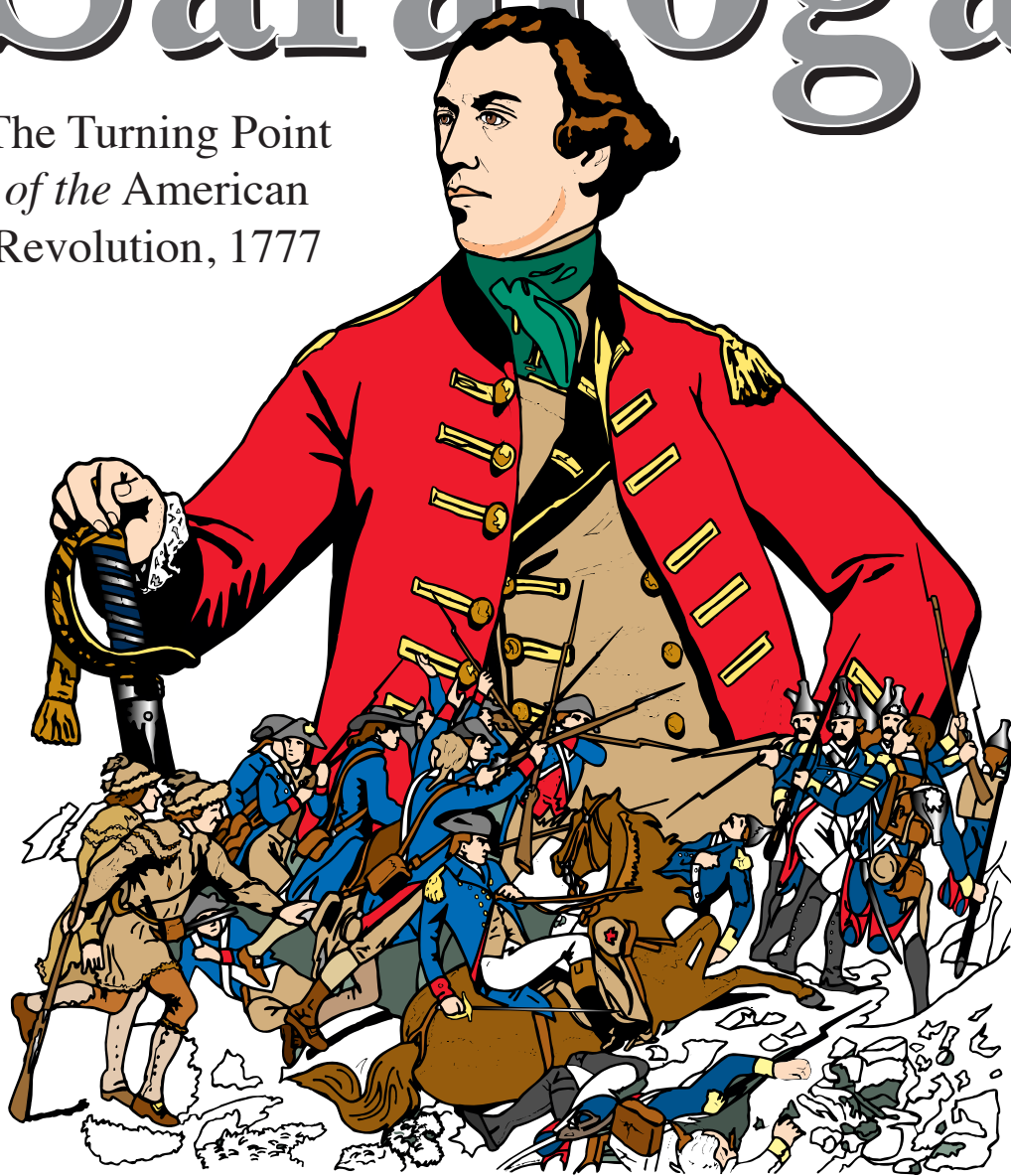


# Saratoga

The Turning Point  
*of the American*  
Revolution, 1777



By Roger B. MacGowan ©2006

## EXCLUSIVE RULEBOOK

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3rd Edition

## Introduction

This, the Third Edition of *Saratoga*, contains significant differences from previous editions including rules changes or modifications, changes in terrain, and new or re-named units. Terrain and unit changes are based on primary sources that have come to light since the Second Edition was published in 2006. Some of the highlights are:

- Addition of a new trail (See hexes 2413 to 2012)
- Several units that previously only appeared in the “Next Day” scenario are now part of the main campaign
- An entirely new historical scenario, “Freeman’s Farm”

## 1. Prepare for Play (Campaign Scenario)

### 1.1 Colors

AMERICAN:

- Light Blue = Arnold’s Wing
- Dark Blue = Gate’s Wing

BRITISH:

- Red = Regulars
- Brown = Militia and Auxiliaries
- Green = Germans
- Yellow = Loyalists

### 1.2 American Setup

The American player sets up his units according to their “at start” locations (printed on the counters).

**1.2.1 Units not Used:** The following units are not used in the campaign scenario: Leader Warner, Middlesex Militia, 3rd Suffolk Militia, and 1st Hampshire County Militia.

### 1.3 British Setup

The British player sets up his units according to their “at start” locations (printed on the counters) or on the Game Turn Track according to their turn of entry.

**1.3.1 Units not Used:** The British HQ marker and flechette markers are not used in the campaign scenario. The optional Prinz Ludwig Dragoon unit is only used by mutual consent of both players.

*NOTE: If the Prinz Ludwig Dragoon unit is used it replaces its dismounted counterpart.*

A complete game of *Saratoga* contains:

- One 22” x 34” game map
- One sheet of die cut counters
- One Series Rulebook
- This Playbook
- Two identical player aid cards
- One 10-sided die

### 1.4 Scenario Length

The scenario begins on Turn 1, and ends on Turn 12, unless either side achieves a Decisive or Substantial victory before then.

### 1.5. Player Order and Initiative

On Turns 1 and 2 only the British player will move – there are no American player turns. On Turn 3 the initiative automatically goes to the American Player. On all remaining turns initiative is determined by die roll according to Series Rule 6.1.

### 1.6 Army Morale Levels

At start levels are 14 for both players.

### 1.7 Momentum Chits

The British start with 1 momentum chit.

### 1.8 Retreat Direction Priority

- British: North, Northeast, or Northwest
- American: South, Southeast, or Southwest

## 2. How to Win

### 2.1 British Decisive Victory

The British player wins a Decisive victory if at least 1 Parade Order combat unit occupies either Bemis Tavern (Hex 2004) or Fort Neilson (hex 1407), without the presence of an enemy ZOC in the hex, at the end of any game turn. Exception: Artillery cannot control a hex.

### 2.2 American Decisive Victory

Starting on game turn 6, the American player wins a Decisive victory if at least 1 Parade Order combat unit occupies hex 2019, without the presence of an enemy ZOC in the hex, at the end of a game turn.

### 2.3 Substantial Victory

See 16.3 in the Series Rules

### 2.4 Marginal Victory

If neither player achieves a Decisive or Substantial victory a Marginal victory will be awarded to the British player if the British have more VPs than the Americans at game end. The Americans earn a Marginal victory if the game ends with VPs tied or in favor of the Americans.

