreased. Some stove to pieces against the banks, while others became so excessive leaky as obliged us to condemn them.”

On October 23, with hunger mounting and supplies running low, Arnold considered ending the expedition. Calling his officers together for a council of war, he argued that, despite their hardship, they should continue toward Canada. The officers agreed.

To save the mission, they decided to send an advance party ahead to French settlements on the Chaudière River to seek help and bring back supplies. Those who were too sick or too weak to continue were ordered to return to American settlements in Maine.

As Joseph Ware recorded in his journal: “Our provisions growing scanty, and some

of our men being sick, held a council and agreed to send the sick back, and to send a Captain and 50 men forward to the inhabitants as soon as possible, that they might send us some provisions. Accordingly the sick were sent back, and Capt. Handchit with 50 men sent forward. Before this Col. Enos, with three captains and their companies turned back and took with them large stores of provisions and ammunition, being discouraged, (as we supposed) by difficulties they met with. This day got forward nine miles. The water very rapid and many of our boats were upset, and much of our baggage lost and provisions and guns.”

After departing the Dead River, Arnold's troops traveled north through a series of highland lakes known as the Chain of Ponds, then through an area of eskers, or ridges, and other bodies of water until they reached present-day Arnold Pond. Canada — and the rest of the expedition's grueling mission — lay just beyond the mountains.

In the summer of 2016, AEHS member Kenny Wing scouted one of these eskers with a metal detector and recovered what was thought to be an iron ring associated with a bateau setting pole. In the autumn of 2024, the AEHS partnered with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to resume investigating the esker. This project yielded additional artifacts associated with the expedition: another iron ring; an iron spike that may have been set as the point of a setting pole; and two lighter iron rings with holes on either side, which may have been fitted on the handle end of a setting pole.

In 2025, the AEHS began an underwater search of Arnold Pond for remains of



Old Fort Halifax  
(Still standing)  
Winslow, Me.

damaged or discarded bateaux. This process will continue into 2026. For further updates, please visit the AEHS website at <https://arnoldsmarch.org/>.

#### Legacy of the Arnold Trail to Quebec

In the early 1900s, the Daughters of the American Revolution began placing markers in Maine along the Arnold Expedition's route. In recognition of its historical significance, the Arnold Trail to Quebec was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1969.

Today, the Arnold Trail to Quebec serves as both a commemorative and educational corridor, stretching through Maine's remote wilderness and offering a tangible link to the past. Preservation efforts have ensured that sections of the original route

remain accessible to the public, and local historical societies continue to interpret the expedition's legacy through signage, guided tours and annual events. For outdoor enthusiasts and history buffs alike, portions of the trail are open for hiking, paddling and exploration, allowing visitors to experience the same rugged landscape that challenged the Arnold Expedition.

The Arnold Trail to Quebec is a living classroom — inviting students, history enthusiasts and travelers to engage personally with the landscape and reflect on the meaning of endurance, cooperation, ambition and patriotism.

*Benjamin Smith is the president of the Arnold Expedition Historical Society.*



Old Fort Western  
Augusta, Me.  
DAVID E. HEATH/SHUTTERSTOCK

# LAST SIEGE

*of the American Gibraltar*

The battlements facing the Plains of Abraham have been mounted with cannon — today, late 19th-century examples — for nearly 400 years.

*The Battle of Quebec was perhaps the Revolution's boldest gamble. In December 1775, American forces attacked one of North America's strongest fortified cities, hoping to bring Canada into rebellion. Instead, the battle ended in failure, costing lives, momentum and any realistic chance of a unified continental nation.*

*By* LUC NICOLE-LABRIE  
PHOTOGRAPH *by* DANIEL HAUG

# The

**INVASION OF CANADA**, or at least of the St. Lawrence River Valley, was the first major campaign of the American Revolution. Though ultimately a failure, its consequences would help pave the way for the 13 colonies to secure their independence in 1783. It also marked the last time the city of Québec was besieged by a foreign army — a poignant reminder of the heavy toll war exacts on civilian populations. From Colonel Benedict Arnold's daring expedition to General Richard Montgomery's capture of Fort Saint-Jean and Montréal, the siege and battle on the last freezing night of the year to General John Thomas's fateful retreat, these events played a crucial role in shaping the city's and conflict's trajectory and eventual outcome.

