

LAKE GEORGE BATTLEFIELD PARK



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Site of Two Great Early American Conflicts

Discovery Self-Guided Tour

This park was the site of dramatic events during the French and Indian War and the American Revolution—two pivotal conflicts in the founding of our nation. Explore and discover the locations and memorials described. For a more complete and colorful retelling of the park's history, take one of the guided tours available during the summer.

The Battle of Lake George

September 8, 1755, during the French and Indian War, the main engagement of the Battle of Lake George took place here. The battle between the French under Baron Jean-Armand Dieskau and English colonial forces under Major General William Johnson, consisted of three engagements: *the Bloody Morning Scout*, *the Battle at the Lake*; and *the Skirmish at Bloody Pond*. Johnson prevailed and soon after built Fort William Henry. Fort George Road closely follows the military road built by Johnson and his troops. The high ground near the park entry kiosk is the likely site of the battle's main engagement.



Lake George was fiercely fought over.

Fort William Henry Falls

In 1757, French General Louis-Joseph de Montcalm mounted a successful siege against Fort William Henry. During the siege, Lieutenant Colonel George Monro and the majority of his English colonial soldiers guarded their families in an entrenched camp here, while the remainder of his men, mainly Regulars from England, defended the fort. After English forces surrendered, the fort was destroyed by the French, who then withdrew.

Defeat, Then Victory

In 1758, British General James Abercromby built a stockade here. With a fleet of hundreds of boats and cannon, he unsuccessfully attacked French Fort Carillon—now called Fort Ticonderoga. Abercromby's routed forces returned, took down the stockade, buried the cannon, and sunk the boats to keep them from the French. Archaeologists have excavated two stockade barracks' foundations in the park. One has touches, like plaster-wall remnants, revealing it was for officers, while the rougher one was for soldiers. If you come upon the foundations, beware of poison ivy near them.

In 1759, British General Jeffery Amherst returned, rebuilt the stockade, retrieved the cannons and many boats, and launched a successful attack, driving the French from Fort Carillon on Lake George and Fort Saint Frederic on Lake Champlain. Boats that were never retrieved lie at the bottom of lake to this day and are known as the Sunken Fleet.

The Abandoned Fort

Later in 1759, Amherst started constructing a stone fort here to be named in King George II's honor. Providing building materials for the fort involved quarrying stone and building a lime kiln for mortar. Evidence of both activities can be seen in the park. Stones from this site were used in building the Colonial Dock at the end of the Fort George Road as well. After Amherst learned that the French had retreated to Canada, he abandoned this location, building a large fort at Crown Point instead. The southwest bastion of the never-finished fort is all that remains.

The American War of Independence

In 1775 and 1776, the hospital for American forces of the Northern Campaign was located here. In 1777, British General John Burgoyne used Lake George and the fort at Crown Point to support his troops. After Burgoyne's loss at Saratoga on October 17, 1777, the fort at Crown Point was in American hands. Then, in 1780, British raiders under Major Christopher Carleton (Carleton's Raid) forced the Americans to surrender the fort one final time before setting it ablaze.

Statues and Memorials

Mohawk Warrior

Created by Phimister Proctor and given to the park in 1921 by George Pratt, this statue honors the Native Americans who lived in this region before Europeans arrived. It also recalls those who joined colonists in the struggles to control this country.

Saint Isaac Jogues

This stature honors the Jesuit priest who was the first European to see the lake known to the natives as Andia-ta-roc-te. Jogues named it Lac du Saint Sacrament and William Johnson gave it his king's name—Lake George.

William Johnson and His Mohawk Ally King Hendrick

This statue was a gift from the Society of Colonial Wars in 1903 commemorating the Battle of Lake George. King Hendrick may seem like an odd name for a Native American, but he was baptized "Hendrick" in the Dutch Reformed Church and "King" referred to his status as a sachem, or chief.

Memorial to Four Unknown Soldiers

Four skeletons found by a road crew in 1931 were determined to be colonial soldiers who died during the Bloody Morning Scout. They were buried here with great ceremony in 1935. Each Memorial Day, a wreath is laid to honor these early Americans who died protecting their country. They also symbolize the soldiers of many nations who were killed during the conflict and buried in unmarked graves.

Other Archaeological Finds

Foundations of buildings dating to the French and Indian War and likely used through the Revolutionary War have been unearthed by archaeologists. The foundation closest to the Unknown Soldiers marker is believed to be that of a workshop or blacksmith. Numerous soldiers' campsites have also been unearthed in archaeological digs throughout the area.

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