

# THE BATTLES OF SARATOGA



THE DECISIVE MOMENT FOR  
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION  
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1778



# SITUATION 1777



- Continental Army strength about 25,000
- British Army about 23,600 ( app. 7,000 Hessians)
- Year begins with Patriot victories at Trenton and Princeton, morale high
- Continental Army winters at Morristown, NJ
- British in NYC (for duration of war)
- Intense partisan strife in the South

# THE THREE-PRONGED PLAN OF ATTACK



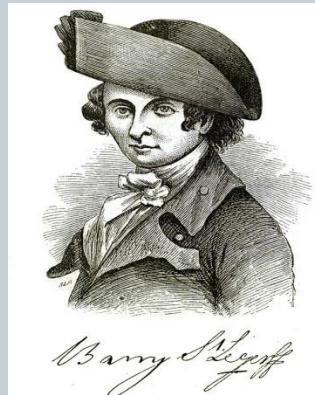
- GEN Burgoyne 's plan , George III approves in March



# THE PLAN IN DETAIL



- GEN Burgoyne heads south from Quebec with a force of 9,000 2/3 British, 1/3 Hessian for Albany
- BG St. Leger leads 2,500 British, Hessians, Native Americans, French Canadians and Loyalists from Montreal along Mohawk Valley for Albany
- GEN Howe was to lead 10,000 troops north to Albany



Barry St. Leger



Time Detective Gallery

# FT TICONDEROGA FALLS 2-6 JULY 1777



- GEN Arthur St. Clair with 3,000 defenders
- Burgoyne at full strength, seizes heights at Sugar Loaf (Mt. Defiance)
- St. Clair retreats Losses minimal: British 5 KIA, US 7 KIA, 11 WIA
- Battle of Hubbardton- 7 July British catch up to GEN Schuyler US rear guard
- British: 41–150 KIA 96–457 WIA 230 POW US: 49–60 KIA, 141–168 WIA

# FT TICONDEROGA MAP



# IN AUGUST, THINGS GO AWRY



- St. Leger besieges FT Stanwix 2-22 August
- GEN Herkimer assembles relief force of 800 irregulars; accused of being a Tory (his brother was), Herkimer pushes for combat earlier than desired.  
Battle of Oriskany 6 August
- Patriots ambushed in a ravine, reform lines
- Very intense fighting 50 % of Patriots KIA/WIA, 15% of British and allies
- Native Americans bear brunt of fighting, lose some possessions/property Low morale hurt St. Leger

# Battle of Oriskany 6 AUGUST 1777



# SIEGE OF FT. STANWIX 2-22 AUGUST



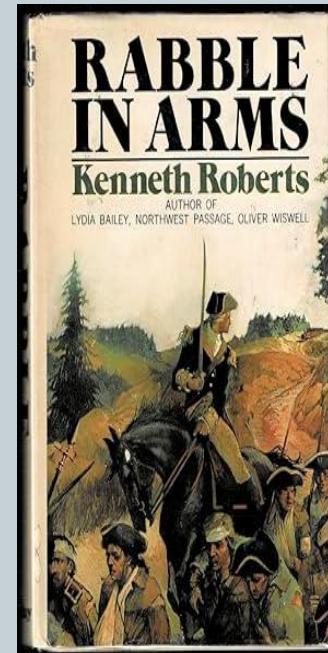
- COL Peter Gansevoort in command
- Sortie of 250 men loot vacant enemy camps
- St. Leger and indigenous allies at odds
- GEN Arnold spreads disinformation about relief column, claiming he has 3,000 men (really only 700)
- St. Leger breaks siege. Later tries to help Burgoyne but only makes Ticonderoga before Burgoyne surrenders



# IN LITERATURE AND FILM



- <https://www.10bestnovelssetintheamericanrevolution.org/rabble-in-arms-by-kenneth-roberts>
- <https://www.amazon.com/Drums-Along-Mohawk-York-Classics/dp/0815604572>

