

Lake George played a pivotal role during the early history of this country and has many historic sites, monuments, and markers which tell this history. Home to Native Americans for 10,000 years, the lake became a bloody arena during the clashes between the French and English empires, was the scene of military action as American patriots wrestled the 13 colonies from the British, and later was a commercial “highway” where various watercraft plied its pristine waters. Experience this history through the [Colonial Wars in Lake George Self-Guided Tour](#).

Your tour can begin anywhere along the 3.3 mile loop and you may wish to do the tour over several days. You may wish to start at stop #1. You should be in good health to walk the route or use a vehicle. Take precautions to avoid potential problems from heat, cold, or bad weather. Walkers should use the walkways. Please maintain the integrity of the historical and natural sites. Restrooms are located along the route. Enjoy the tour and pay Lake George a return visit.

The Lake

The 32 mile long Lake George is nestled in the Adirondack Mountains which rise 2,500 feet above the lake. The lake has a maximum depth of about 200 ft. and some 172 islands. Most of the lake is spring fed. Lake George was an integral part of the natural navigation system running south-north from the mouth of the Hudson River to the Lake George region, to Lake Champlain, to the Richelieu River, and on to the St. Lawrence River. Control of this corridor during colonial times meant domination of the region.

Colonial Wars

This region was bitterly contested between the Iroquois and the Algonquin Native Americans. In 1609, the French explorer, Samuel de Champlain, with his Algonquin, Huron, and Montagnais allies, defeated a superior force of Iroquois in the Champlain Valley. That battle cemented an alliance in which the Algonquins supported the French and the Iroquois backed the English in future conflicts.

In 1689, the first of several colonial wars between the French and English began. This was known as [King William’s War \(1689-1697\)](#). It was followed by [Queen Anne’s War \(1702-1713\)](#) and [King George’s War \(1744-1748\)](#). There was little military action from these wars in the Lake George area. All three wars ended without either side gaining a conclusive victory.

By 1754, British and colonial authorities became concerned over the French forts being constructed along the Ohio River Valley frontier. Following two military encounters in southwest Pennsylvania involving Virginia militia under Lieutenant Colonel George Washington and French troops, a final confrontation between the French and English in North America became inevitable. The British strategy in 1755, under the leadership of General Braddock, was for the British and their colonial allies, called provincials, to take Forts Duquesne, Niagara, St. Frederic, and Beauséjour (Nova Scotia). This war began in North America as the [French & Indian War \(1754-1763\)](#) and in Europe as [the Seven Years’ War \(1756-1763\)](#).

Seventeen fifty-five was a terrible year for the British as General Braddock was defeated and killed near Fort Duquesne and the provincials never got to Niagara, becoming bogged down at Oswego. However, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Monckton was successful as thousands of Acadians in present-day Nova Scotia were forced from their homes. Finally, General William Johnson with provincial troops defeated the French in the Battle of Lake George. With this beginning, Lake George was the scene of momentous warfare during both the [French and Indian War](#) and the [American Revolution \(1775 – 1783\)](#).

3.3 Miles Round Trip
2 Hours Approximate Walking Time

The Colonial Wars In Lake George

Self-Guided Tour

LAKE GEORGE

- **September 8, 1755** – The Battle of Lake George was fought at the south end of the lake. This was a great British victory over the French and their Native American allies.
- **March 1757** – The French crossed ice-covered Lake George and attacked Fort William Henry. However, the French retreated after they were unable to seize the fort.
- **August 1757** – The French again attacked Fort William Henry and the entrenched camp in what is now Lake George Battlefield Park. This time the British surrendered and the French burned the fort before departing.
- **July 1758** – 15,000 British and provincials left the south end of Lake George and attacked French-held Fort Carillon (Ticonderoga) on Lake Champlain. There the British were defeated.
- **1759** – The British under General Jeffery Amherst pushed beyond Lake George to Lake Champlain. The British seized Fort Carillon, renamed it Fort Ticonderoga, and then occupied Fort St. Frederic (Crown Point). During this campaign, Fort George in the Lake George Battlefield Park was constructed, as well as a log stockaded fort.
- **1763** – The Treaty of Paris ended the French & Indian War with the British victorious.
- **The American Revolution** – Lake George was the scene of warfare with the Battle at Diamond Island in 1777, and several military actions at Fort George including Carleton’s Raid in 1780. Also, located here was the smallpox hospital for the American army in 1776.