### 2.5 Freeman’s Farm Objective Area

This is the 10 hex area around Freeman’s Farm (indicated by a dotted line around these hexes), which is worth 1 VP to either side at the end of the game if one side has control of the area.

**2.5.1** The British player receives 1 VP if there is a British non-artillery combat unit (this includes, militia, auxiliaries, Loyalists and Germans) in Freeman’s Farm (hex 1015) *and* there are no American combat units or ZOCs from American combat units in any hex of the objective area.

**2.5.2** The American player receives 1 VP if there are American combat units in at least two adjacent hexes of the objective area. The presence of British units and/or their ZOCs have no effect on this VP determination.

## 3. Special Rules

### 3.1 American Artillery



American artillery units have a movement allowance three that is in parenthesis (3) indicating they may not move unless forced from their at-start hex as a result of close combat or fire combat. If forced from their at-start hex the unit may move normally with a movement allowance of three MPs.

### 3.2 The River Road

The River Road does not cross the creek hexsides at 2019/2119 and 2410/2411. Units may not use strategic movement or the road rate when crossing these hexsides.

### 3.3 Momentum Chits and Leader Loss

If Burgoyne or Gates is captured or eliminated, the owning player must return one Momentum chit to the pool. If the owning player does not have a Momentum Chit, then the opponent is entitled to take a Momentum Chit from the pool. If all Momentum chits are in play, there is no further effect.

### 3.4 Leaders

All leaders may stack and command any units with the exceptions noted below.

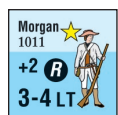
#### 3.4.1 Leader Seniority

- Americans: Gates followed by Arnold, Lincoln, and Warner.
- British: Burgoyne, followed by Phillips, von Riedesel, Fraser, and Hamilton.



**3.4.2 von Riedesel:** von Riedesel may only stack with and command German units although he may freely move through other British-player units during movement, retreat, or disruption. *Design Note: von Riedesel did not speak English. In addition, there was a bias within the British officer corps against foreign officers commanding British troops.*

**3.4.3 Warner:** Warner may stack with any American units but may only command militia.



**3.4.4 Morgan's Rifles:** The Morgan rifle unit acts as a demi-leader (indicated by the star on the counter) for tactics chit play for himself and all units stacked with him in Close Combat. Morgan cannot command a multi-hex attack.

**3.4.4.1** If Morgan chooses not to attack (to avoid the penalty for rifle units in close combat) he does not count as a demi-leader for that attack.

**3.4.4.2** When Morgan is stacked with Dearborn the -1 DRM for rifle units in close combat is not applied.

**3.4.4.3** British artillery that is in the ZOC of the Morgan unit may not fire at any unit.

### 3.5 Burgoyne



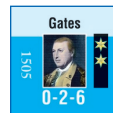
Hamilton



Burgoyne is back-printed with Brigadier Hamilton (1-1-6). If Burgoyne is captured or killed, immediately place Hamilton in the following order of precedence:

- With the 21st Foot if that unit is still in play
- With either the 20th or 62nd Foot if at least one of those units is still in play
- With the Fighting 9th if that unit is still in play
- With any combat unit whose at-start location number was 1830.

### 3.5 Gate's Wing



*DESIGN NOTE: One of the intriguing aspects of Saratoga was the so-called Gates-Arnold controversy. Gates, the army commander, preferred to await the British assault upon the prepared American positions at Bemis Heights. Arnold, the army's second in command, argued for a spoiling attack to disrupt the British approach. Historically, a compromise of sorts was reached in which Arnold was allowed to sortie with his wing of the army, while Gates with nearly two-thirds of the American forces stayed on Bemis Heights.*

**3.5.1 Bemis Heights Movement Restriction:** No units of Gate's Wing can move north or west of the Bemis Heights Line (denoted by yellow dots on the map) until they are released. They can move freely on or behind the Bemis Heights Line (Exception: American Artillery (3.1)).



Major General Horatio Gates

### 3.5.2 Release of Gate's Wing

**3.5.2.1** Gate's Wing is released immediately when a British combat unit moves within 4 hexes of hex 2410 or hex 1407. The 4 hex measurements are from one of these hexes to the British Unit, counting the British unit's hex but not the starting hex (2410 or 1407).

**3.5.2.2** Gate's Wing can also be released if Gates makes a successful release roll. Beginning on game turn 8, the American player rolls for release at the start of each American movement phase. If the die roll is within the range printed on the turn track for that turn, Gate's wing is released immediately.

**3.5.2.3 Middle Branch Ford:** The American player subtracts 1 from the Gate's release roll during any turn in which the British player does not control hex 1011. Control is defined as occupying or being the last to pass through with a Parade Order combat unit.

**3.5.2.4** Once Gate's wing is released either by proximity of British Units or by a successful Gate's release roll his wing may move without restriction (Exception: See 3.1 and Garrison Requirement [3.6.1]).

## 3.6 American Garrison Requirements

### 3.6.1 Garrison Hexes

The American player must garrison hexes 2207, 2108, 2008, 1807, 1707, 1508, 1407, and 1406 with at least one non-artillery combat unit each until the British occupy the hex or an adjacent garrison hex. This garrison requirement is checked at the end of each American player movement phase only. *NOTE: This requirement remains in place even after Gate's wing is released.*

### 3.6.2 Abandoned Garrison Hexes

The American player may choose to give up the garrison of a hex before British actions remove the garrison requirements. If this occurs, the British player immediately gains 1 VP *per hex* abandoned.

*NOTE: This lost VP is permanent and cannot be regained by the American player.*

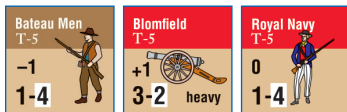
*NOTE: Artillery can never voluntarily abandon a garrison hex per 3.1 above.*

## 3.7 Intelligence (Optional)

If players agree to use this rule, follow Series Rules 7.4.2 and 7.4.3.

## 3.8 British Reinforcements

**3.8.1** British reinforcements arriving before turn 5 are placed in hex 2031 (entry hex "B") at the beginning of the British movement phase on their game turn of arrival. Placement on the board does not cost any movement points and units can expend their entire movement allowance and use strategic movement on their turn of entry.



**3.8.2** British reinforcements arriving on turn 5 enter at hex 2019 and cannot move during that turn (*Design Note: they are arriving by bateaux*). These units have their MP values

highlighted by a white box indicating they can never move more than two hexes from the river road, counting the first hex off-road as hex one.



**3.8.3 Prinz Ludwig (Optional):** The Prinz Ludwig counter is now a mounted unit; the Prinz Ludwig foot unit is not used. It can only enter play if both players agree prior to the beginning of the game (See rule 1.3.1).

## 3.9 Fog

**3.9.1 Chances of Fog:** On game turns 1 and 2 roll a die and consult the table on the map for the possibility of fog.

### 3.9.2 Effects of Fog:

- **DENSE FOG:** The entire game-turn is skipped. Move immediately to the next game turn; any reinforcements due on the turn that was skipped will enter on the next turn played.
- **MODERATE FOG:** No units may use strategic movement and no unit may conduct Fire Combat.
- **CLEAR:** The turn is played normally with no restrictions.