## Reaching Québec: Montgomery's Invasion and Arnold's Expedition

The Continental Army was officially formed on June 14, 1775, and the Second Continental Congress swiftly appointed George Washington commander in chief. While Washington focused on unifying the forces besieging Boston, Major General Philip Schuyler, commander of the Northern Department, was tasked with evaluating the feasibility of an invasion of Canada, if deemed necessary.

The Province of Québec — established by the British in 1763 following their victory in the French and Indian War and the signing of the Treaty of

Paris — was viewed as both a strategic threat and a potential opportunity. If the French-speaking population could be persuaded to join the rebellion, it would sever a vital British link in North America and remove the possibility of invasion of the colonies from the north. In future negotiations with the Crown, the captured Province of Québec would also provide leverage.

In July and August 1775, Schuyler began assembling troops and planning the main invasion route via Lake Champlain. Local support and the neutrality of First Nations were deemed essential to success. However, Schuyler's initial assault on Fort Saint-Jean in early September failed, and illness forced him to withdraw. Command then passed to General Richard Montgomery.

Despite facing smallpox outbreaks and inadequate artillery, Montgomery pressed on. After a prolonged siege, his forces captured Fort Saint-Jean, a key defensive position south of Montréal, on November 3, 1775. This victory led directly to the capture of Montréal on November 13. With the city secured, Montgomery set sights on Québec City.

Meanwhile, a second operation was underway, as Colonel Benedict Arnold launched a covert expedition through the wilderness of northern Massachusetts (present-day Maine), up the Kennebec River and down the Chaudière River into Québec. They faced a logistical nightmare plagued by inaccurate maps and insufficient supplies, as well as harsh weather. The force that reached the heights overlooking Québec City on November 14 was half its original strength. At the French settlements they encountered along the way, some locals offered food and limited support, but hopes of a widespread uprising proved unfounded. The challenge of capturing Québec loomed large.

## Preparing for the Unavoidable: Québec City Braces for Attack

As the Continental Army advanced, British authorities were fully aware of the threat and began preparing for a siege. Governor General Guy Carleton spent the summer in Montréal, overseeing its defense, while Lieutenant-Governor Hector-Théophilus Cramahé remained in



Québec City. Though both men now held civilian posts, they were veterans of the Siege of Québec (1759–1760), when Britain had captured New France.

In late summer 1775, Cramahé mobilized the militia to reinforce the city's fortifications. On September 16, the British began regulating movement in and out of the city — every new arrival was required to identify themselves to the city guards. By September 28, navigation on the St. Lawrence River near the city was restricted to essential vessels. Québec was on high alert.

Throughout October, Cramahé worked to prepare the city and its defenders for a potential winter siege. Reinforcements arrived in early November: Lieutenant-Colonel Allan Maclean, commanding the Royal Highland Emigrants — composed largely of veterans from the 78th Regiment, who fought in the French and Indian War — reached Québec on November 10. His arrival was a turning point:

## Carleton issued a final ultimatum to the city's inhabitants: All men of fighting age must either take up arms or evacuate.

Maclean assumed command of military operations, providing a much-needed boost to morale just days before Colonel Arnold's force appeared outside the city.

On November 22, Carleton issued a final ultimatum to the city's inhabitants: All men of fighting age must either take up arms or evacuate. He also ordered the construction of palisades in the Lower Town by the militia and British troops. Finally, Québec was ready to stand strong against the invasion.

## December 1775: At Your Post

Although Arnold's force reached the outskirts of Québec City by mid-November, they were only able to secure a few houses for shelter and received limited care from the nuns at the General Hospital, north of the city. Arnold knew he had to wait for Montgomery, whose larger force was coming from Montréal with vital resources.

On December 3, the two detachments finally united outside Québec. Montgomery brought much-needed supplies, including food and winter clothing, a welcome reprieve for Arnold's

wearied troops. The following day, the combined Continental force — approximately 1,200 men — returned to the Plains of Abraham to demand the city's surrender. They were refused.

In the days that followed, Arnold, Montgomery and their senior officers began planning an assault. They understood that a conventional siege was impossible: Québec's garrison numbered around 1,800, including British regulars, sailors and Canadian militiamen determined to defend their homes. With limited manpower and ammunition, the Continental Army's only chance lay in a swift, decisive attack. A snowstorm would also bring additional cover and could create some confusion for the defenders. The Continental Army decided to wait for such a storm to launch the attack.