**Now, take this tour to experience
the Colonial Wars in Lake George!**

1 The Old Courthouse

Corner of Amherst & Canada Streets

We suggest you definitely visit inside the Lake George Historical Association museum within the Old Courthouse as it has exhibits about Lake George's colonial military history. It also has a book and gift shop. Today, the building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Donations are appreciated.



The Old Courthouse, which was the Warren County seat from 1813-1963, is located upon ground which served the French during Montcalm's August 1757 siege of Fort William Henry. This site is close to Montcalm's 1st battery. During construction on the grounds of the Old Courthouse in the 1970s, a French cannon ball was unearthed. ■

2 Artillery Cove

Marine Village Resort, Canada Street

Marine Village Resort is nestled around Artillery cove. Part of the motel sits on a filled area which once was part of Artillery Cove (Please don't enter the motel grounds unless you are a guest. It is private property).

In August 1757, this is where Marquis de Montcalm, a brilliant French general, landed cannons and mortars for an assault upon Fort William Henry, and thus gave the cove its name. Montcalm took a force of several thousand French regulars, French Canadians, and Native Americans from the Champlain Valley to attack the British and provincial stronghold at Fort William Henry. Montcalm's armada (shown in the illustration coming into the cove) included 31 "pontoons" carrying artillery, 250 bateaux (25-35 ft. long flat-bottomed warships), and about 150 canoes. ■

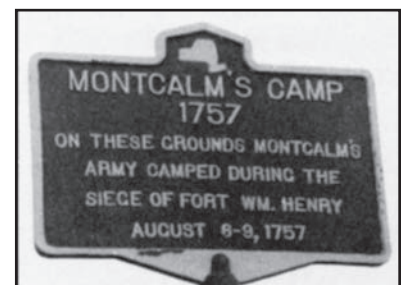
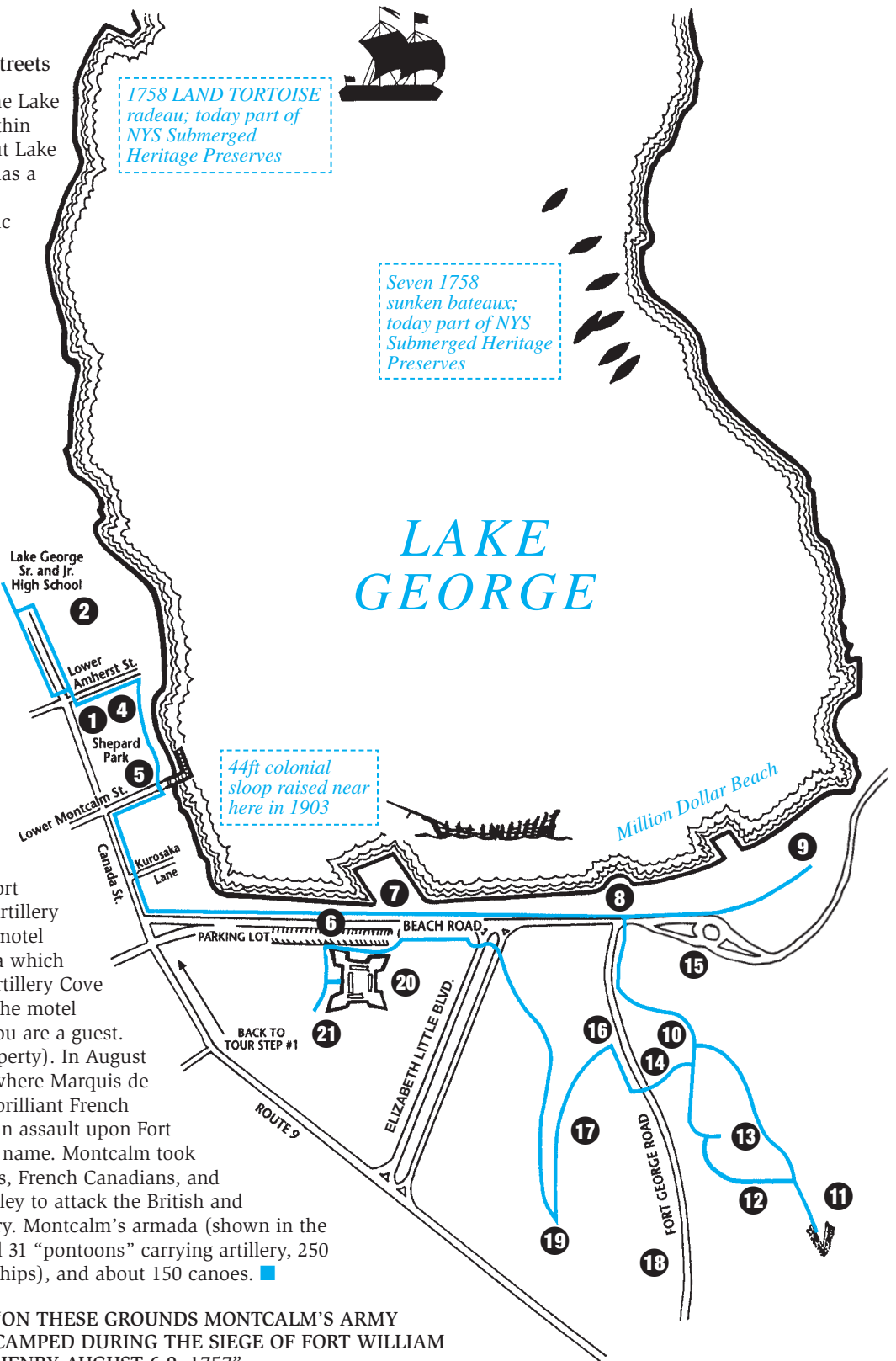
3 Montcalm's Camp