**3.9.3 Turn 2 Fog Roll:** If the result was Dense Fog on turn 1 the fog roll on turn 2 is modified by a -1 DRM. If the Fog roll on turn 1 was clear, the Fog roll on turn 2 is automatically clear.

## 3.10 Indian Withdrawal

The Ottawa Indian unit may conduct Indian Withdrawal per Series Rule 12.5.

# 4.0 Variants

## 4.1 Gates Prevails

No American units can move north or west of the Bemis Heights Line until they are released. The British player receives no VP for controlling the Freeman's Farm Objective Area.

## 4.2 Arnold Prevails

All American units are considered released beginning on game turn 3.

- Ignore rule 3.5
- The garrison requirements of section 3.6 are still in force at all times as are the restrictions in section 3.1 regarding movement of American Artillery.

# 5.0 Saratoga "Next Day" Scenario

## 5.1 British Setup:

*Hex Units*

- 1920: Phillips, Blomfield Artillery, Infantry Recruits, & Flechettes
- 2019: Bateau Men, Royal Navy, & Flechettes
- 2214: 2nd Chasseurs
- 2016: Pausch Artillery
- 2117: von Specht

1415:	47th
1518:	Burgoyne & Prinz Ludwig
1517:	20th (reduced) & Flechettes
1417:	21st Fusiliers (reduced) & Flechettes
0711:	Fighting 9th
0812:	Baron von Riedesel, von Riedesel Infantry, Spangenberg Artillery
1015:	Boucherville, Hosmer Artillery, & Flechettes
1918:	Erb-Prinz
0911:	Jaegers & 1st Chasseurs
0510:	British Grenadiers
0610:	Fraser & 24th
0409:	Earl of Balcarres
0405:	Fraser's Rangers
0912:	German Grenadiers
0813:	von Rhetz
0714:	Jessup's Corps, MacKay's Corps, Walker Artillery

Ottawa Indians: Setup anywhere outside the Bemis Heights Line but no closer than 4 hexes distant.

**Not Used:** 62nd, Jones Artillery, Queen's Loyal Rangers, Mitchelson's Artillery

## 5.2 American Setup

Setup per the Campaign "at start" designations with the following exceptions:

<i>Hex</i>	<i>Units</i>
1106:	Cook's CT Militia
1309:	2nd Massachusetts
1505:	Morgan (reduced), Dearborn, Kosciuszko
2004:	Lincoln, CT Light Dragoons
2210:	12th Massachusetts
1108:	8th Massachusetts
1911:	17th Albany
2410:	2nd Albany

*NOTE: The 2nd New Hampshire begins the scenario reduced.*

**Not Used:** 1st New Hampshire, Lattimore's CT Militia

### Reinforcements:

Turn 3: Warner, 1 Hampshire Co., 3 Suffolk Co., and 5 Middlesex enter at hex 2101. These units may not use strategic movement on their turn of entry (see Rules 7.5 & 7.5.1).

## 5.3 Momentum

The British start the scenario with 1 Momentum Chit

## 5.4 Army Morale

Both armies have a starting AM of 14.

## 5.5 Turn Order

If there is Fog on turn 1:

- Turn 1 – British only
- Turn 2 – British followed by American

- Turn 3+ Random player order

If there is no Fog on turn 1:

- Turn 1 – British Only
- Turn 2+ Random player order

## 5.6 Optional Rule: Free setup

**5.6.1** The American army deploys first anywhere within the Bemis Heights Line. *NOTE: Garrison rules are in effect at all times and American artillery must be placed in the hexes on their counter and cannot move per 3.1.*

**5.6.2** The British army deploys second anywhere north of Mill Creek and its Middle Branch tributary.

**5.6.2.1** British units designated to start in hexes containing Flechettes must be placed in those hexes during setup.

**5.6.2.2** The British player must garrison hexes 1015, 1518, 1920, and 2019 per rule 7.6.2

**5.6.2.3** Units that begin reduced are treated in accordance with Section 4 of the Series Rules.

# 6. Victory Conditions

## 6.1 British Decisive

If at least 1 Parade Order combat unit (excluding artillery) occupies either Bemis Tavern (hex 2004) or Fort Neilson (hex 1407), regardless of American ZOCs, at the end of any game turn.

## 6.2 British Marginal

The British player cannot win a Marginal Victory in this scenario.

*DESIGN NOTE: Anything except opening the road to Albany would lead to the eventual destruction of Burgoyne's army. Winning the day without actually taking control of Bemis Heights is not enough to claim a Marginal victory. The onus is on the British Player to carry battle to the Americans or lose the game.*

## 6.3 American Decisive

If at least 1 Parade Order combat unit (excluding artillery) occupies either the baggage train (hex 2019) or British HQ (hex 1518), without the presence of an enemy ZOC, at the end of any game turn.

## 6.4 American Marginal

The American player wins a Marginal victory if the British player fails to win either a Decisive or Substantial victory.

## 6.5 Substantial

Substantial victories are achieved per Series Rule 16.3.

## 6.6 Reduced Units:

For units that begin reduced Series Rule 4 applies.

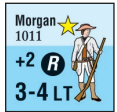
## 7. Special Rules

### 7.1 American Ammo Depletion

Each time one of the units listed on the Ammo Depletion Log participates in Close Combat, whether attacking or defending, check off 1 box.

### 7.2 Ammo Depletion

- Once a unit has all of its boxes marked off it should be marked with an “Ammo Depleted” marker.
- Units that are Ammo Depleted have no ZOC.
- Ammo Depleted units cannot be the lead unit in Close Combat if stacked with other Parade Order combat units that are not Ammo Depleted.
- There is a -1 (if attacking) or a +1 (if being attacked) close combat modifier if at least one unit in the combat is Ammo Depleted.



### 7.3 Morgan & Ammo Depletion

The Morgan unit has two sets of Ammo Depletion boxes, one for Close Combat and one for Fire Combat.

**7.3.1** Morgan has only one Close Combat box. After it is checked off he suffers the effects described in the third and fourth bullets of 7.2 above.

**7.3.2** Morgan has three boxes for rifle fire, one being checked off each time he conducts Fire Combat. When all three boxes are checked off Morgan can no longer fire and the effects of 7.2.2 above apply.

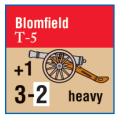
**7.3.2.1** Even though Morgan begins this scenario at reduced strength, the first time Morgan conducts fire combat he gets the “First Fire” bonus per Series Rule 10.5

**7.3.3** If Morgan loses his ZOC, British units no longer have to pay the +1MP penalty associated with entering or exiting the ZOCs of rifle units.

**7.3.4** If Morgan loses his ZOC he can no longer interdict enemy artillery fire per Exclusive Rule 3.4.4.3.

*NOTE: There are 2 Ammo Depleted markers for Morgan, one to track when his Close Combat box is checked off and another to track when all of his Fire Combat boxes have been checked off. Both should be used as their effects are different.*

### 7.4 Heavy Artillery



The British “Blomfield” Artillery unit is 12-lb or heavier guns, and has a range of 4 hexes. Its counter is distinguished by a longer barrel, an MP rating of 2 and the label “heavy” on the counter.