Time was running out. Many of Montgomery's soldiers had enlisted for one year, with their service ending on December 31. Additionally, smallpox — already present in the city — was spreading among the Continental troops, probably transmitted by a limited number of sympathizers who had left Québec to join the invaders.

The plan was bold: Unable to breach the city's fortifications from the Plains of Abraham, the Continental Army would launch a two-pronged assault on the Lower Town, attacking simultaneously from the

north and south. The goal was to converge near Place Royale, ascend the narrow road leading to the Governor's Palace overlooking the St. Lawrence River and force a British surrender.

Success would require every available soldier, favorable weather conditions and a measure of luck.

### The Battle

On December 31, as the long-awaited snowstorm raged over the city, the time had come.

The attack began before sunrise, with Captain Jacob Brown leading a force of approximately 160 militiamen in an assault on the Cape Diamond Redoubt, located on the southern edge of the cliff near the St. Lawrence River. Just before 5:00 a.m., Brown launched flares to signal the start of the operation and opened fire on the redoubt. This was part of a coordinated feint, which also included James Livingston's First Canadian Regiment. This detachment of 200 men was tasked with creating a second diversion by attacking Saint-Jean Gate on the western fortifications. With these distractions in place, the main assault could proceed.

General Montgomery descended from the Plains of Abraham, leading nearly 400 men down a narrow path along the cliffside toward the westernmost edge of the

Lower Town. The first barricade was taken with little resistance. Montgomery, at the head of a vanguard of about 50 men, pressed forward through a second barricade and saw what he believed to be an opportunity. He advanced toward a large two-story building, unaware that it was a barracks manned by defenders armed with muskets and artillery.

As the Continental troops approached, the British and Canadian defenders opened fire at close range. Montgomery and several senior officers were killed instantly. Colonel Donald Campbell, now the highest-ranking officer in the southern detachment, saw no viable path forward and ordered a retreat to the Plains of Abraham — leaving Montgomery's body and the fallen vanguard behind. The southern assault was a complete failure.

Simultaneously, Colonel Arnold led his detachment from the north. He descended from the heights of Saint-Roch, staying close to the cliffs to take advantage of their cover. Progress was slow but steady until the force encountered heavy fire near Porte du Palais (Palace Gate). The defenders' volleys confirmed to Governor Carleton that the attacks from the Plains of Abraham were diversions, prompting British and Canadian forces to regroup and reinforce the northern defenses.

At a disadvantage due to the elevation and narrow streets, Arnold pressed forward to shield his men from enemy fire. The blizzard added confusion and disorientation. As Arnold pre-

pared to assault the first barricade, he was struck in the leg by a musket ball and had to withdraw. Command passed to Captain Daniel Morgan.

Morgan led a successful frontal assault on the barricade, personally leading the charge and overpowering the defenders. With the path ahead temporarily clear, Morgan advanced deeper into the city. However, the snowstorm dampened the soldiers' gunpowder, and the narrow streets made maneuvering difficult. Morgan was forced to pause for half an hour to allow the rear guard to catch up.

By the time Captain Henry Dearborn led the rear guard past the first barricade, British and Canadian forces had regrouped. Dearborn's men were intercepted and forced to surrender. Morgan, now isolated, attempted to breach a second barricade but was blocked by a 12-foot palisade. Behind him, more than 500 Royal Highland Emigrants and British sailors had cut off any retreat.

Trapped in the snow-covered streets of Québec, Morgan had no choice. Before 10:00 a.m., he surrendered. Québec City had withstood the assault.

### The Aftermath

The defenders' morale was strengthened by their victory. Of the 431 Continental soldiers captured by the British, most were confined in the Seminary under harsh conditions. Smallpox continued to spread, and the cold Québec winter made the rooms frigid and inhospitable. The situation was so dire that some prisoners attempted to escape but were quickly apprehended. The ringleaders were transferred to ships anchored in front of the city, where they were used as human shields against gun batteries the Continental Army had begun installing on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River in early spring 1776.