Historic Marker

"ON THESE GROUNDS MONTCALM'S ARMY CAMPED DURING THE SIEGE OF FORT WILLIAM HENRY AUGUST 6-9, 1757"

Across the street from Marine Village Resort Motel is a historic marker at the site of Montcalm's 1757 camp. The French siege of Fort William Henry has been popularized in James Fenimore Cooper's 1826 novel, "The Last of the Mohicans," and by movies of that title.

From August 3-9, 1757, Montcalm's forces successfully laid siege to the British and provincial Fort William Henry and a nearby breastworks and encampment. The siege involved the French attacking the 17 ft. high Fort William Henry's northwest wall. After several days of heavy artillery bombardment, Lieutenant Colonel George Monro, the commander of the British-led forces, capitulated and agreed to an honorable surrender. Monro's troops were then ambushed on August 10th by angry French-allied Native Americans as the British and provincials retreated to nearby Fort Edward. The Native Americans were upset because they had been promised the spoils of war by the French, but the British-French agreement negated that promise. Approximately 200-300 British and provincials were listed as killed or missing. ■



4

Sunken Fleet

Historic Marker

“FALL 1758
BRITISH/AMERICANS
SANK RADEAU LAND
TORTOISE, SLOOP
HALIFAX, 260 BATEAUX,
TO AVOID WINTER
PLUNDER BY FRENCH
RAIDING PARTIES”



This marker was erected in 1993, by the Lake George Historical Association and Bateaux Below, Inc., two local not-for-profit educational corporations.

Following the fall of Fort William Henry in 1757, the British and provincials returned to the lake in 1758. Part of the British strategy for 1758 was an attack upon Fort Carillon (Fort Ticonderoga), a French fortress on Lake Champlain. In July 1758, a vastly superior British and provincial force was defeated by the French at Carillon. The British and provincials retreated to their base at the south end of Lake George. They began a massive boat building campaign with plans to attack Carillon later that year. As the cold winds of autumn approached, the British and provincials realized they could not launch an offensive against Carillon in 1758. So, they began the deliberate sinking of much of their fleet in the lake's shallows, placing the warships in a wet or cold storage for the winter. Many of these vessels were retrieved from the lake in 1759 and reused.

