

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Vermont	
COUNTY: Addison	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Mount Independence

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Mount Independence

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
east shore of Lake Champlain, opposite to Fort Ticonderoga, New York

CITY OR TOWN:
Orwell

STATE Vermont	CODE	COUNTY: Addison	CODE
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Historical Park planned
Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Fort Ticonderoga Association, Fort Ticonderoga, New York;
William B. Pinney, Director, State of Vermont, Board of Historic Sites

STREET AND NUMBER:
7 Langdon Street

CITY OR TOWN: Montpelier	STATE: Vermont	CODE
05602		

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Office of the Secretary of State

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House

CITY OR TOWN: Montpelier	STATE: Vermont	CODE
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
State Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE OF SURVEY: 1967-68 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Vermont Board of Historic Sites

STREET AND NUMBER:
7 Langdon Street

CITY OR TOWN: Montpelier	STATE: Vermont	CODE
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7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Mount Independence is a peninsula on the east or Vermont side of Lake Champlain that juts out to the north into the lake just south of Fort Ticonderoga to form a narrow passage in the lake about 1500 feet wide. This rocky promontory is about 1.3 miles long and 3/4th of a mile wide at its widest point. Rising to a height of about 300 feet, Mount Independence is bounded on the north, west, and a part of the south side by Lake Champlain and on the northeast side by East Creek. The promontory is bordered on the west and northeast by steep cliffs ranging from 15-feet high at the northern tip to 60 feet on the western side. A break in the cliffs at the northern tip of the point provides a narrow natural ramp. From this tip, the land rises gradually to a large and irregularly shaped plateau 200 to 300 feet high and then slopes sharply southward toward the lake and also to the low flat land to the southeast. The north, east, and west slopes are now forested with pines and mixed hardwoods. Most of the north slope and the higher plateau are pasture land dotted with clumps of cedar. Surrounded on three sides by a natural wall of rock and also by water, Mount Independence was a position of great military strength in 1776-77.

General Burgoyne's description of Mount Independence is excellent:

"It seemed that the enemy had employed their chief industry, and were in greatest force, upon Mount Independence, which is high and circular, and upon the summit, which is table land, was a star fort made with pickets, and well supplied with artillery, and a large square of barracks within it. The [north] foot of the hill on the side which projects into the Lake, was intrenched and covered with a strong abatis, close to the water. This intrenchment was lined with heavy artillery, pointed down [north up] the Lake flanking the water battery [on the Fort Ticonderoga side]..., and sustained by another [horseshoe-shaped] battery about half-way up the hill. On the west side of the hill runs the main river [lake], and on its passage round [Mount Independence] is joined by the water which come down from Lake George. On the east side of the hill the water forms a small bay [East Creek], in which falls a rivulet after having encircled in its course part of the hill to the southeast. The side to the south could not be seen, but was described as inaccessible." (John Burgoyne, A State of the Expedition...(London, 1780), Appendix VII, pages xiv-xv.).

These steep southern slopes were also crowned by entrenchments and three redoubts and the slopes covered with large abatis.

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4. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1776-1777 July 1-6, 1777

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fortified by the Americans in 1776-77, Mount Independence formed the heart and key section of the great defensive complex known generally as "Fort Ticonderoga" during the War for Independence. The fall of these two fortresses, famous throughout the colonies as "the Gibraltar of the North," on July 6, 1777 was a severe shock to American political and military leaders and to American morale in general. George III was so exultant over the news from Ticonderoga that he is said to have exclaimed: "I have beat them! I have beat all the Americans!" Key to the northern Hudson Valley, the fall of the Mount Independence-Fort Ticonderoga complex laid the Northern Colonies open to the fateful Burgoyne invasion of 1777.

The extensive and virtually undistributed remains of Mount Independence stand much as they were in 1777 in a superb and little-altered setting.

History

The fortification of Mount Independence, executed under the supervision of Chief Engineer Jeduthan Baldwin and his assistant, Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko, began in June 1776 and continued into October. On October 28, 1776, a reconnoitering party from the British fleet on Lake Champlain, fresh from their naval victory over Benedict Arnold at Valcour Bay, approached the forts and viewed the 13,000-man American army manning the defenses of Fort Ticonderoga and Mount Independence, located opposite to each other on the east and west banks of Lake Champlain. A week later the 8,000 man British army under General Sir Guy Carleton withdrew from Crown Point and retired to Canada for the winter. Work continued on the Mount Independence fortifications during the winter and following spring and summer months. By the summer of 1777 the defenses were much stronger than in 1776, but the Americans now had only about 5300 men available to defend lines that were intended to be held by 10,000.