Unable to organize a proper retreat due to heavy snow — and perhaps still hopeful that the new year would bring a reversal of fortune — Arnold attempted to maintain a siege. However, he failed to



*The Death of General Montgomery in the Attack on Quebec, December 31, 1775* by John Trumbull. It depicts American general Richard Montgomery at the Battle of Quebec during the invasion. YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY

As the Continental troops approached, the British and Canadian defenders opened fire at close range. Montgomery and several senior officers were killed instantly.

make any significant impact on the city's formidable defenses. In response to the deteriorating situation, Continental Army leadership dispatched General John Thomas to assume command and oversee a withdrawal from the Province of Québec.

Thomas arrived in Québec on May 1, 1776, and quickly assessed the dire state of affairs: a rampant smallpox outbreak, demoralized troops and no realistic path to victory. He ordered the lifting of the siege and a full retreat. Thomas himself contracted smallpox during the withdrawal and died in early June 1776 along the Richelieu River.

Throughout the campaign, the hope that the French-speaking population would rise in support of the Continental Army never materialized. While some Canadiens were eager to retaliate against the British conquerors of 1759, an equal number took up arms in defense of their homes. A third group remained largely neutral. In the end, both the British and the

Continental Congress misjudged the loyalties of the Canadian population.

Though the invasion was a tactical failure, its long-term consequences proved advantageous for the colonies. In the fall of 1776, the British pushed the Continental Army southward along Lake Champlain after the Battle of Valcour Island. Yet Benedict Arnold, commanding from Fort Ticonderoga, managed to delay further British advances, buying precious time for the Continental forces to regroup and prepare for the following year's campaign.

This delay would prove critical during the Battles of Saratoga in 1777, where the Continental Army forced a British surrender and secured French support for the war effort. Despite occasional consideration, the Continental Army never launched another invasion of the Province of Québec.★

*Luc Nicole-Labrie, historical interpretation coordinator, National Battlefields Commission.*



La Citadelle  
Québec, Canada  
DRONAVISION/SHUTTERSTOCK



Glens Falls, N.Y.

# ICY

RESOLVE

# ICY

DETERMINATION

*Outside Boston, Washington's army held the British at bay but lacked the firepower to finish the fight. Henry Knox's plan was brutally simple and wildly dangerous — haul the only artillery available to the Americans across frozen wilderness before thaw, reinforcements, or exhaustion stopped the nascent rebellion in its tracks.*

*By* JONATHAN C. LANE

PHOTOGRAPHY *by* MATTHEW HARTWIG

# KN

**THE TENSE WEEKS** after Lexington and Concord, General Thomas Gage and the British Army found themselves in an unenviable position. Hemmed in on the Boston Peninsula by more than 10,000 Provincial militia, the Redcoats had lost access to the fertile interior of Massachusetts. Only the Royal Navy's control of the harbor kept Gage's troops from starvation. Thousands of civilians, many loyal to the Crown, also crowded into Boston, dependent on the British military for food and fuel.

The army surrounding Boston faced difficulties of its own. Farmers turned militiamen could feed themselves, but their supply of muskets, powder and shot was meager. Each week away from their fields threatened their families' survival. Though they had the British bottled up, they lacked the means to strike a decisive blow.

That uneasy stalemate erupted on June 17, 1775, at the Battle of Bunker Hill. There, the Provincials proved both their courage and their limitations. They stood toe to toe with Britain's best soldiers, but their powder ran low and their ranks lacked coordination. The war would require more than bravery: It needed discipline, leadership and, critically, artillery.

Relief arrived on July 3, when George Washington took command of the newly christened Continental Army. A veteran of the French and Indian War, Washington set about imposing order and purpose upon a force of volunteers. As he toured the siege lines that summer, he stopped at Roxbury, where a formidable fortification guarded the only land approach to Boston. The works impressed him, but the engineer behind them impressed him even more — a self-taught, 25-year-old bookseller named Henry Knox.

Washington recognized in Knox the rare combination of ingenuity and resolve the army desperately needed. Years later, after the Siege of

Yorktown, Washington would say of Knox, "The Resources of His Genius Supplied the Deficit of Means." That insight was born from watching Knox succeed in many difficult situations, particularly his first military enterprise. News had reached Cambridge that Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold had captured the British fortress at Ticonderoga, which held the heavy artillery Washington lacked. If those guns could be brought to Boston, they might break the stalemate.