Two hundred sixty bateaux were sunk. These were the utilitarian watercraft of the times. Flat-bottomed, pointed at bow and stern, and some 25-35 ft. long, many of these bateaux were built in Albany and Schenectady and transported overland to Lake George. In 1992, seven sunken bateaux were nominated to the National Register of Historic Places by Bateaux Below, Inc. They are listed on the National Register and are also part of a State underwater park for scuba divers called “Submerged Heritage Preserves.”

The sloop HALIFAX, with a “51 Feet Keel,” was likewise scuttled in 1758. In 1759, it was raised and reused. Row galleys and whaleboats were also part of the sunken fleet.

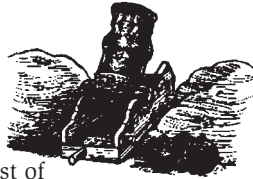
However, the prize of the sunken fleet was the 52 ft. long radeau, LAND TORTOISE. Not recovered in 1759, it was discovered in 1990, and then surveyed by Bateaux Below, Inc. and the LAND TORTOISE Radeau Survey. This floating gun battery was pierced for seven cannons and is the only radeau-class warship found for archaeologists to study. In a remarkable state of preservation, due in large part to its 107 ft. depth, the radeau is “North America’s oldest intact warship.” ■

5

Montcalm’s Entrenchments

Shepard Park is the site where one of several British colonial docks was supposedly located.

The area lies just east of Montcalm’s 890 yd. long entrenchment where the French army dug trenches to bring siege artillery closer to Fort William Henry. As you look up the hillside of Shepard Park, you can almost hear the cannon and mortar fire and voices of the French in their entrenchments. Today, this is one of several beautiful parks in Lake George which had colonial military action. ■



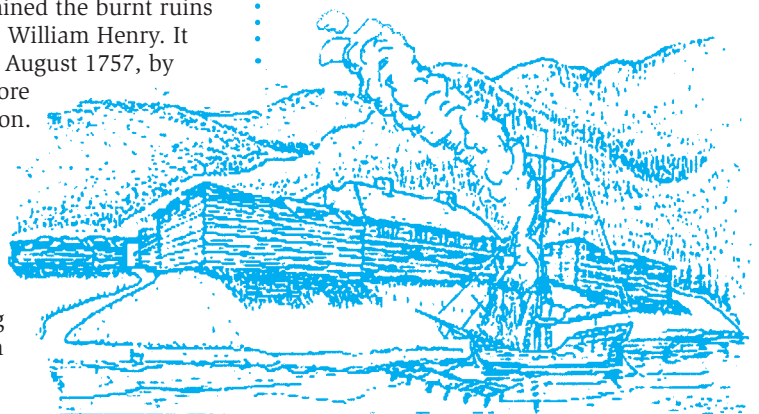
6

Warship Row and the Mayor Robert M. Blais Walkway and Park

Several small signs mark the beginning of this popular walkway along the lake. As you proceed east along this walkway you’ll tread over 18th century history. Near here from 1755-1759, were encampment grounds for mostly provincial troops. In March 1757, the French attacked Fort William Henry by crossing the ice-covered lake. Without artillery, the French had scaling ladders, hoping to take the fort, garrisoned with only 346 men and 128 invalid soldiers. Though the fort was not captured, the French burned hundreds of bateaux pulled up on shore near the fort as well as two sloops, thus giving the area the name – Warship Row. When the French retreated, all buildings around Fort William Henry were on fire; only the fort survived.

You are also near the area where Robert Rogers and his Rangers came in December 1757, when they examined the burnt ruins of the once proud Fort William Henry. It had been destroyed in August 1757, by Montcalm’s forces before they returned to Carillon.

This area in front of the fort was also used by the British and provincials during their 1758 and 1759 campaigns. Remnants of sunken bateaux lying off this shore have been explored by divers and archaeologists. ■



7

Lake George Steamboat Company and Steel Pier



Less than 40 years after the American Revolution, in 1817, the Lake George Steamboat Company was started. Today, their large cruise boats are tied up at the Steel Pier, a famous Lake George landmark constructed in 1954. In 1903, a 44 ft. colonial sloop was raised from the lake near this spot. Coincidentally, the Steel Pier lies not far away from one of the colonial piers, reminding us that history often repeats itself. The Lake George Steamboat Company offers informative boat tours which describe for their passengers the lake’s history, geology, and limnology. Shoreline Cruises, Inc., one of the lake’s other tour boat companies, is located not far from the southwest corner of the lake. ■