On June 20, 1777, Major General Philip Schuyler, commanding officer of the Northern Department, Major General Arthur St. Clair, commandant Fort Ticonderoga and Mount Independence, and St. Clair's three brigadier generals held a council of war at Ticonderoga. It was

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Vermont, A Guide to the Green Mountain State (American Guide Series) (Boston, 1937), 313-314.
 Christopher Ward, The War of the Revolution (2 vols., New York, 1952), Vol. II, 384-397, 405-412.
 "Mount Independence in Time of War, 1776-1783," Vermont History, April 1967.
 Hoffman Nickerson, The Turning Point of the Revolution (Boston, 1928), 129-147.
 Benson J. Lossing, The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution (2 vols. New York, 1861), I, 147-149.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE			LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	43°	50'	09"	73°	23'	37"
NE	43°	50'	09"	73°	22'	35"
SE	43°	48'	58"	73°	22'	35"
SW	43°	48'	58"	73°	23'	37"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **300 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian**

ORGANIZATION: **Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service** DATE: **1/18/72**

STREET AND NUMBER: **801 - 19th Street, N.W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **D. C.** CODE:

12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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7. Description: (1) Mount Independence

The star fort, Colonel Kosciuszko stated in 1778, would hold 1000 men. The ground on the summit of Mount Independence, he added, was very stony and rocky and required a great deal of labor to construct fortifications on it--a ditch could not be sunk to its proper depth without blasting. The spring for Mount Independence was located on the west side, near the lake and the main landing place for supplies was situated on the southwest side.

The feat of engineering, however, that excited the most admiration of the British and German officers, was the 1500-foot-long bridge which served both to connect Ticonderoga and Mount Independence as a road and also to block completely the passage and entrance for ships from Lake Champlain on the north into South Bay on the south. Again Burgoyne noted:

"The great bridge of communication was supported by 22 sunken piers of large timber, at nearly equal distances; the space between were filled by separate floats, each about 50 feet long, and 12 feet wide, strongly fastened together by chains and rivets, and also fastened to the sunken piers. Before [north of] this bridge was a boom, made of very large pieces of round timber, fastened together by rivets, bolts and double chains, made of iron an inch and half square."¹

The surface of Mount Independence, about 300 acres, has never been plowed and the 1776-77 remains are remarkably distinct. Among these are the earthen walls, three to four feet high, of the horseshoe-shaped battery located half-way up the north slope. The log stockade or pickets of the star fort have disappeared, but its parade ground and also the fort's well are still quite evident. Stone foundations, such as those of the 25-by 200-foot hospital, are also visible. The location of a crane, used to hoist supplies from the ship-landing up the steep cliffs on the southwest side, is also still marked by its stone foundation. Aside from a few old wire fences, there are no intrusions on the tableland of Mount Independence.

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1. The sunken piers or caissons were made of tree trunks 3/4 feet in diameter, 20 to 25 feet long, put together on the square, and filled in with quarry stone to hold them in place.

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7. Description: (2) Mount Independence

Note: On July 1, 1777 the Fort Ticonderoga side was defended by Brigadier Generals Enoch Poor and John Paterson's Continental brigades. Mount Independence was held by Brigadier General De Roche Fermoy's Continental Brigade and Colonel Pierse Long's brigade of Massachusetts and New Hampshire militia, three regiments. Two more regiments of New Hampshire militia arrived on July 3, 1777. The American lines were defended by 131 cannon and 28 more guns were mounted on their small fleet.

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8. Significance: (1) Mount Independence

considered to be highly unlikely that a powerful British army would come down Lake Champlain this year, "but in this event, because of the number of troops . . . are greatly inadequate to the defense of both posts . . . that if it should become necessary to evacuate one or other of the posts, . . . that it ought to be the Ticonderoga side." (Court Martial of Major General Arthur St. Clair, August 25, 1778, Collections of the New York Historical Society for 1880 (New York, 1881) (24-26).

Mount Independence was thus chosen as the key position in the event of a major attack because the generals believed that the great bridge which linked Fort Ticonderoga and Mount Independence could be defended from the Independence side alone, thus still preventing the British fleet from entering the South Bay of Lake Champlain and proceeding south to Skenesborough (now Whitehall). The American fleet, operating from the south end of Lake George, it was believed would be able to block British penetration by that route. Finally, the troops on the Mount Independence (~~west~~^{East} or Vermont) side of the Lake Champlain would be linked by a newly built military road running from the Mount to New Hampshire. Reinforcements and supplies could come via this route, or, in the event of disaster, the road offered an escape route.