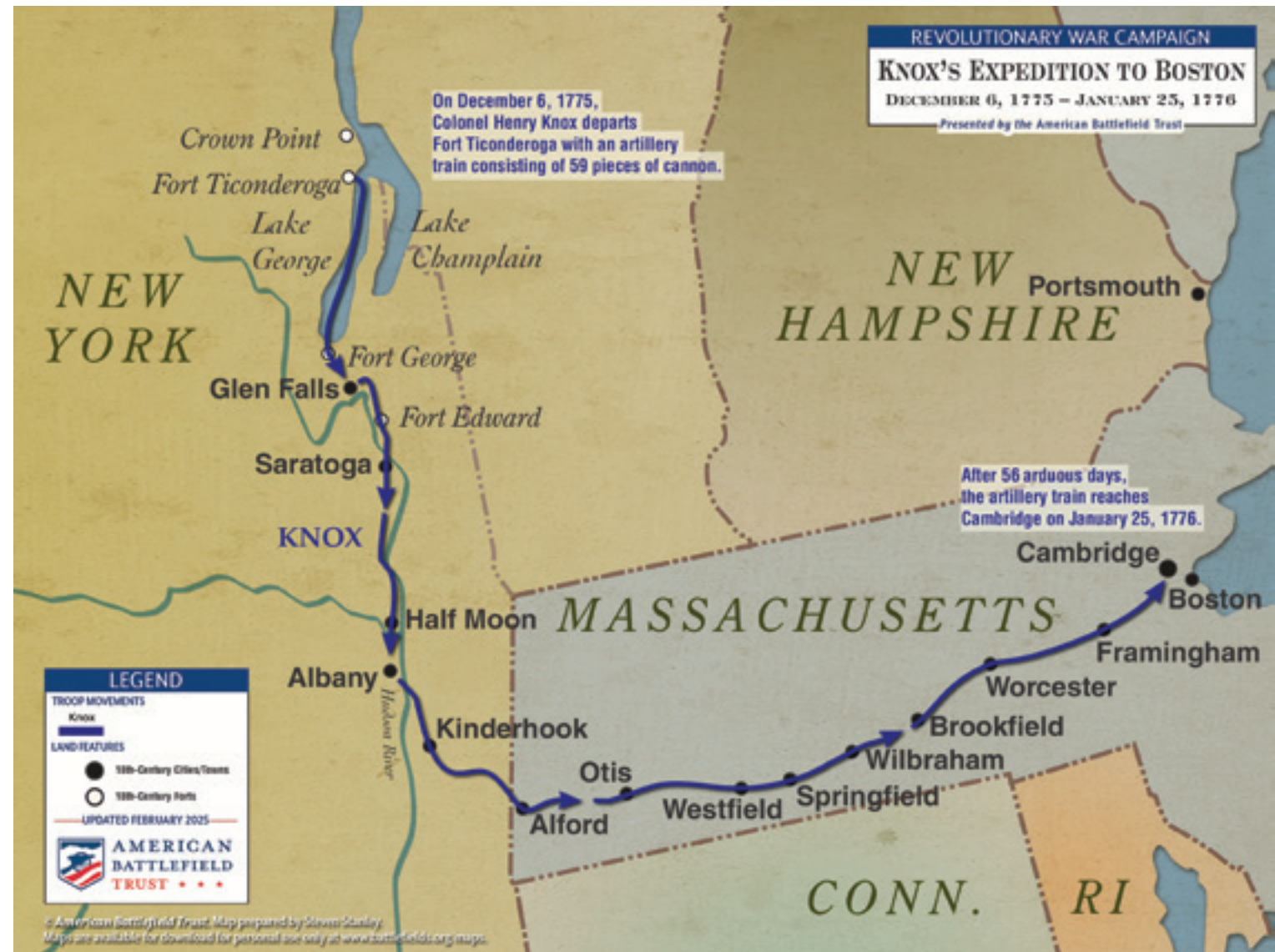
In November, Washington entrusted Knox with that mission. He was to travel to New York City to secure powder and shot, then continue north to Fort Ticonderoga and bring back the best of the captured artillery — more than 60 tons in all. Washington wrote to General Philip Schuyler, warning that he was "in very great want of Powder, Lead, Mortars, Cannon, indeed of most Sorts of Military Stores," and urging him to assist Knox by every means possible.