**7.4.1 Optional Rule:** Treat the “Blomfield” Artillery unit in hex 1920 as having zero movement points. It is considered dug into battery, just as the American Artillery units are, and is governed by the same restrictions in Exclusive Rule 3.1., except that it only has two Movement Points.

### 7.5 American Reinforcements

American turn 3 reinforcements arrive at hex 2101, and cannot use strategic movement on their turn of arrival. They must meet stacking requirements by the end of the American movement phase of turn 3.

**7.5.1 Optional Rule:** The American player must secretly declare, at the start of the game, whether he is using these troops. He should make a note on a piece of paper and reveal it at the beginning of the American half of turn 3. If using these troops, 1 point of Army Morale is immediately surrendered when the troops are placed on the board.

*DESIGN NOTE: Historically, these troops arrived on September 25th and represented the first of thousands of New England militia that swelled Gate’s ranks during the weeks leading up to “Second Saratoga.” This optional rule allows the American player to force march these reinforcements at a cost of an Army Morale point.*

### 7.6 Garrison Requirements

**7.6.1** The American player must occupy the 8 garrison hexes according to Exclusive Rule 3.6. If he voluntarily abandons a garrison hex before British actions remove the garrison requirement, he must surrender 1 point of Army Morale for *each* hex so abandoned. Army Morale points *cannot* be regained if the American player subsequently re-enters an abandoned garrison hex.

*NOTE: This differs slightly from Exclusive Rule 3.6.2 which refers to a loss of victory points.*

**7.6.2** The British player must occupy hexes 1015, 1518, 1920, and 2019 at all times or suffer the Army Morale penalty described in 7.6.1 above.

### 7.7 Gate’s Release

Exclusive Rule 3.5 is not in effect in this scenario. Gate’s wing may move freely with the exception of American Artillery and the garrison requirement.

### 7.8 Benedict Arnold House Arrest

Arnold can never stack with Gates. Arnold cannot leave his at-start hex (1407) until any British unit enters the Bemis Heights Line. Thereafter, Arnold can move freely.

*DESIGN NOTE: Arnold is under house arrest and restricted to his quarters in Fort Neilson. The unwillingness of Gates to credit Arnold or his Division for their role in the previous day’s fighting has exacerbated the feud that has been brewing between the two men. This feud has its roots as much in the rivalry between New England forces (championed by Gates) and those of New York (Championed by Arnold and Schuyler) as it does in the antagonistic personalities of the two men. When Arnold complains of the slight in the official report on the battle Gates contemptuously restricts him to quarters. Arnold’s impetuosity and lust for valor and glory, however, prevent him from obeying orders when it becomes clear the British attack is at the threshold of the American position.*

**Optional Rule:** Arnold cannot move until his at-start hex is attacked in Close Combat, after which he can move freely.

## 8.0 Historical Scenario, “Freeman’s Farm”

### 8.1 British Setup:

Hex	Units
1519	Phillips and Hosmer Artillery
1118	20th Foot
1016	62nd Foot, Jones Artillery (reduced)
0916	21st Fusiliers
0715	24th Foot, Spangenberg Artillery
0717	Fighting 9th (reduced)
****	Burgoyne – place with either 62nd or 21st
<hr/>	
0516	Earl of Balcarres
0415	British Grenadiers
****	Jaegers – place with either Earl of Balcarres or British Grenadiers

*NOTE: These three units may not move until their first movement phase after any American reinforcements have entered the game.*

0517	1st Chasseurs, Jessup’s Corps, MacKay’s Corp, Queen’s Loyal Rangers, Walker Artillery
0416	Fraser, Hessian Grenadiers
0316	Fraser’s Rangers, Boucherville

#### 8.1.1 Fraser’s Release

- NOTE: The units beginning in hexes 0517, 0416 & 0316 must remain in place until an American combat unit moves adjacent to one or more of these hexes, even if the moving unit ends its move in a non-adjacent hex. The units whose hexes were moved adjacent to by the moving American force are released and can move normally for the remainder of the scenario.
- The British player then rolls a die on the Fraser Release Table below to determine if additional units are also released. **NOTE:** This is a one-time roll. It is possible that some units will not move for the entire scenario.
- If the die roll indicates additional units may be released to move, the British player can select any unit not already released.

**Fraser Release Table**

Die Roll	Units Released
0-3	None
4-8	1
9	2

### 8.2 American Setup

Hex	Units
1213	Morgan (reduced)
1113	2nd New Hampshire
1110	Cook’s CT Militia
1012	3rd New Hampshire

0913	1st New Hampshire (reduced)
0812	Dearborn
****	Arnold – place with either 2nd or 3rd New Hampshire

### 8.3 Reinforcements

**8.3.1 British Reinforcements:** All British reinforcements enter at hex 1416. Place the following on the turn track:

- Turn 10: von Riedesel, Regt von Rhetz, Pausch Artillery
- Turn 11: Regt von Riedesel

**8.3.2 American Reinforcements:** All American reinforcements enter at hex 1309. Place the following on the turn track:

- Turn 9: 2nd New York, 4th New York
- Turn 10: Lattimore’s CT Militia, 2nd Massachusetts, 8th Massachusetts, 9th Massachusetts, 10th Massachusetts, 1st Canadian

**8.3.3 Reinforcement Arrival:** All reinforcements are placed in their arrival hex at no cost (see 8.3.4 below for an exception) and may move their full MP value and use strategic movement.

**8.3.4 Blocked Reinforcement Hexes:** If enemy units are adjacent to a reinforcement hex arriving units may enter at the nearest non-adjacent hex in the direction of their friendly map edge as defined in Exclusive Rule 1.8, but must pay the full terrain cost of that hex, and cannot use strategic movement. If two or more hexes qualify the player receiving reinforcements may select any of the hexes.

### 8.4 Scenario Length

The scenario begins on Turn 8 and ends on Turn 11 unless either player has achieved a Decisive or Substantial victory prior to that.

### 8.5 Momentum

The British start with 1 Momentum chit.

### 8.6 Army Morale

Both sides start with Army Morale at 14.

### 8.7 Initiative Order

- The American player has the initiative on Turn 8
- Player order is random on Turns 9 & 10
- The American player has the initiative on Turn 11

## 9. Scenario Victory Conditions

### 9.1 Decisive Victory

- American: Control both hex 1111 and 0616 at the end of the game.
- British: Control both hex 0616 and 1111 at the end of the game.

**9.1.1 Definition of Control:** Control of Decisive victory hexes is defined as occupying or being the last to pass through the hex with a Parade Order combat unit (excluding artillery).

At the beginning of the scenario, Hex 1111 is American controlled and hex 0616 is British controlled. Players should use control markers to note the current status of each hex.

## 9.2 Substantial Victory

A player earns a Substantial victory the moment their enemy's Army Morale falls to Wavering.

## 9.3 Marginal Victory

If neither player achieves a Decisive or Substantial victory a Marginal victory is awarded to the player with the most VPs at the end of the scenario. If VPs are tied, the player with the higher Army Morale wins. If Army Morale is tied, the American player wins.

## 9.4 Freeman's Farm

Freeman's Farm (hex 1015) is worth 1 VP to the player who controls it (Use the definition of control in 9.1.1 above) at the end of the game. Freeman's Farm begins the game uncontrolled.