On June 17, 1777, Lieutenant General John Burgoyne embarked on Lake Champlain from St. Johns, Canada. By keeping his naval vessels, 400 Indians, and 1500 light troops well advanced as a screen, Burgoyne skillfully and secretly moved a British army down Lake Champlain, arriving before Ticonderoga and Mount Independence on July 1. Not until July 3, 1777, did General St. Clair realize that he was confronted by a powerful British army of 9,000 men and 138 ~~CANNON~~^{CANNON} and not merely a strong skirmishing force. In this advance Burgoyne achieved one of the greatest strategic and tactical surprises of the War for Independence.

On July 2 British regiments, on the west or New York side of the lake, circled through the forests to the west of Fort Ticonderoga and took Mount Hope, a position already abandoned by the Americans because of the lack of men, and thereby cut communications between Ticonderoga and Lake George. On July 3 and 4 German (Brunswick) troops pushed southward through the heavy forests on the east or Vermont side of the lake, while British opened batteries and began firing on the Ticonderoga side. On the evening of July 4th the British moved artillery to the summit of 853-foot high Mount Defiance, located to the south of Fort Ticonderoga. From here the batteries under construction commanded Fort Ticonderoga 6000 feet to the northeast, Mount Independence 7000 feet to the east, and the South Bay arm of Lake Champlain 4000 feet

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8. Significance: (2) Mount Independence

to the east and south. The Germans, on the east shore, pushed south to the north bank of East Creek and were only about 3/4th of a mile from cutting off the peninsula over which the military road ran from Mount Independence to New England.

About noon on July 5 Americans sighted the batteries building on Mount Defiance and in the early afternoon St. Clair called a council of war. It was decided to remove all troops, guns, and supplies from the Ticonderoga to the Mount Independence side immediately and, after dark, to secretly evacuate Mount Independence. The main army was to march east over the military road from Independence through the wilderness, while the sick, guns, and supplies were to move by boat down South Bay to Skenesborough, where the main army would join them. The American retreat from Mount Independence began about 2 a.m. on July 6 and the last soldiers left about 4 a.m.; shortly thereafter Burgoyne's troops occupied Fort Ticonderoga and Mount Independence. St. Clair's decision to retreat from Mount Independence thereby saved from certain capture the American army that was later to defeat Burgoyne at Saratoga, but as St. Clair predicted at the time, when the news of the evacuation of Ticonderoga reached the Continental Congress, it cost both Generals St. Clair and Schuyler their commands.

Mount Independence was garrisoned by a British regiment from July to October 1777, but these were then withdrawn because of supply problems. Although reoccupied from time to time by scouting and raiding parties in the period 1778 to 1781, Mount Independence was never again garrisoned by a military force.

Since the War for Independence Mount Independence has been occasionally lumbered and its land used for pasture, but never farmed or otherwise developed. In 1965 the State of Vermont has succeeded in acquiring about half of the acreage of Mount Independence and plans to develop the site as a State Historic Park. The remaining half of Mount Independence is owned by the Fort Ticonderoga Association (Mr. John H. F. Pell). Mount Independence is completely undeveloped and is not open to visitors.

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Boundaries of Mount Independence Historic District, Orwell vicinity.

Approximately 300 acres of land, including the fortified position known 1776-1777 as Mount Independence, starting at a point on the west bank of East Creek, on the east side of Mount Independence, at latitude 43° 49' 39" - longitude 73° 22' 37", then proceeding south about 2,700 feet to a second point at latitude 43° 49' 13" - longitude 73° 22' 41"; hence going southwest about 2,000 feet to a third point on the east shore of Lake Champlain at latitude 43° 48' 59" - longitude 73° 23' 00"; then going northwest, north, and northeast, following the east shore of Lake Champlain to the most northern tip of Mount Independence; from here going southeast about 3,200 feet, following the western bank of East Creek to the point of beginning, at latitude 43° 49' 39" - longitude 73° 22' 37".

Precise boundaries, as described above, are on record on a copy of U.S. Geological Survey Map: Ticonderoga Quadrangle, New York- Vermont, 1950, 7.5 Minute Series, on file with the Historic Sites Survey, Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service.