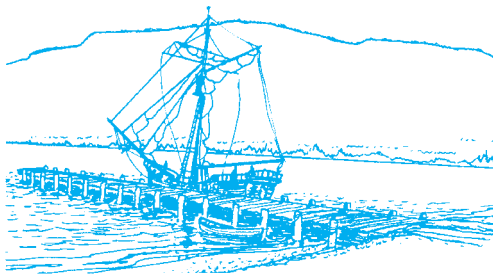
8

Military Dock

Historic Marker

“DURING THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR, BRITISH AND PROVINCIAL TROOPS USED A DOCK NEAR HERE FOR LOADING SOLDIERS, ARTILLERY, AND SUPPLIES.”

In June 1992, the Lake George Historical Association and Bateaux Below, Inc. erected this historic marker. Historians suggest at least three colonial docks were present at the south end of Lake George in 1757: one near present-day Shepard Park, one by Fort William Henry, and a third near this marker. Since much of the area east of Fort William Henry was known as “A Great Swamp,” docks helped the British and provincials load and unload their soldiers and provisions. ■



9 Radeau Warship

Historic Marker

“LAND TORTOISE, BUILT BY COLONIAL AND BRITISH TROOPS, NEAR THIS SITE IN 1758, LIES 2 MILES NORTH IN 107 FEET OF WATER.”



This marker was erected in 1995, by Bateaux Below, Inc. In 1990, a 52 ft. long radeau named the LAND TORTOISE was found in Lake George by principals of Bateaux Below, Inc. using a Klein side scan sonar. From 1990-1994 the vessel was studied. In 1994, it opened as a New York State Submerged Heritage Preserve, an underwater museum for visiting divers. The site has a plastic chain supported by PVC posts built around it to discourage divers from touching this fragile warship. In 1995, the LAND TORTOISE, called “North America’s oldest intact warship,” was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Land Tortoise was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1998 by the Department of the Interior. For information on the preserves, contact: Lake George Submerged Heritage Preserves, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Region 5, Route 86, Box 296, Ray Brook, New York 12977. ■

10 Battle of Lake George

Historic Monument

“1903 THE SOCIETY OF COLONIAL WARS ERECTED THIS MONUMENT TO COMMEMORATE THE VICTORY OF THE COLONIAL FORCES UNDER GENERAL WILLIAM JOHNSON AND THEIR MOHAWK ALLIES UNDER CHIEF HENDRICK OVER THE FRENCH REGULARS COMMANDED BY BARON DIESKAU WITH THEIR CANADIAN AND INDIAN ALLIES. DEFEAT WOULD HAVE OPENED THE ROAD TO ALBANY TO THE FRENCH. CONFIDENCE INSPIRED BY THIS VICTORY WAS OF INESTIMABLE VALUE TO THE AMERICAN ARMY IN THE WAR OF THE REVOLUTION.”

This 13 ft. high monument is located in Lake George Battlefield Park, a facility operated by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation. The monument reportedly stands near where provincial General William Johnson’s

command tent was located. Here King Hendrick is showing Johnson that he should not divide his troops before the Battle of Lake George. Hendrick is giving Johnson arrows bunched together to signify strength in numbers. ■



11 Fort George Ruins

In June 1759, British General Jeffery Amherst arrived at Lake George and soon proceeded to build a new fort at the lake. The site was the high ground east of the ruins of Fort William Henry, which had been destroyed by the French in 1757. A provincial officer described the fort as “the Walls [are] about 14 Feet thick Built of Stone & Lime.” In 1760, Amherst said of Fort George: “the bastion enclosed at Fort George is very neat, mounts 15 guns, is very small and a bad defense, but ‘twas’ the shortest, cheapest & best method of finishing what was begun of the Fort.”