## 9.5 Reduced Units

For units that begin reduced Series Rule 4 applies.

# 10. Special Scenario Rules

## 10.1 Morgan

Morgan does not get a first fire bonus in this scenario.

## 10.2 Movement Restrictions

**10.2.1** American units may not move east of Mill Creek. Additionally, they may not move east of hex row 12xx, beginning at hex 1217 and extending north to the board edge.

**10.2.2** British units may not move south of South Branch. They may not move south of any hex row beginning at hex 1108 and alternating Hexes 1008, 0908, 0808 and so forth, extending to the west edge of the board.

## 10.3 Exclusive Rules not Used

The following Exclusive rules are not used in this scenario:

- 2.5 - Freeman's Farm Objective Area
- 3.1 - American Artillery
- 3.2 - The River Road
- 3.3 - Momentum Chits and Leader Loss
- 3.5 - Gate's Wing
- 3.6 - American Garrison Requirements
- 3.9 - Fog
- 4.0 - Variants

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# SARATOGA

## The Battle of Freeman's Farm

*"Both armies seemed determined to conquer or die." —Brigadier General John Glover*

by designer Mark S. Miklos

American independence was won on many a bloody field; from Lexington to Yorktown and from Ninety Six, South Carolina, to Philadelphia. Yet in all the span of war there was seldom a spectacle to equal the march of Lt. General John Burgoyne's British Army of Canada as it moved south through the Adirondack wilderness en route to its appointment with destiny.

The British government's plan of campaign for 1777 was for General Burgoyne to advance from Canada southward upon Lake Champlain. His mission was to capture Fort Ticonderoga and, "from thence by the most rigorous exertion to proceed with all expedition to Albany and put himself under the command of Sir William Howe." The Champlain Valley was of vital importance because the lake and the Richelieu River formed an open waterway through the road-less forests leading from the upper Hudson River to the St. Lawrence Valley. Both sides had relied on this route during the French and Indian War, as had Native American war parties for centuries.

Howe, the British Commander in Chief stationed in New York City with 16,000 men, was to drive up the Hudson River valley to Albany. At the same time, a smaller diversionary force under Colonel Barry St. Leger was to move down the Mohawk Valley from Lake Ontario to rendezvous at Albany. Confronted with these three simultaneous offensives the Americans would be unable to concentrate against any one of them. New England would be thus separated from the rest of the colonies. The rebellion, perceived to be strongest there, would be isolated and defeated.

General Washington, in winter quarters at Morristown, New Jersey, was preoccupied with the threat posed by the vast army under Howe. Only days after Burgoyne submitted his "Thoughts for Conducting the War from the Side of Canada" to Lord Germain in London, Washington announced that a British invasion by way of Lake Champlain was "against all probability." He therefore made no effort to reinforce Major General Philip Schuyler, commander of the Northern Department, choosing instead to concentrate all his strength to oppose Howe.

## II

Burgoyne commanded an imposing force. There were approximately equal numbers of British troops and German mercenaries; in all 7,661 infantry. With the addition of Canadian and Tory militia, Indian auxiliaries, and a train of cannon his force numbered nearly 9,000 combatants. They stepped off on June 6th certain they had more than enough strength to crush and scatter the Americans.

Their advance southward against the backdrop of Adirondack wilderness was a marvel to behold. Making up an immense inland navy were birch bark canoes, flat-bottomed bateaux, gunboats, brigs, and sloops. There were Indians in war paint, Germans in blue or green, and British in scarlet. Headgear was equally diverse: bearskin, leather, tricorne, cocked, and plumed. Many British soldiers had cut off the tails of Canadian cows and died them with bright colors to designate their respective regiments. Several hundred drums, fifes, and horns accompanied the entire spectacle.

When his expedition reached Crown Point, twelve miles above Ticonderoga, Burgoyne sounded the keynote of the campaign. "The services required of this particular expedition are critical and conspicuous. During our progress occasions may occur, in which neither difficulty nor labor nor lives are to be regarded. THIS ARMY MUST NOT RETREAT."

At Ticonderoga, meanwhile, there was a change in command in June. Incoming Major General Arthur St. Clair was a veteran of the French & Indian War, the recent Canadian campaign, and the fighting at Trenton and Princeton. Upon reviewing his new command of 2,500 men St. Clair lamented, "Had every man I had been disposed of in single file on the different works and along the lines of defense they would have been scarcely



*General Sir John Burgoyne*

within the reach of each others voices; but Congress had been persuaded that the enemy would make no attempt in that quarter, and such a number of men only as were judged to be sufficient for constructing the works that had been projected were assigned to me.”

The Americans realized too late that Burgoyne’s advance was not a feint. At three in the afternoon on July 2nd advanced elements of British light infantry began sniping at American positions. Burgoyne quickly recognized that 750-foot Mount Defiance, slightly south and west of the fort, commanded all the American works as well as the water route south. The Americans believed the mountain too steep to be accessible to artillery and had left it undefended. Major General William Phillips was Burgoyne’s second in command and an expert artilleryman. He declared, “Where a goat can go, a man can go; and where a man can go, he can drag a gun.” British engineers began cutting a road up the reverse slope three days later.

Recognizing that his post was now untenable, St. Clair pulled out during the night of July 5th. Approximately 400 troops retreated by boat to Skenesborough at the southern tip of the lake. The rest of the garrison crossed a floating bridge to the east shore of the lake and then dispersed into Vermont. Their rear guard was later defeated at Hubbardton on July 7th. Burgoyne had conquered the Gibraltar of the West and thrown open the northern front.

The British advanced to Skenesborough and then along semi-navigable Wood Creek to Fort Anne. From there a swampy ten-mile land carry would bring the invading army to the Hudson River. It was this transition from water transport to overland carry, however, which would prove to be decisive. British forward progress over the next several weeks slowed to a crawl. Schuyler’s retreating forces felled trees, flooded trails, and in general assisted

nature as much as possible in impeding the British advance. It took twenty days to cover just twenty miles! At last, on July 30th, the British army emerged from the wilderness at Fort Edward.

A week earlier, on July 23rd, Sir William Howe left New York City bound not for Albany but rather out to sea for an amphibious campaign against Philadelphia. The arrival of this force at Head of Elk, Maryland, on August 25th was clear indication to Washington of Howe’s intention to attack the capitol. While shifting his own forces south to meet this threat he declared, “Now let all New England turn out and crush Burgoyne.”

Burgoyne did not learn of Howe’s move until August 28th while encamped at Batten Kill opposite the village of Saratoga. At the same time he also learned of the repulse of St. Leger’s diversion at Fort Stanwix in the Mohawk Valley. His German contingent had already lost the Battle of Bennington on August 16th suffering nearly 1,000 casualties. Most of his Indian allies had left the expedition due in part to the Jane McCrea incident. Thus weakened and blind and deep in enemy country, the news that Howe was not moving in support was alarming.

In his “Thoughts” paper, Burgoyne had suggested three alternatives following the taking of Ticonderoga. One of these was an advance to Albany as a diversion while Howe moved, “with his entire force to the southward.” Nevertheless, the scenario in which he and St. Leger were to rendezvous at Albany and subordinate their commands to Howe moving north from New York City was the essence of his plan and, he presumed, the basis of his instructions. Burgoyne’s orders were clear and specific. Burgoyne and St. Leger were to “never lose view of their intended junctions with Sir William Howe as their principle objects.” Howe on the other hand later insisted that he had never been ordered to march to Albany.