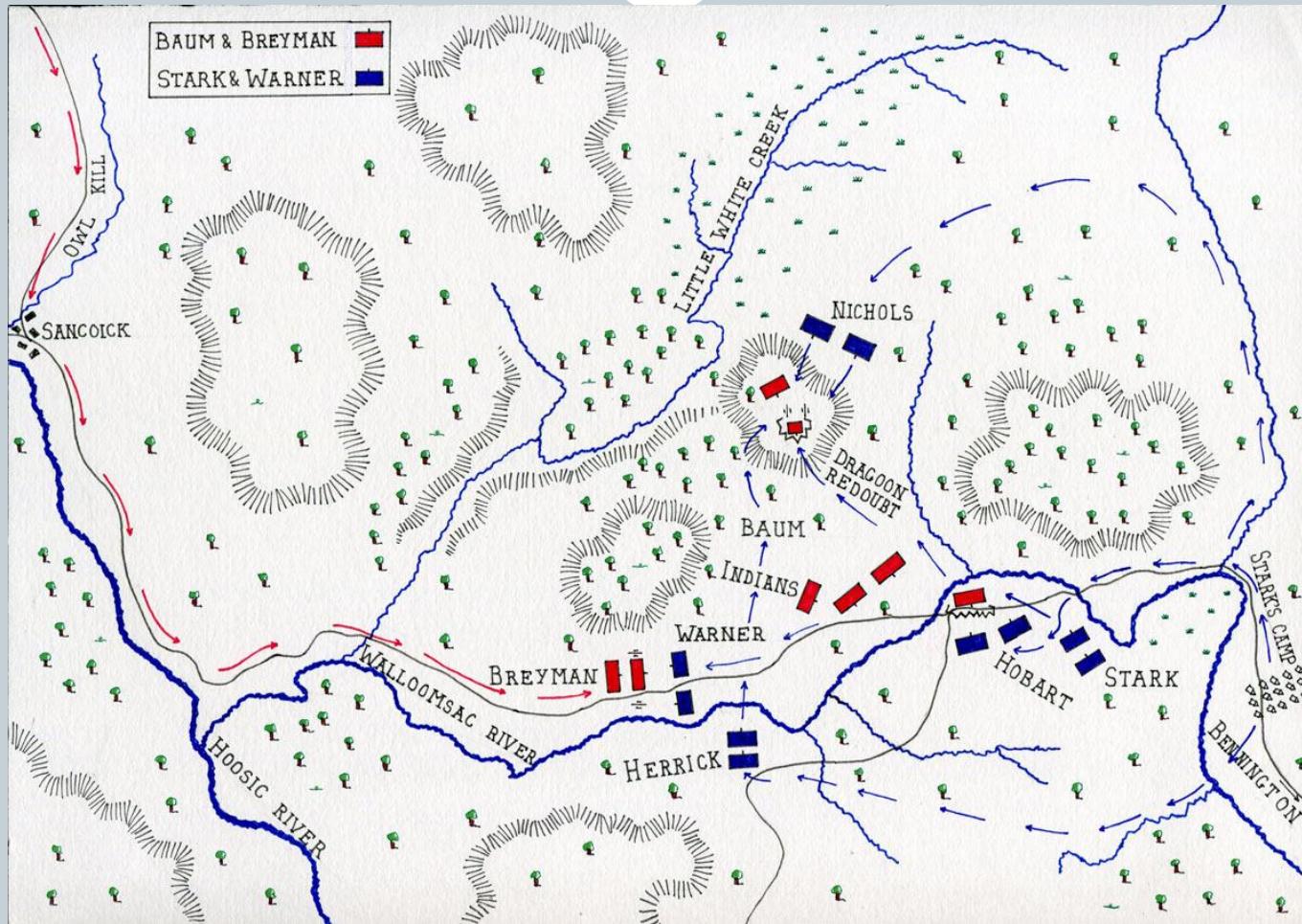


# BATTLE OF BENNINGTON 16 AUGUST



- Burgoyne's advance slowed by obstacles
- LTC Baum sent for supplies at Bennington NY now  
VT: British, Hessian, Loyalist, Native American  
troops
- GEN Stark attacks , day long vicious fight
- British: 200 KIA/WIA/POW 700 (incl. relief force)  
US: 70 KIA/WIA
- British advance weakened, Native American s desert  
US morale hgh