Knox's journey was grueling from the outset. The ride from Cambridge to New York and on to Ticonderoga covered more than 600 miles of cold and frozen roads. Leaving on November 17, Knox and his brother William reached the old fort by December 5, 1775. They immediately began selecting guns for transport, moving the chosen pieces down the La Chute River, the link between Lake Champlain and Lake George. Here they faced their first major obstacle.

Lake George stretched 32 miles through steep, snow-covered hills. As with most colonial travel, movement by water was always easier than movement by road, especially for heavy cannons. Knox assembled a flotilla of bateaux and scows, and a curious canoe-like sailing vessel called a pettiauger, loaded them with cannon, and set out on December



Washington recognized in Knox the rare combination of ingenuity and resolve the army desperately needed.



6. Snow swept up from the south, forcing the men to row against the wind through freezing spray and forming ice. That night, they took shelter with a Mohawk community at Sabbath Day Point, only to learn that one of the boats — commanded by Knox's brother — had struck a rock and sunk.



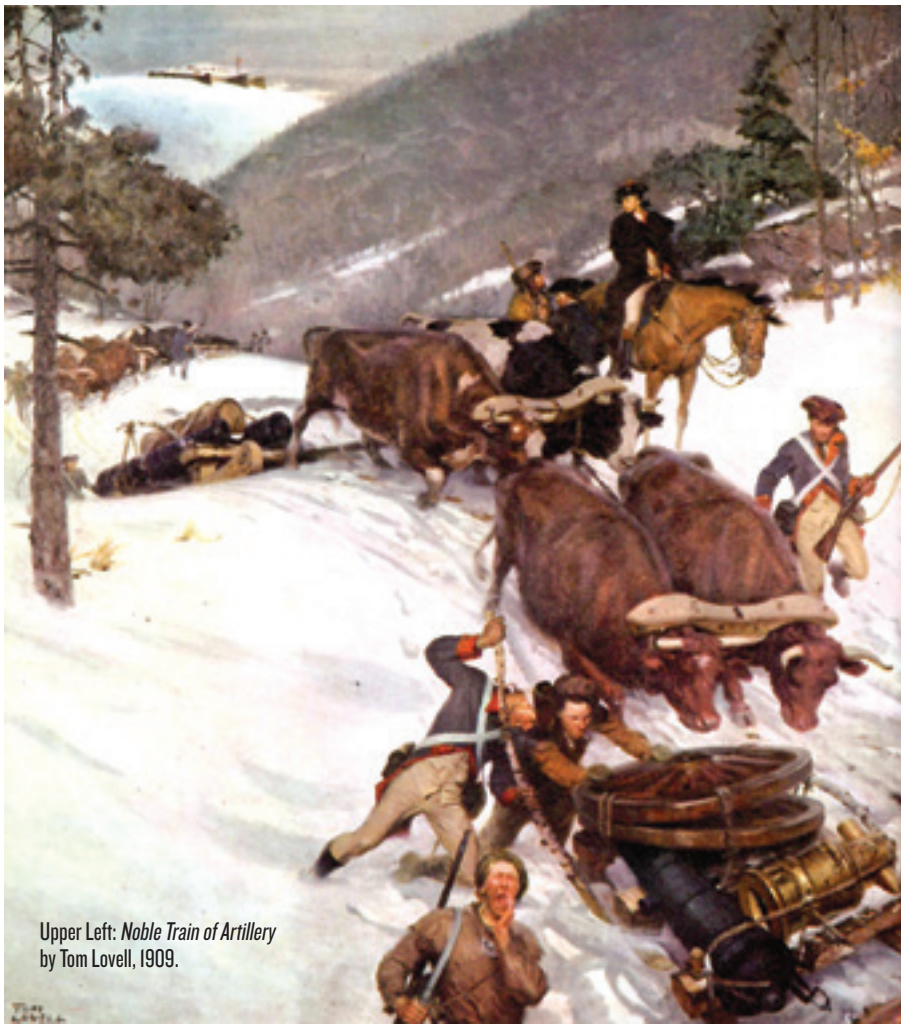
The men raised and repaired it, but it went down again shortly after.

