

**“Ethan Allen Takes Fort Ticonderoga”. Download from jeanoconnor.com
A Reading and Writing Lesson. For English and ELA, also for Social Studies and History.
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FACTS AND IMAGES

- ◆ Fort Ticonderoga was built by the French as a defense in 1756 during the French & Indian War (1745-1763). It was named Fort Carillon. The Fort was built on the southwest shore of Lake Champlain, giving it control of the lake. In Colonial and Revolutionary days, this body of water was strategically important for travel between Canada and the colonies.



Fort Ticonderoga



Northern Colonies and Major Forts During the Revolution

- ◆ During the Colonial period, forts were built near rivers or lakes. Most of the forts were built at the beginning of the French and Indian War (1754-1763); Fort Niagara was built earlier, in 1726. In the eighteenth century, waterways offered the predominant method of travel and thus were important for defense.

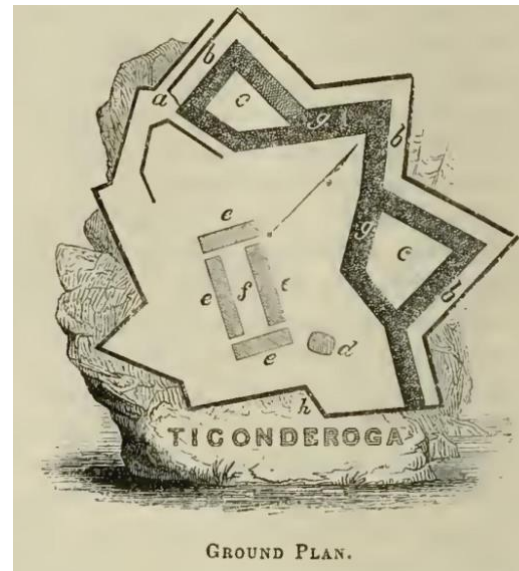
Fort Ticonderoga was situated on a major route between Canada and the Hudson River, namely Lake Champlain. Holding the fort was vital to the Americans. With a relatively short land passage, troops could reach the Hudson River corridor, itself key to holding New York.

- ◆ This fortress was strongly built. Its walls and barracks were of limestone, and everything about it was done in the most substantial manner.