# BATTLE MAP



# THE MISSING LINK- GEN WM. HOWE



- 23 July 1777-GEN Howe moves 16,500 troops by sea to northern end of the Chesapeake Bay in MD
- GEN Washington is baffled- Howe going to Charleston, SC? Back to NYC?
- Howe feints towards NJ. No overland march to Phila
- Lord Germain in London does not coordinate commanders in field- how could he, really?
- Howe thinks Patriots will fold when Phila. And Congress are captured Howe takes Phila. 26 Sept

# BACK TO BURGOYNE

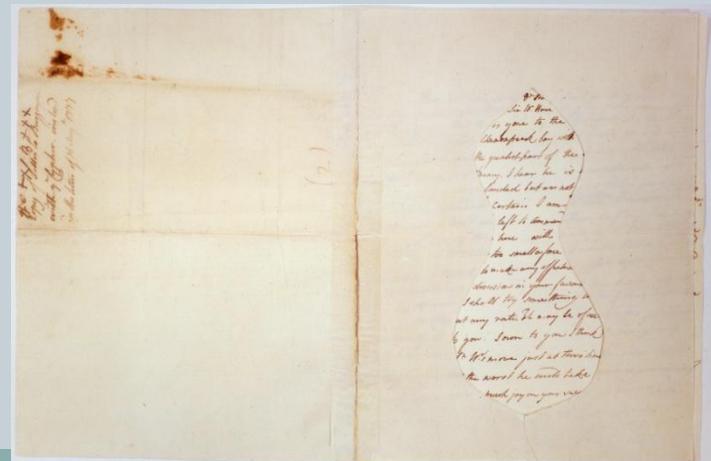


- 1,000 troops left at FT Ticonderoga
- Almost 1,000 lost one way or another at Bennington
- St. Leger halted- will resume though
- So about 25% of Burgoyne's force not available (360 miles)
- Howe writes Burgoyne 17 July, Burgoyne reads on 15 Aug, GEN Clinton writes Burgoyne 18 Aug

# DECEPTION TECHNIQUES



- Both sides watch for messengers between commanders
- Mask letters- one messenger carried the actual letter. Another messenger carried a shaped template to put over the letter
- The actual message appear within the template
- Disinformation also was used.