Nine days later, battered and frost-bitten, Knox's fleet reached the southern end of the lake. From Fort George, he dispatched a rider to George Palmer of Stillwater, New York, who had agreed to supply teams and sleds. But Palmer, wary of the cost, canceled the contract and ordered new arrangements. His cousin Harmanus Schuyler procured fresh teams and had holes cut in the ice of the Hudson River so that upwelling water would refreeze and strengthen the crossings in advance of the expected tons of metal, wood and animal that would need the strength of deep ice to safely cross.

By early January 1776,

the "Noble Train of Artillery" was on the move. Deep snow blanketed the upper Hudson Valley, aiding the sleds' progress. One by one, the massive guns creaked over frozen stretches of the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers, past the future battle sites at Saratoga, through the ancient town of Albany, up forested slopes and across the icy ridges of the Berkshires. The journey was perilous — sleds occasionally broke through the ice, and drivers had to cut their teams loose to avoid being dragged under — but the column pressed on.

In the hill towns of western Massachusetts, the sight of Knox's caravan stirred wonder. At Westfield, residents greeted the exhausted men as heroes and begged Knox to fire one of his mortars. The train carried no powder with it, but the people of Westfield supplied the needed munition and the gun's thunder echoed for miles — a triumphant prelude to liberation.



Upper Left: *Noble Train of Artillery* by Tom Lovell, 1909.

By mid-January, Knox reached Springfield, where he paid and dismissed his New York drivers and hired new teams to carry the cannon the remaining 70 miles. On January 18, he and the first ox-drawn sleds rumbled into Framingham, Massachusetts, ending one of the most astonishing logistical feats of the Revolution. Knox established an artillery park there before riding to the Continental Army's headquarters at Cambridge to report to Washington, who swiftly commissioned him as Colonel of the Continental Artillery and convened a Council of War to plan the guns' deployment.

In Framingham, the "Noble Train" became a sensation. Townspeople came to marvel at the cannon that had crossed mountains and frozen lakes. Among the curious visitors were John Adams and Elbridge Gerry, en route to the Continental Congress, eager to witness the triumph of the young bookseller they knew and esteemed.

The decisive moment came on the night of March 4. As British forces were distracted by bombardment from Cobble Hill and Lechmere Point, Continental troops under General John Thomas hauled prefabricated fortifications and Knox's guns up Dorchester Heights. By dawn, Washington's army commanded the harbor. When General William Howe surveyed the scene through his spyglass, he reportedly exclaimed, "Good God! These fellows have done more work in one night than I could have made my army do in three months!"

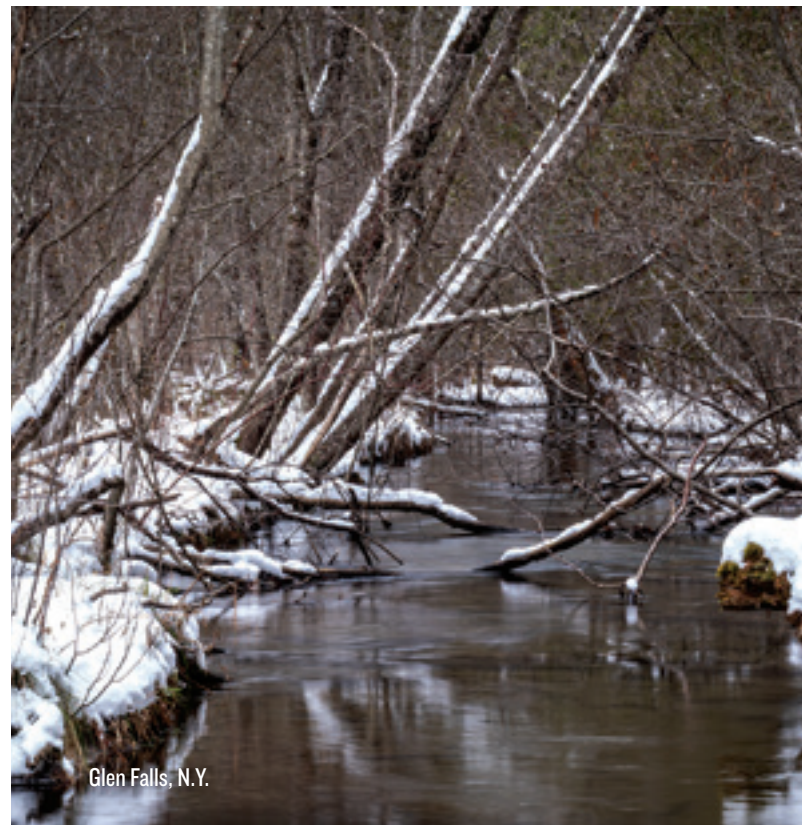
A storm prevented Howe's planned counterat-



Sandisfield, Mass.