While the clock of the season ticked on and Burgoyne pondered his situation the Americans were rallying under their new commander Major General Horatio Gates. Schuyler had fallen back all the way to Albany where he assembled 4,500 troops and intended to make a stand. Despite having conducted a satisfactory retreat during which his men impeded the advance of the enemy, Schuyler was unable to wipe away the doubts caused after his loss of Ticonderoga. In addition, there had always been friction between Schuyler, a representative of the Dutch aristocracy of the Hudson Valley, and the New Englanders who made up the majority of the forces in the Northern Department.

Gates, meanwhile, had served as Washington’s first Adjutant General and had a good reputation for caring for the common soldier. His appointment, together with the news of the American victory at Bennington and of St. Leger’s failed offensive, had an electrifying effect upon the troops. Morale soared as those who felt shame for the recent retreat now looked forward to redeeming their reputations. Waiting only long enough to gather in additional reinforcements Gates marched north on September 8th with an army of over 9,000 men. In his general orders Gates declared, “If the righteous cause of freedom, and the happiness of posterity be motives to stimulate the army to conquer their mercenary and merciless foes, the time is now come, when they are called upon



*Major General Benedict Arnold*

by their country, by their General, by every reason, human and divine to vanquish their enemies.”

A key member of Gates’ staff was Polish engineering officer Colonel Tadeusz Kosciuszko. He chose Bemis Heights, three miles north of the village of Stillwater, as the ground upon which the Americans would attempt to stop Burgoyne’s advance. Even a superficial examination of the map is sufficient to show why. Here the riverbank suddenly rears up forming bluffs over a hundred feet high. There is only a narrow strip of land between the heights and the river along which the River Road passes to Albany. West of the bluffs streams running in narrow but deep ravines to the Hudson intersect the densely wooded land. Here and there isolated farms in small clearings are linked together by primitive footpaths and wagon tracks.

The heights became an anthill of activity as Kosciuszko sited artillery emplacements and constructed entrenchments and breastworks. Colonel James Wilkinson, Deputy Adjutant General to Gates, described the defenses. “General Gates’ right occupied the brow of the hill near the river with which it was connected by a deep entrenchment. Strong batteries defended the extremities of this camp, and the interval was strengthened by a breastwork without entrenchments, constructed of the bodies of felled trees, logs, and rails. At the northwest angle, near Mr. Nelson’s, stood the log barn. A double tier of logs on three sides strengthened this. Strong batteries, in circular form, extended about 150 ft. south. A deep trench and a row of strong palisades encircled the whole. When completed it formed quite a strong bulwark.”

The day after the Americans arrived on Bemis Heights the British crossed over to the west bank of the Hudson River ten miles away at the village of Saratoga. Burgoyne’s assessment of his situation was that his orders were inflexible. He had to drive on to Albany, particularly since the season was becoming advanced and autumn nipped the air. He amassed a month’s supply, crossed the river, and, feeling himself on the very doorstep of Albany, methodically moved south against an enemy he knew was in his front but whose precise numbers and disposition were unknown. By September 14th the British could hear the American evening guns. By the 17th only four miles separated them.

### III

An examination of Burgoyne’s orderly book reveals that although the British army had been prepared for instant action from the time it crossed the Hudson, no special orders indicating an intention to attack the American camp on September 19th had been issued. According to Wilkinson, “This battle was perfectly accidental; neither of the Generals mediated an attack at the time. Burgoyne’s movement being merely to take ground on the heights in front of the Great Ravine, to embrace our front and cover his stores, and on our side the defenses of our camp being not half completed and reinforcements daily arriving, it was not General Gates’ policy to court an action.”

Major General Benedict Arnold, Gates’ second in command, held a different opinion. “When advice was received that the enemy were approaching, I took the liberty to give it as my

opinion that we ought to march out and attack them.” Arnold argued for a spoiling attack. The British would be prevented from deploying their superior artillery in the forest, he said. In addition, the Americans could fall back upon their prepared positions in the event the spoiling attack failed. When lookouts reported Burgoyne’s forces on the move toward the American left Gates acquiesced and ordered Arnold to send out the light infantry and, if necessary, support it with other units from his wing of the army.

The British were delayed on the morning of the 19th by thick fog. Their 3-column advance did not begin until after 9:30 AM. Brigadier General Simon Fraser commanded the largest force of 2,400 troops. He was to gain the American left where Burgoyne had learned from American deserters the defenses were incomplete. Furthermore, the high ground on this flank dominated the entire Bemis Heights position. Fraser commanded the elite units of the army, the auxiliaries, and twelve pieces of artillery.

The center column consisted of 1,600 troops of the British line and four pieces of artillery. Their objective was to move through Freeman’s farm and advance upon the center of the American position. Burgoyne himself accompanied this force and left the following instructions for his subordinate commanders: “In case of action, the Lt. General will be found near the center of the British line, or he will leave word there where he may be followed.”

On the River Road, Major General Baron Friedrich von Riedesel commanded 1,400 troops of the German line and four pieces of artillery. Their mission was to threaten the American right and exploit any opening that might present itself. Signal guns were to coordinate a simultaneous advance by all three columns.



*Colonel Daniel Morgan*

Acting as rear guard and security for the vast baggage train and artillery park were the Hesse-Hanau infantry regiment, assorted dismounted German dragoons, and the British 47th regiment. Together these represented another 1,000 troops.

At about 12:30 PM Dan Morgan's riflemen, occupying the house and outbuildings of Freeman's farm, opened fire upon the advance guard of the British center column as it entered the farm clearing. The British troops were shattered by the accurate fire and fled north into the tree line. Rushing in pursuit, Morgan's men ran headlong into the main body of the British and were instantly repulsed by heavy volley fire. Morgan was heard to cry, "I am ruined, by God," as he desperately tried to rally his men.

Eventually the riflemen reformed in the tree line along the southern edge of Freeman's clearing. From here they targeted the British officer corps and artillery detachments. Regarding the effectiveness of the American rifles Burgoyne later said, "In this action many placed themselves in high trees in the rear of their own lines, and there was seldom a minutes interval of smoke without officers being taken off by single shot." In one battery of two guns Morgan's men brought nineteen of twenty-two artillerymen down.

Fraser's battalions, meanwhile, were still approaching although the 24th Regiment was close enough to be sent toward the center in support. Down on the River Road von Riedesel heard the firing off to his right while his fatigue parties worked to repair the bridge across the Great Ravine.

Other American units began to arrive as Arnold committed the regiments in his wing. First on the scene was the 1st New Hampshire, which wheeled into line, fired a volley, and charged. The New Hampshire men hit the British center held by the 62nd, faltered, and fell back before a withering blast of musketry. Only temporarily demoralized, the 1st New Hampshire rallied as the 2nd and 3rd New Hampshire came up from the south. The American battle line was formed by about 2:00 PM and a renewal of the attack was made on the British center at Freeman's farm.