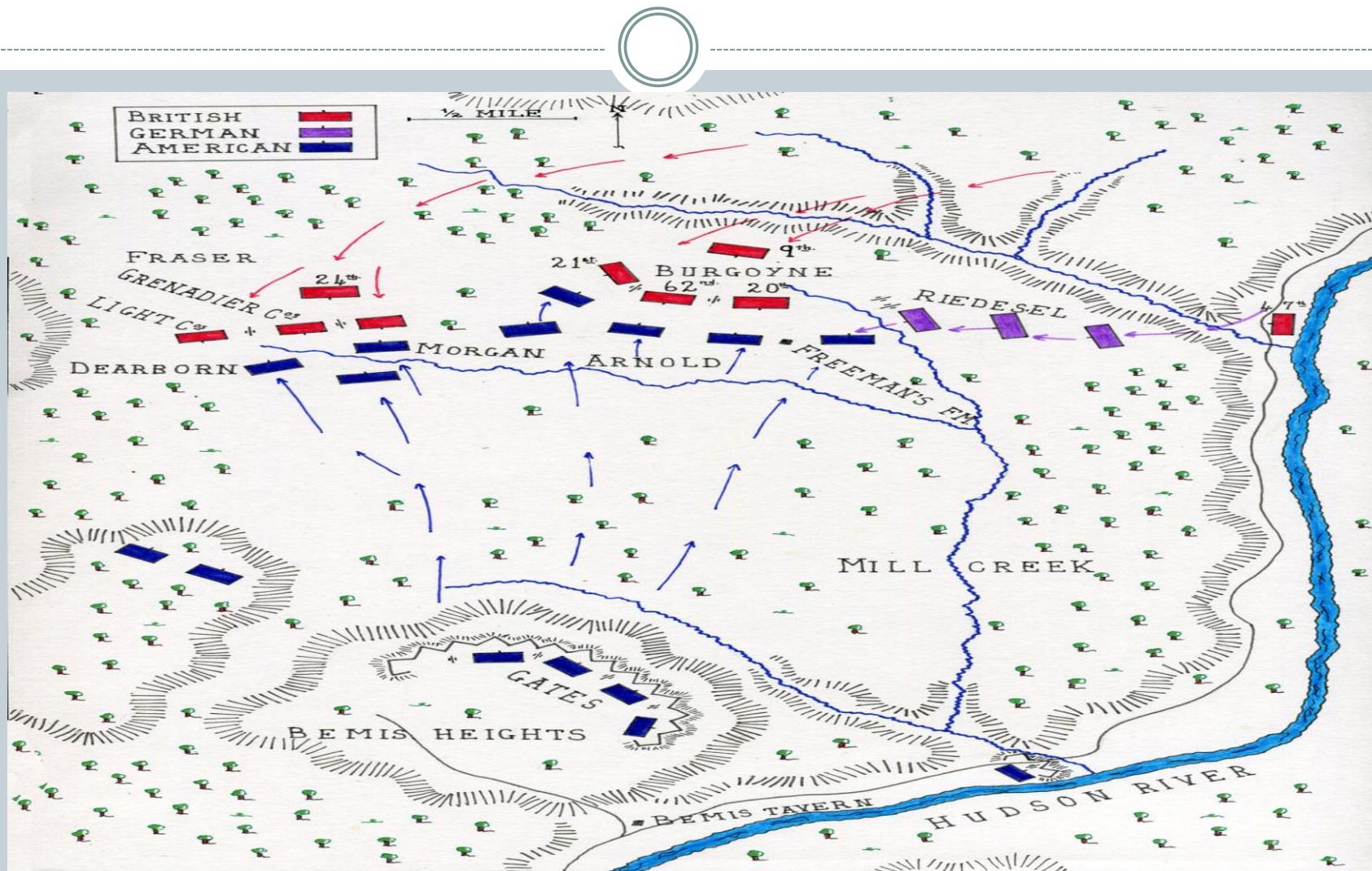


# BATTLE OF FREEMAN'S FARM-19 SEPT



- GEN Horatio Gates in US command
- Burgoyne wants to turn US left flank, has few scouts
- British Reconnaissance in Force of 3 columns heads south
- Gates allows GEN Arnold and Morgan to move north
- Day-long intense battle ensues
- British hold position in pyrrhic victory
- Arnold rallies US forces
- British KIA 440, WIA 700 US KIA 80, WIA 240