This bastion is the only part of the planned fort that was finished. In May 1775, Fort George was captured by patriot forces under Captain Bernard Romans. The British-held fort was garrisoned by a single person – a 65 year old caretaker named Captain John Nordberg. On July 16, 1777, American Major Christopher Yates set fire to Fort George as the British approached. The British then utilized the fort as a vital link for General Burgoyne’s supply route from Canada toward Albany. After Burgoyne’s defeat and surrender at Saratoga on October 17, 1777, the Redcoats retreated from the Lake Champlain-George corridor and the Americans again gained control of the fort. In October 1780, British Major Christopher Carleton took Fort George. Carleton burned the fortification and retreated north. In 1819, Professor Benjamin Silliman from Connecticut, provided insight into the condition then of Fort George: “... we observe one of the old barracks, formerly belonging to the fort, now exhibiting a tavern sign, and, till within a few years, constituting the only place of accommodation to those who visited Lake George.” Eventually local people used the



fort as a quarry and most of the fortification vanished.

Archaeological studies under the direction of Dr. David Starbuck over the last few years have identified many previously unrecognized features in the Park including remains of foundations within the stockaded fort, hut sites and the fort itself. Hundreds of relevant artifacts have also been found and studied. During 2015 and 2016, intact sections of walls identified as part of bomb proofs and barracks have been found within the fort itself. All walls have been carefully reburied to maintain their preservation.

The fort’s remains are administered and protected by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. It is illegal to damage the bastion’s 15-20 ft. high walls. ■

12 Entrenched Camp 1757

During the French siege of Fort William Henry in August 1757, the majority of provincial (American colonials) and British troops, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel George Monro, were stationed on the high ground east of the fort. These troops were protected by an entrenched camp, consisting of “a Breast Work of Logs” designed by James Montresor, the chief British engineer in America. The camp was also fortified with six cannons and a number of swivel guns.

The entrenched camp played a prominent role in the chaos that followed the surrender of Fort William Henry. On the afternoon of August 9, 1757, Native American warriors aligned with the French army climbed over the breastworks of the entrenched camp and began to pillage, seeking “trophies of war.” Early the next morning, as English troops prepared to leave for Fort Edward, the warriors again scaled the breastworks to “Plunder” and during the mayhem scalped 17 wounded men. No sooner had the English parolees left the entrenchment when the warriors fell upon the rear contingent, stripping, killing, and scalping them. Original journals, official letters, and period newspapers referred to the episode as a “massacre.”

13 Native American

Historic Statue

In the center of Battlefield Park is a bronze statue of a Native American. According to a State document he is “dipping water in the cup of his hand from a spring. This fine statue is a memorial to the Indians who once freely roamed the region.”

The statue was dedicated in 1921, and was a gift from George D. Pratt. Native Americans played crucial

roles in the area’s early history. As many as 30-40 Native American tribes, some from as far away as Mississippi, fought in the August 1757 siege of Fort William Henry. This statue represents these early Americans prior to the advance of the Europeans.



The statue was repaired and rehabilitated through donor contributions to the Warren County Historical Society on the occasion of the 250th Anniversary of the French and Indian War. ■

14 Unknown Soldiers

Historic Monument

“A MEMORIAL TO FOUR UNKNOWN SOLDIERS WHO FELL SEPTEMBER 8, 1755 ON THE BLOODY MORNING SCOUT LED BY COL. EPHRAIM WILLIAMS AND KING HENDRICK AGAINST THE FRENCH AND INDIANS UNDER BARON DIESKAU. THE REMAINS WERE DISINTERRED IN BUILDING A STATE HIGHWAY IN 1931 AND REBURIED UNDER THIS MONUMENT ERECTED BY STATE EDUCATION AND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENTS AND THE NEW YORK STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION 1935”



This monument commemorates one of the most serene yet little recognized historic sites around Lake George. This bronze and granite monument was erected to the four unknown soldiers buried there.

These human remains were discovered in 1931 by workmen while excavating for a culvert near the Colonel Ephraim Williams Monument on Route 9, located south of Lake George. These bones were later identified by Dr. Arthur C. Parker of the Rochester Museum of Art and Science

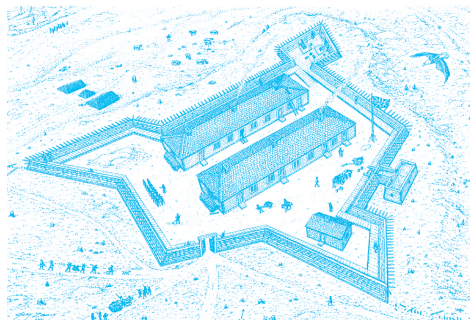
as “all the skulls are of Europeans.” The study also determined the men died of head wounds.