Fraser became concerned that his own right might be turned and the British baggage in the rear threatened. He halted his advance and extended a line of battle to Burgoyne. Von Riedesel also redeployed so as to have a flying column in position for a dash to support the British center where the sound of battle was rising.

Led by Colonel Cook's Connecticut Militia other American regiments came up, fired, and charged across the clearing only to break before massed British fire. The grapeshot of the British artillery helped disrupt one American attack after another. But the cost was high. Unmanned British guns often fell silent until men could be supplied from the hard-pressed infantry. As the redcoats countercharged with the bayonet, the Americans stood pat at the southern end of the field, driving the British back.

All afternoon Arnold spurred his men on. Leading by example, he directed their charges and maneuvers. He was seen galloping up and down the line on his big black horse Warren shouting, "Come on, boys. Hurry up, my brave boys!" The main pressure of the American attacks throughout the afternoon continued on

the British center, where Arnold, at the head of five regiments, attempted to break through. "The theatre of action was such," said Wilkinson, "that although the combatants changed ground a dozen times in the course of the day, the contest terminated on the spot where it began, like waves of a stormy sea, with alternate advantage for four hours without one moments intermission."

Describing the scene American Brigadier General John Glover said, "Both armies seemed determined to conquer or die. The enemy in their turn sometimes drove us. They were bold, intrepid, and fought like heroes. I do assure you our men were equally bold and courageous and fought like men fighting for their all."

According to Burgoyne, "Few actions have been characterized by more obstinacy in attack or defense. The British bayonet was repeatedly tried ineffectually. Eleven hundred British soldiers, foiled in these trials, bore incessant fire from a succession of fresh troops in superior numbers, for above four hours, and after a loss of above a third of their numbers forced the enemy at last."

About 5:00 PM, von Riedesel received orders to leave adequate defenses on the River Road and rush to the aid of the hard-pressed British center. Personally at the head of his 500-man flying column, and supported by the 2-gun battery of Captain Pausch, he pushed along a wagon road and through the woods with his troops shouting "hurrah!" There was no time to lose. The British center, its flanks drawn back, was on the verge of collapse. The Germans emerged from the woods and fired on the exposed American right flank. Hearing the crash of German muskets, the battered redcoats cheered wildly. Pausch's guns, firing cannon shot at pistol range, were decisive.

At this point Arnold dashed back to Gates' headquarters, a mile and a half away. He had been requesting additional troops all afternoon and finally persuaded the army commander to order out Learned's brigade. Gates refused to allow Arnold to lead the counterattack, however, and made a point of sending Learned himself. In the twilight and without a guide Learned went astray in the forest. Instead of joining the fight in the center, where his brigade might have been decisive, Learned became engaged with Fraser's troops holding the British right where he was repulsed with no gain.

The Americans, having come to the very brink of destroying the British center, were themselves broken by von Riedesel's flank attack. Darkness fell; the firing became haphazard and random and then ceased altogether. Pausch sent a few balls crashing into the woods as the Americans formed up and marched off, in good order, back to their fortified camp. The British were left masters of the field; but as Lt. William Digby of the grenadiers later wrote, "It was a dear bought victory as we lost many brave men. The 62nd had scarce 10 men a company left and no very great advantage, honor excepted, was gained by the day."

American casualties totaled 320 (64 k). Burgoyne's losses totaled 566 (160 k). The British 62nd Regiment was the hardest hit. Its casualties alone totaled nearly a third of all British losses: 53 killed, 109 wounded. For the entire campaign, including Ticonderoga, Hubbardton, Fort Anne, Bennington, and Freeman's Farm, British and German losses totaled 1,544. After discounting the

garrisons he was compelled to leave in his rear as he marched south, Burgoyne's effective combat strength after the battle was down to 5,816.

## IV

Tactically, the Battle of Freeman's Farm was a marginal British victory. The strategic situation, however, remained unchanged. Gates, in superior numbers and on prepared ground, was still astride the only road to Albany. Burgoyne saw no real flexibility in his orders. He had to press on and intended to attack again the next day. Unknown to Burgoyne the Americans were apprehensive of just such a push. They were down to just 40 rounds per man while British ammunition had been replenished to full 60 rounds. Wilkinson later testified, "If Burgoyne had attacked the American camp on the 20th or 21st as he had originally intended, his force would have enabled him to lead a column of 5,000 rank and file against our left, where the ground was most favorable to his approach, whilst a feint on our right, by the plain near the river, would have kept every man at this station within our extensive lines, and under such advantages on his side, it is highly probable, he would have gained a decisive victory."

General Fraser, however, convinced Burgoyne to delay the offensive for 24 hours to give the troops much needed rest. During the following day a coded message arrived from General Henry Clinton who now commanded British forces in New York City. As fate would have it the British decoding mask was lost. Perhaps reading into the code what he hoped it would say Burgoyne believed that Clinton was on the way with a relief force. Clinton's true intention was merely to offer a diversion against the Hudson Highlands. Burgoyne at once decided to suspend forward movement, dig in, and wait for Clinton.

For the next eighteen days the British army fortified Freeman's farm and their post on the River Road. The American army, meanwhile, swelled its ranks. Eighteen additional regiments of New England militia raised Gates' strength to over 12,000 effectives, more than twice those of the British. The American defenses were also completed during this period and extended further to the left.

Burgoyne, who hourly expected relief that was not forthcoming, learned that American attacks on his line of communications had seized 200 bateaux, captured 300 British defenders, and liberated 100 American prisoners. On October 14th, with his supplies dwindling and with reports of Gates' buildup, he decided he could no longer wait for Clinton. He called a council of war and urged an all out offensive, but his general officers objected. Burgoyne, in turn, rejected their suggestion that the army retreat. In a second council of war, held the next day, a compromise plan was adopted. A reconnaissance in force would probe the American left. This would be expanded into a full-scale attack if the situation appeared promising.

Unknown to him, but working in Burgoyne's favor, was the growing Gates-Arnold controversy in the American camp. Gates had become jealous of the glory Arnold had won at Freeman's farm and refused to mention him in dispatches to Congress. When

Arnold protested Gates took the opportunity to relieve his most effective subordinate of command. He replaced him with Major General Benjamin Lincoln.

On October 7th the decisive action between the two armies occurred in what is known as the Battle of Bemis Heights. The brigades of Poor and Learned supported by Morgan's corps overwhelmed the 1,500 man British reconnaissance. Following up this success, American units assaulted the British defenses at the Balcarres and Breyman redoubts on the old Freeman's farm battlefield. Arnold, acting without authority, personally led the decisive charge that broke the back of British resistance. General Fraser was mortally wounded, the British lost another 600 men, and their morale was shattered. The Americans lost only 150, although one of them was Arnold who was wounded in the same leg where he had been shot during the Christmas assault upon Quebec in 1775.

Abandoning their sick and wounded and much of their baggage, the British began a retreat northward on the River Road on October 8th. Gradually encircled by pursuing Americans, the British opened negotiations that eventually led to the surrender of Burgoyne's army at the village of Saratoga on October 15th. In an irony of history Burgoyne and Gates were meeting for the second time. Thirty-two years earlier both had been lieutenants in the same regiment in England.