Ticonderoga, N.Y.



Glen Falls, N.Y.

### THE COLD FACTS

- 56 days, from November 1775 to January 1776
- Fort Ticonderoga to Boston
- Approx. 300-mile journey
- Transported by boat, horse and ox-drawn sleds across frozen lakes, rivers and rugged terrain.

### THE NOBLE TRAIN

- 6 Coehorn (brass)
- 1 Mortar (brass)
- 6 Mortar (iron)
- 13 Cannon (brass)
- 31 Cannon (iron)
- 2 Howitzer (iron)

CARGO TOTAL 60 TONS

tack, and within days he resolved to evacuate. On March 17, more than a 100 ships carrying 11,000 British soldiers, officers, Loyalists and camp followers set sail for Halifax, Nova Scotia. They left behind a scarred, half-empty city ravaged by siege and smallpox and handed the Americans their first major victory of the war.

The Continental Congress ordered a gold medal for Washington, honoring the triumph that freed Boston. Yet Washington's greatest reward lay in the men who achieved it — none more so than Henry Knox. The young artilleryman had turned vision into reality, proving that ingenuity and determination could supply the "deficit of means" in America's fight for liberty.

Of the 60 artillery Knox brought to Boston, most continued in service, some later recaptured at Ticonderoga. They did not remain as a single unit, but elements of the train saw action in many of the war's major campaigns — New York, the Ten Crucial Days, Philadelphia, Saratoga and

*"Good God! These fellows have done more work in one night than I could have made my army do in three months."*

beyond. Today, only one fragment within museum collections — part of a 13-inch mortar — can be definitively traced to his epic trek; it rests today at Fort Ticonderoga. But Knox's real monument endures in the nation his courage helped to secure, and in the enduring image of a man who transformed learning into leadership and determination into destiny.

*Jonathan C. Lane is the executive director of Revolution 250 in Massachusetts and has served in the field at numerous leading institutions, including the Massachusetts Historical Society. Lane is the author of a monograph on songs for British Soldiers in the 18th century, and is the editor of From the Potomac to the Etowah, the Civil War Correspondence of Alonzo Hall Quint.*

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**A** TRIP to the Plains of Abraham Museum starts with a journey through open fields integral to Canadian and American history. Site of the Battle of Quebec on September 13, 1759, the subsequent Battle of Sainte-Foy on April 28, 1760, and the attempted American invasion of Quebec in 1775, the rolling hills overlooking the St. Lawrence River are dotted with cannons and historic fortifications. The museum itself serves as the primary information hub for Battlefields Park, made up of the Plains of Abraham and Des Braves Park.

Opened in 2015, the Plains of Abraham Museum is housed inside a former weapons inspection hall, with three floors of permanent and rotating exhibits. A core exhibit, *Battles 1759–1760*, uses projections, hands-on features, artifacts and scale replicas to illustrate key clashes. Through the interactive halls, visitors encounter the personal stories of soldiers and witnesses to the multiple conflicts that occurred just outside the museum walls.

There's something for everyone, whether you're well acquainted with the battle plans of Major-General James Wolfe or are just in the area to explore.

Battlefields Park is home to gardens, statues, monuments, and most important, space to walk through the history of the land. The Plains of Abraham Park is Canada's first national park, created in 1908, and serves as an incredible green space and reminder of the battles fought there, with 50 cannons from the 18th century to the 20th century scattered across the site.

When visiting, be sure to check for temporary exhibition schedules, like the current display about the American attempt to invade Quebec, or to see if there's anything happening at the bandstand on the site. There's something for everyone year-round, so don't let the chilly winters hold you back from exploring the incredible offerings at the Plains of Abraham Museum and Battlefields Park.★

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