# BATTLE MAP

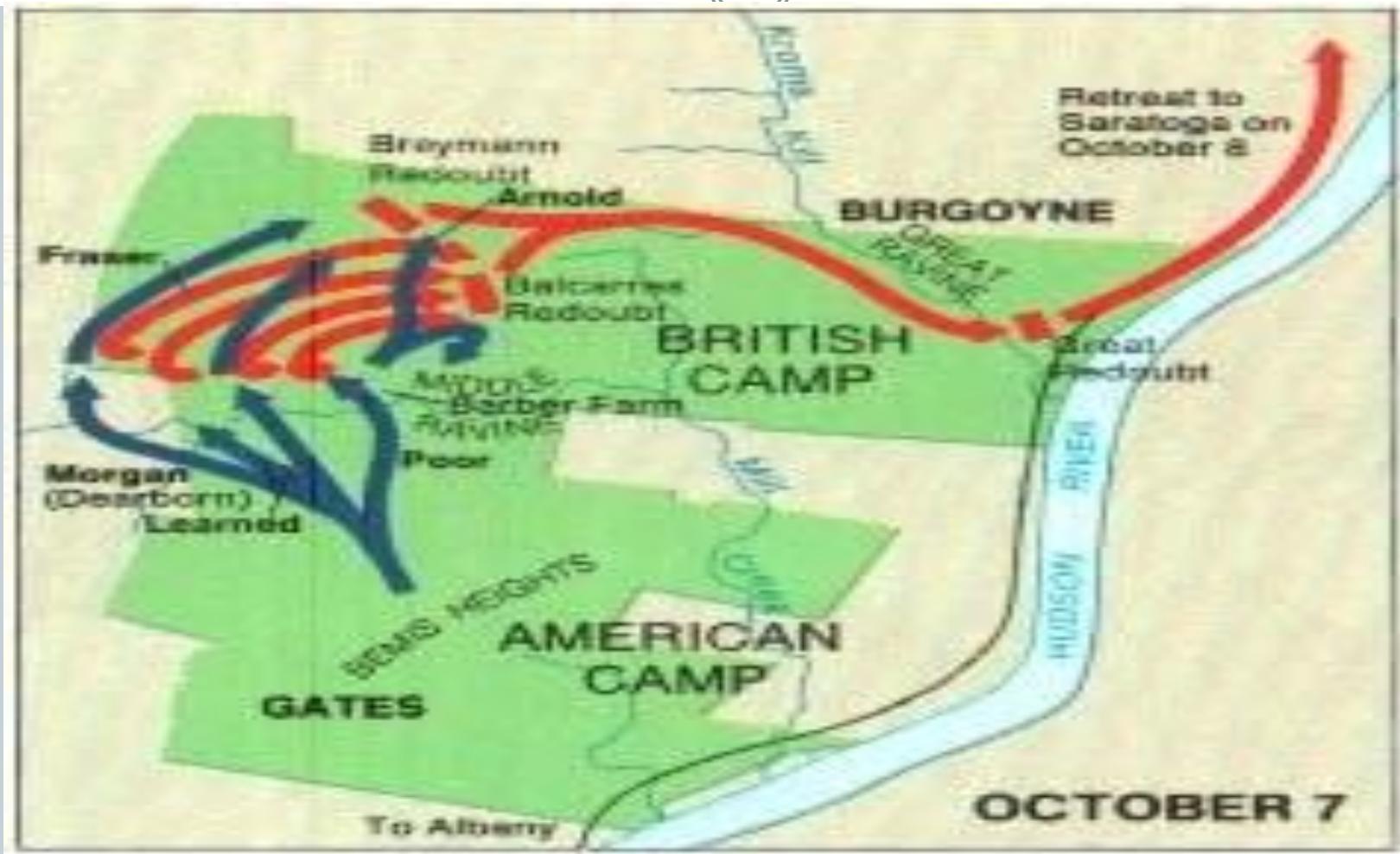


# BATTLE OF BEMIS HEIGHTS 7 OCTOBER



- Gates does not mention Arnold in report to Congress, Arnold enraged
- Burgoyne low on supplies orders another RIF on US left flank
- GEN Fraser leads attack, Morgan pushes him back and advances
- Arnold asks to fight, promises no full-scale battle, men cheer him
- US turns both British flanks and hits center
- Arnold takes British redoubts, wounded in leg
- GEN Fraser mortally wounded, LTC v. Breymann fragged

# BEMIS HEIGHTS MAP



# AFTERMATH AND SURRENDER



- British total losses- 600 US total losses 150
- Burgoyne retreats north towards Saratoga
- Gates surrounds Burgoyne's 5,000 man force
- 17 October- Burgoyne surrenders , Congress reneges on promise to send them home- they become POWs in Charlottesville VA
- First British army to surrender
- French aid begins 1778, Spain and Holland follow
- Now it is a world-wide war

# OUTCOMES OF SARATOGA

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- Great Britain faces more adversaries, loses momentum
- US morale is much higher
- Continental Army goes to Valley Forge, comes out stronger
- Seeds of Arnold's betrayal are sown