Thus, the remains could be from the September 8, 1755, Bloody Morning Scout (the first part of the Battle of Lake George). In this battle 1,000 provincials and 200 Native Americans were attacked while they marched south along the Old Military Road. The provincials were led by Colonel Williams of Deerfield, Massachusetts, and the Native Americans by the 63 year old Mohawk chief called King Hendrick. Both were killed in this ambush. Though the Bloody Morning Scout was a victory for the French and their Native American allies, the Battle of Lake George was eventually won by General William Johnson and his forces as the French and Native Americans, under Baron de Dieskau, failed to take advantage of their initial success. As a footnote, Williams’s will created funds for the building of Williams College in Massachusetts. ■

15 Stockaded Fort 1759

Two stockaded (log) forts were constructed on this site, one in 1758 and another the following year. In the absence of a garrisoned fort that could withstand a siege during the winter months of 1758-59, the troops dismantled the fort’s barracks and buried the boards for retrieval the next year. On June 28, 1759, Lieutenant Colonel William Eyre, who had earlier supervised the construction of Fort William Henry, began erecting a “Post of Logs” on the hillside overlooking the lake, which would “serve during the time” that the larger stone fort (Fort George) was being built.

The walls of the stockaded fort were constructed of “horizontal timbers” with three bastions, enclosing two wood barracks on stone foundations. The fort was garrisoned through 1760. By 1765 the green wood of the fort had substantially deteriorated; one traveler noted a “Small Stockaded Fort,” tumbling down and not usable. In 2000-2001, an archaeological team, under the supervision of Dr. David Starbuck, discovered hundreds of artifacts and two limestone foundations—one measuring 17 feet in width and 67 feet in length—which are believed to be the remains of the barracks. The large earth mounds before you are the covered remnants of these foundations. ■



16 Knox Cannon

Historic Monument

“THROUGH THIS PLACE PASSED GEN. HENRY KNOX IN THE WINTER OF 1775-1776 TO DELIVER TO GEN. GEORGE WASHINGTON AT CAMBRIDGE THE TRAIN OF ARTILLERY FROM FORT TICONDEROGA USED TO FORCE THE BRITISH ARMY TO EVACUATE BOSTON ERECTED BY THE STATE OF NEW YORK DURING THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION”

In the early part of the American Revolution on May 10, 1775, Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys captured Fort Ticonderoga from the British. In late 1775, General Washington sent Henry Knox to Ticonderoga to bring 59 pieces of artillery, weighing over 119,000 pounds, to break the British hold on Boston. Knox used 82 sleds and teams of oxen to travel 300 miles in 40 days from Ticonderoga to Boston. This is considered one of the great feats of the Revolution. ■

17 Smallpox Hospital 1776

After the tumultuous evacuation from Canada in June 1776, the American army in the Northern Theater was ravaged by smallpox and other infectious diseases. As a result, Major General Horatio Gates wrote to George Washington that “a General Hospital” would be established at Fort George to isolate infected soldiers from the rest of the troops at Ticonderoga.

The hospital, which quartered “between two and three thousand sick,” was spread across the area that today encompasses the entire Battlefield Park and the site of Fort William Henry. Patients were housed in open-air sheds, temporary barracks, and a few adjacent farm houses and barns. On August 10, 1776, Dr. Jonathan Potts, the director of the hospital, recorded “the distressed situation of the sick...without clothing, without bedding, or a shelter sufficient to screen them from the weather.” Shortly thereafter, Chaplain Ebenezer David visited the Fort George hospital, praying with the patients who he described as skeletons living in “large sheds.” Finding “near 2000 sick (and) between 20 & 30 dying each day,” Chaplain David felt a “sympathetic anguish (t)hat neither Tongue nor Pen can describe.” At the end of August, Dr. Lewis Beebe noted only 700 sick at Fort George and viewed “the burying place,” opened five weeks earlier, which held “upwards of 300 graves.” By mid-September conditions improved to the point that Major General Gates was informed “the sickness” had substantially abated at the hospital. ■