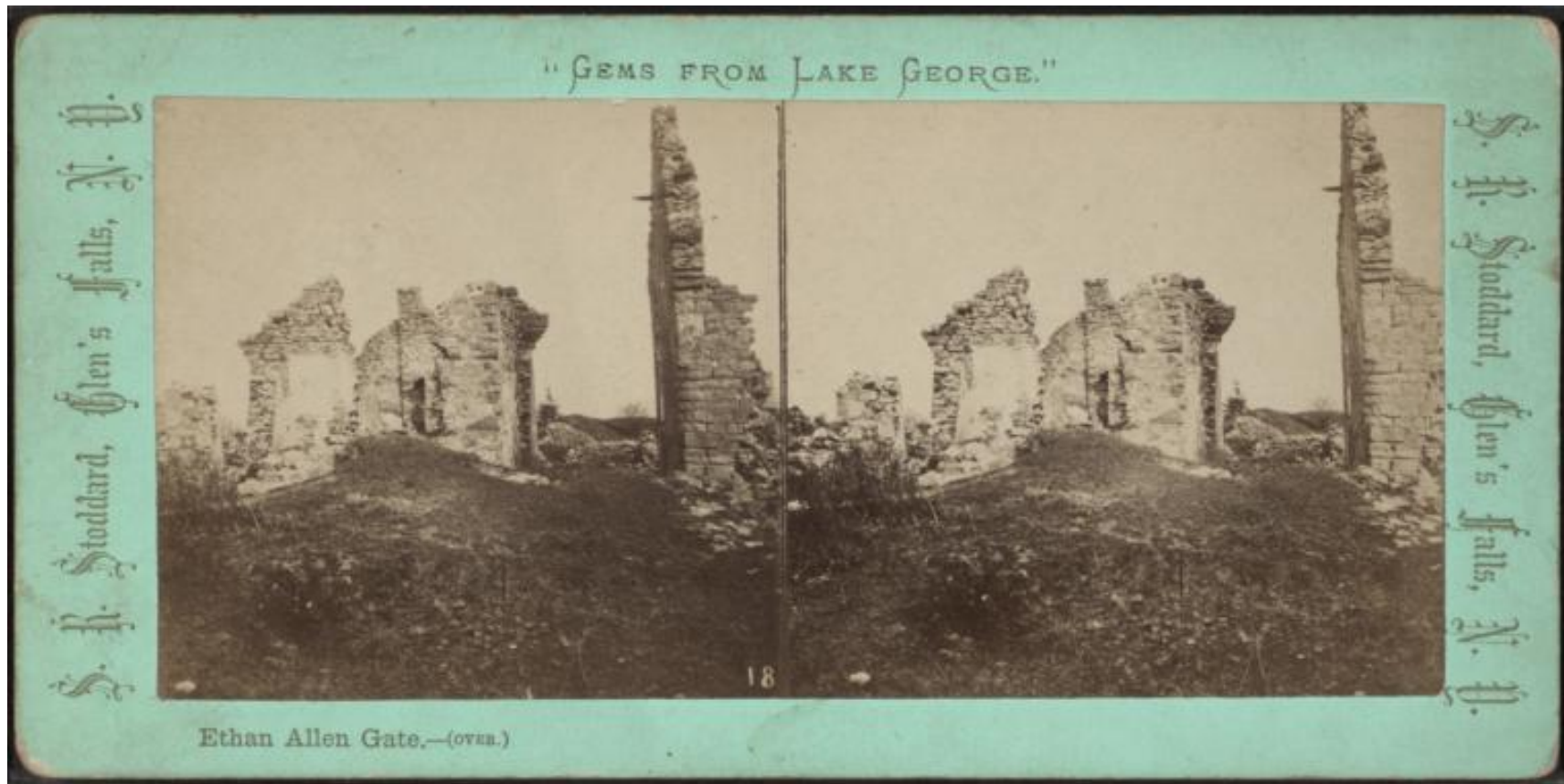
Explanation of the ground plan:

- a - entrance and wicket gate
 - b - counterscarp twenty feet wide
 - c,c - bastions (stone extensions, making access to central area difficult)
 - d - under-ground room and ovens
 - e e e e - barracks and officers' quarters
 - f - court or parade-ground
 - g g - trench or covert-way, sixteen feet wide and ten feet deep
 - h - the place where Ethan Allen and his men entered by a covert-way from the outside
- ◆ Constructed by French engineer Michel Chartier de Lotbinière, using the designs of well-known French military engineer Vauban.

Ground Plan of Fort Ticonderoga



- ◆ In 1758, the British, with a force greatly outnumbering the French, assaulted the French fort. The French successfully defended the Fort. In following year, 1759, the British gained control of the Fort. However, as the French left, they blew up much of the Fort's structure so the British could not have it, leaving much of it in ruins. The British renamed it Fort Ticonderoga.



Ruins of Fort Ticonderoga. Ethan Allen Gate.



