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KNOX'S "NOBLE TRAIN" TO BE COMMEMORATED IN LAKE GEORGE

By Mirror Staff

Every December, Fort Ticonderoga commemorates the winter days of 1775, when Colonel Henry Knox departed the outpost with artillery collected from Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Fort George and other forts, bound for George Washington's camp near Boston.

This year's commemoration will be somewhat different. On Monday, December 19, Fort Ticonderoga Museum Curator Dr. Matthew Keagle will explore the full military and political significance of Knox's "Noble Train" at the Holiday Inn in Lake George.

The free program, which Fort Ticonderoga will present in collaboration with the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance and the Warren County Historical Society, starts at 7 pm.

Fort Ticonderoga's own collection of artillery includes at least one weapon Knox took with him to Boston.

Cast in France and shipped to Canada during the French and Indian War, the mortar was eventually hauled to Ticonderoga. It was still there when the fort was captured by Benedict Arnold and Ethan Allen in May, 1775.



The journey overland to Boston was made possible by the labor of many soldiers, as well as the drivers and teams of horses.

Rather than bringing his own artillerymen to Ticonderoga, Knox relied on soldiers already serving in the Northern Army under



General Philip Schuyler to help gather and move the guns south of the Hudson River.

Knox's personal journal and correspondence, as well as the papers of General Philip Schuyler, have revealed who was at Ticonderoga to heft the guns for the Noble Train. The commanding officer at Ticonderoga in December of 1775 was Colonel James Holmes, commander of the 4th New York Regiment.

The American army's achievement is commemorated by monuments along what is now known as "the Knox Trail," including those at Fort Ticonderoga, Sabbath Day Point, Bolton Landing, Lake George and Queensbury.

Erected in 1926 and recently restored, the monuments contain identical bronze plaques

that read: "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."

The plaques also feature a map of the 260-mile trail and an image of cannon being dragged by ox sled through the snow.

Knox's epic "noble artillery train"—ordered by Continental Army Commander in Chief George Washington to break a British stranglehold on Boston—covered approximately 300 miles over an eight-week period.

Knox reached Boston in late January. After transporting the artillery up Lake George to

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Fort George, where he remained for weeks as he worked to secure the oxen, horses and sleds he would need to complete his mission, Knox travelled south through Queensbury, Glens Falls, to Albany.

"Knox's expedition brought Washington his first victory of the Revolution," said Bruce Venter, a trustee of the Lake George Battlefield Alliance and author of "The Battle of Hubbardton" and other works on the War for Independence.

The Lake George Battlefield Park

Alliance and the Warren County Historical Society will also present a program on Knox's expedition to students at Lake George Jr.-Sr. High School on December 20 with Fort Ticonderoga Vice President of Public History Stuart Lillie and Director of Interpretation Cameron Green.

"The cooperation of Fort Ticonderoga and the Lake George Battlefield Alliance in producing this program with the Warren County Historical Society bodes well for future 250th anniversary events in the Lake George area," said Bruce Venter.



A: Fort Ticonderoga's artillery contributed to the Americans' first victory of the Revolution in winter, 1776. B: The 300-mile expedition from Ticonderoga to Boston took 8 weeks. C: Colonel Henry Knox. D: A re-enactor poses at the Knox Trail marker in Bolton Landing.