18 Battlefield Park Visitor Interpretive Center

The Visitor Interpretive Center displays a wide selection of artifacts, models, and historical illustrations that document the Lake George Battlefield Park's long history: the habitation period of indigenous peoples, the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, and subsequent centuries. Ten three-by-four-foot color panels explain the chronological history of the park during these periods. Large detailed models of the 1759 stockaded fort, the stone bastion fort



(Fort George), and the 1758 radeau *Land Tortoise* (a National Historic Landmark) are among the exhibits. An actual gunport lid from the vessel, a photomosaic (underwater photograph), and a documentary film about the *Land Tortoise* are exhibited as well. Artifacts and a model of the wreckage of one of the armed 1756 sloops built at Lake George provide a tangible connection to the past. Other exhibits include a Gary Zaboly drawing of the 1759 stockaded fort, a large painting by artist Ernest Haas of the 1759 Fort George complex, and a reproduction uniform on a military mannequin of a First Pennsylvania Battalion soldier who was stationed at Fort George and died from smallpox in the 1776 hospital. ■

19 Father Jogues Historic Monument

“AD MAJOREM DEL GLORIAM” (“to the greater glory of God”)

This bronze statue commemorates the life of Father Isaac Jogues, a French missionary born in 1609, in Orleans, France, the birthplace of Joan of Arc. He was captured by the Mohawks in 1642, and tortured when several of his fingers were gnawed off by his captors. He eventually escaped and returned to France.



Jogues then came back to New France (Canada) and departed south into New York.

He was again captured by Mohawks

where he was tortured and killed when they blamed him for their crop failure. Jogues named the lake, Lac Du Saint-Sacrament (Lake of the Saint Sacrament), when he saw the lake in 1646.

The lake was renamed Lake George in 1755, by General William Johnson, in honor of King George II, the reigning British monarch. In 1930, Jogues was canonized a saint by the Roman Catholic Church. This monument was erected by the State of New York in July 1939. ■

20 Fort William Henry

Go up these stairs to the fort proper. We encourage you to pay a visit inside the restored Fort William Henry. There is a small admittance fee.

Fort William Henry was constructed in 1755, under the direction of provincial General William Johnson and Captain William Eyre. It was an earthwork fort and constructed “in the manner the French build.” It was to garrison 500 troops and was approximately 17 ft. high and included walls up to 30 ft. thick. Approximately 500-700 men, or one quarter of the troops stationed at Lake George, worked at building the fort. At times the number working on the fort's construction would rise to 1,000 people. The fort's flag was finally raised on November 13, 1755, 44 days after construction began. Fort William Henry had several two story barracks, magazines for storing artillery and other armament, storehouses, and even a large encampment east of the fort in what is now Lake George Battlefield Park.



The fort survived a major assault in March 1757, when the French, led by Francois-Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil, crossed ice-covered Lake George and attacked it. Without artillery and siege equipment, the French relied upon scaling ladders. Though the French burned all structures around the fort including many boats, the French could not take the fortress and they soon retreated. Fort William Henry was at that the time, commanded by its builder, William Eyre, then a major.

However, several months later, in August 1757, Fort William Henry succumbed to Montcalm as this French commander laid siege to the fortress. After the garrison surrendered it was burned to the ground by the French. Today, Fort William Henry is one of the area's most popular tourist attractions. ■

21 Fort William Henry Cemetery and Memorial

The accompanying photograph shows archaeology done at Fort William Henry in the 1950s, when the fort was excavated and restored. In May 1993, Fort William Henry modified an outdoor exhibit on the site of the old colonial cemetery. The exhibit portrays the 1950s excavation and subsequent display of human skeletal remains from the 1757 siege and massacre. In 1993, human skeletal remains were examined by Dr. Maria Liston, an anthropologist from the Adirondack Community College. According to Dr. Liston, “the information from the skeletons can supplement, and at times verify the historical accounts, providing details of life not available from other sources. The [fort's] soldiers suffered not only from war-related trauma, but from pronounced physical stress, often in conjunction with infectious disease.” (Note: The skeletons are no longer on display.) ■



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Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance
PO Box 26, Lake George, NY 12845
www.lakegeorgebattlefield.org

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