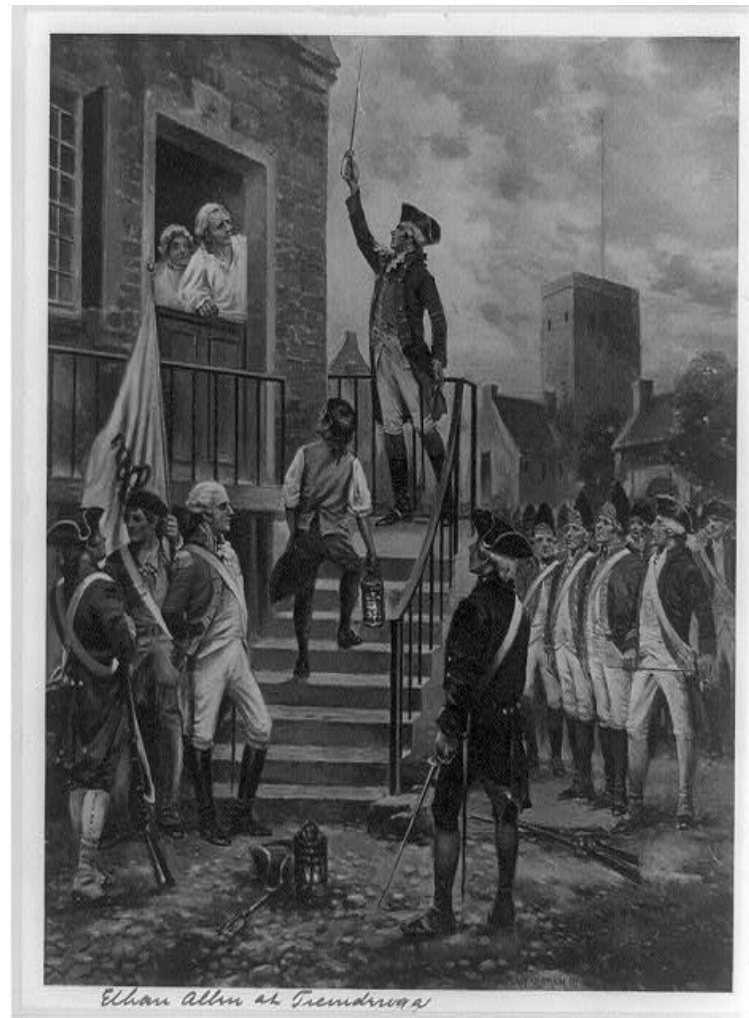
Ticonderoga at Sunset

- ◆ Ethan Allen, a leader in the frontier area that later became Vermont, and those loyal to him known as the Green Mountain Boys, captured Fort Ticonderoga on May 10, 1775. Their goal was to retrieve the cannon for the American militia, gathered around Boston. With them was Benedict Arnold, an officer commissioned by Massachusetts to capture the Fort.



Benedict Arnold in 1775

- ◆ Ethan Allen, Benedict Arnold, and eighty-three of the Green Mountain Boys rowed across Lake Champlain in three boats. In the early morning of May 10, 1775, they captured the Fort without a shot, surprising the few British soldiers posted there. Captain De la Place handed over control of the Fort.



Ethan Allen and Captain De la Place



ETHAN ALLEN AND CAPT. DE LA PLACE

Ethan Allen and Capt. De la Place



Ethan Allen and Captain Delaplace: improved



Ethan Allen and Captain Delaplace: Recent Version

- ◆ Later, Ethan Allen was captured by the British after a failed attempt to take Montreal, spent time in British jails in England, then was sent to the British stronghold of Halifax in Nova Scotia, arriving in August of 1776. Placed in jail at Halifax, he made the friendship of James Lovell, a teacher at the Boston Latin School, who had been imprisoned in Boston on suspicion of spying for the American forces.
- ◆ The cannon from Fort Ticonderoga were retrieved by Henry Knox and militia, tugged by oxen over snow-covered hills to Boston, where General Washington set them up on the heights over-looking the town. In March, 1776, the pounding of cannon caused General Howe, who had held Boston under siege for months, to abandon the town. He took all 8,000 British soldiers, 1,200 Loyalists, and any prisoners to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where the British had a stronghold. James Lovell was one of the prisoners taken to Halifax.



Henry Knox bringing artillery to end the Siege of Boston.

- ◆ Ethan Allen describes the capture of Fort Ticonderoga in his typical colorful fashion to James Lovell while both were in jail in Halifax. By all accounts, Ethan Allen was a powerful, enthusiastic leader. His written *Narrative* gives us the story. The success of Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys in capturing the British fort gave the Americans a sense of accomplishment and improved their morale in the difficult early days of the conflict.



Ethan Allen At Fort Ticonderoga

Image Sources

Colonel Benedict Arnold in 1775. Courtesy of the Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library. Intel.gov, Evolution of Espionage in America, <https://www.intel.gov/evolution-of-espionage/revolutionary-war/british-espionage/benedict-arnold>

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