"I am glad to see you," said Gates. "I am not glad to see you," answered Burgoyne. "It is my fortune, sir, and not my fault that I am here." Gates promptly replied, "I shall always be ready to bear testimony that it has not been through any fault of your Excellency." After a simple dinner Gates called upon Burgoyne for a toast. Embarrassed, the British General raised his glass, "General Washington," he said. "The King," responded Gates.

## V

News of the spectacular American victory reached France on December 4th. It was precisely what was needed to spur the French government into open alliance with the United States. France formally recognized American independence on February 6th, 1778. By June, France and Britain were at war

The entry of France as a belligerent permanently changed the character of the conflict. From an insurrection by a colony within the British Empire it grew into a renewal of global war between the two superpowers in the western world at the time. Spain and Holland were soon to follow France's lead as the theater of operations shifted to the Caribbean, India, and even England's home waters. For the British, already strained by the expense of the war, the entry of France was disastrous. British strategy in America became one of consolidation and retrenchment. Initiative passed to the rebels as Washington put a newer, larger, and better army in the field following its winter training at Valley Forge.

Now stalemated in the north the British shifted major campaigning to the Deep South where they expected Tory sympathy to run high. Although successful in capturing Savannah, Charleston and much of the local countryside, they could not stem the rising

tide of partisan warfare. Leaders like Francis Marion, the Swamp Fox, harassed their logistics. The new American Southern Army, under the brilliant leadership of Major General Nathaniel Greene, could not be brought to heel in spite of a losing battlefield record. Ironically, as the British continued to win battles, their perimeter became inexorably smaller. Ultimately it was a coordinated land and sea campaign conducted by the Franco-American Allies that led to final victory at Yorktown in October 1781.

**Post Script**

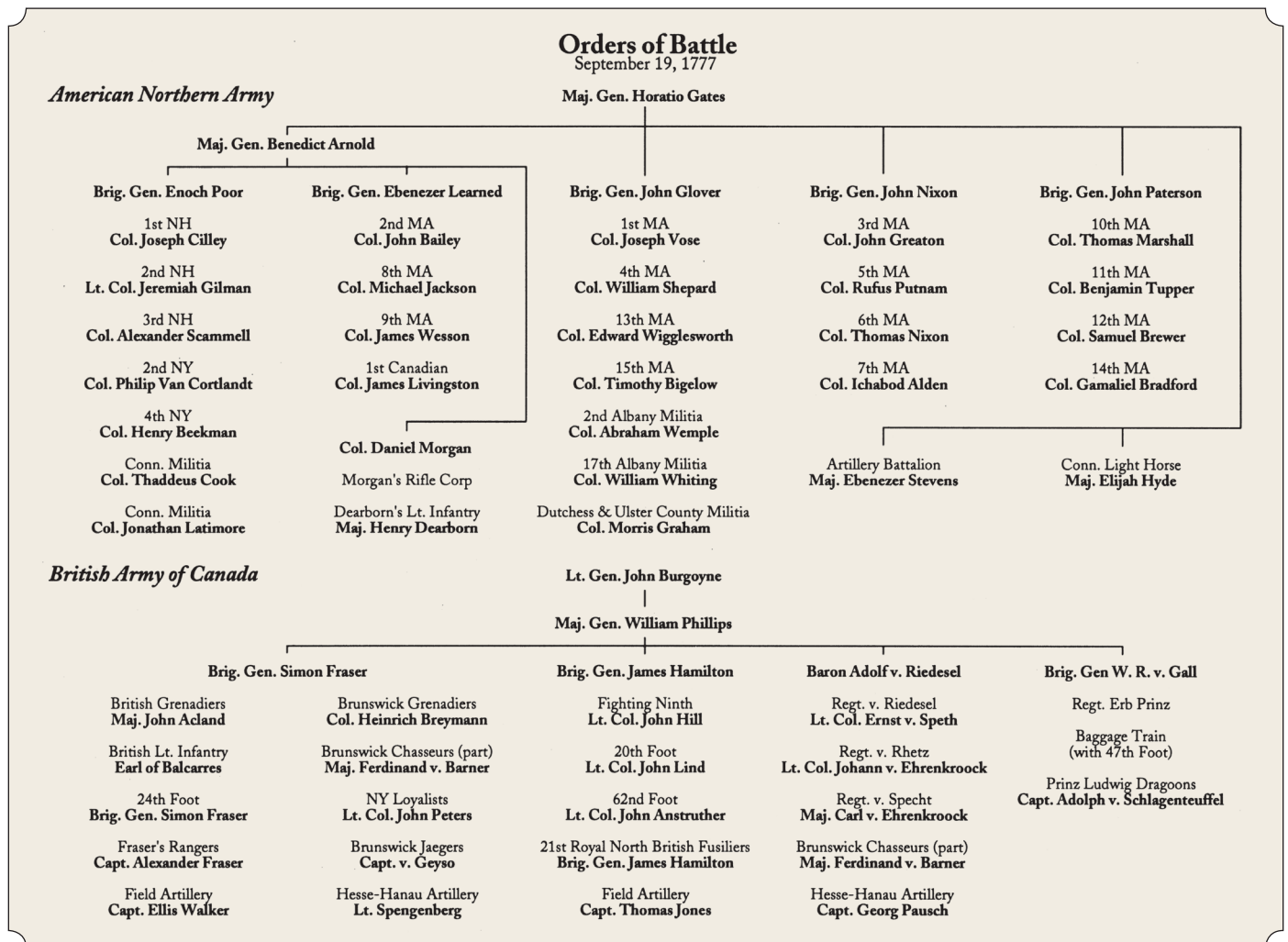
On October 7th, 1777, the British situation was a forlorn hope. They were outnumbered more than 2:1, short of supply, with hostile forces astride their communications and still blind to the precise nature of the American position to their front. On September 19th, however, with rough parity of forces the British had an opportunity.

What if Arnold had not convinced Gates to offer a spoiling attack? What if Burgoyne had not posted himself at the firing line with the regiments on Freeman’s Farm? Here his perspective narrowed to the action in his immediate front and he lost the ability to effectively coordinate the three wings of his army. What if Fraser and von Riedesel had continued their advance? American units rushing to the center might have become en-

circled. An attack the next day as Wilkinson suggested would have caught the Americans short of ammunition and may have had decisive consequences. What if the British cipher mask had not been lost? Finally, a quicker drive from Skenesborough to Fort Edward would have enabled the British to bypass Bemis Heights before the Americans arrived to fortify it. Other than Bemis Heights there was no favorable ground upon which the Americans could make a stand. The road to Albany would have been laid open.

One thing is certain. Historians agree that the American victory at Saratoga was the turning point in the Revolution. The English historian Sir Edward Creasy said, “Nor can any military event be said to have exercised more important influence upon the future fortunes of mankind, than the complete defeat of Burgoyne’s expedition in 1777; a defeat which rescued the revolted colonists from certain subjugation; and which, by inducing the courts of France and Spain to attack England in their behalf insured the independence of the United States, and the formation of that trans-Atlantic power which not only America, but both Europe and Asia, now see and feel.”

For those six hours on September 19th, 1777, America’s destiny hung in the balance. In charge and countercharge, veteran soldiers giving their all decided the future course of world history.





# Next Day Scenario

## Ammo Depletion Log

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