

Time Softens the Harsh Verdict of His Contemporaries on an American Military Genius Who Was Born Just 200 Years Ago



HIGH TIDE IN THE CAREER OF A MILITARY GENIUS—Benedict Arnold leads the successful attack on the Hessian redoubt at the Battle of Saratoga, October 7, 1777.

By **ELMO SCOTT WATSON**
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

ON THE battlefield of Saratoga in New York stands a monument that is unique. One side of the simple marble slab is adorned with a column, in bold relief, in the shape of a cannon. Carved at its top are a wreath, an epaulet and—a boot! But there is no word engraved there to indicate why anyone should erect a monument to a boot.

Walk around to the other side of the monument and you will read on the smooth face of the stone these words:

Erected by **JOHN WAITS de PEYSER**
Brev: Maj; Gen: S.N.Y.
2nd. V. Pres't Saratoga Mon't Ass'n
In Memory of the "most brilliant soldier of the Continental Army" who was desperately wounded on this spot, the sally port of **BURGOYNE'S "GREAT (WESTERN) REDOUBT"** 7th. October 1777, winning for his countrymen the Decisive Battle of the American Revolution and for himself the rank of Major General

If, as this inscription says, the monument was erected in memory of the "most brilliant soldier of the Continental Army" who won for his countrymen "the Decisive Battle of the American Revolution," then why isn't his name mentioned? The answer is, of course, that if it were, this would become a monument to treason, also. For the name which would be engraved here would be "Benedict Arnold" and, for a century and a half, that has been synonymous with "treason." As for the boot, it is a replica of the one worn by Arnold on his left leg which was wounded at Quebec and at Saratoga. The story back of this unusual monument is this:

In 1877 when the Saratoga Monument association was organized to erect a monument on the site of battle which was the "Turning Point of the Revolution," it planned a monument with four niches. In three were to be statues of Generals Horatio Gates, Philip Schuyler and Daniel Morgan of the American army, but the fourth was left vacant—a silent memorial to one of the heroes of Saratoga who later turned traitor to the Patriot cause.

But General de Peyster, one of the vice presidents of the battle monument association, was not satisfied with this negative gesture. He believed that even though Arnold had been a traitor, there should be some recognition of his services at Saratoga. Even though he could not honor Arnold by name, or the whole of him in a statue, he could honor Arnold's leg which had received two bullets in the cause of liberty.

So he commissioned George Edwin Bissell, a noted American sculptor, to carve the memorial to Arnold and it was set up in 1877. At that time the land on which it stood was private property and could be reached only by a footpath across a swamp. Consequently, few visitors to the battlefield ever saw it. In 1929 this land was taken over by the state of New York and incorporated in the memorial park which includes approximately 1,700 of the 3,400 acres over which the British and American armies fought so desperately in 1777.

Today the Saratoga battlefield is one of the best-known "shrines of American liberty," visited annually by thousands. The Arnold memorial, "touching in its simplicity and symbolism" (as R. L. Duffus of the New York Times

has phrased it) is one of the chief points of interest on the battlefield and many Americans who see it are now inclined to think somewhat differently of Benedict Arnold than to associate his name always with the word "traitor" as they learned from their school book histories to do.

In fact, the passage of time has softened the harsh verdict which his contemporaries passed upon this man who was born just 200 years ago (January 14, 1741). Through the perspective of a century and a half Americans are beginning to see more clearly the real tragedy that was the life of Benedict Arnold, and they are learning to share Washington's emotion—sadness that a brilliant career should end so darkly—rather than hatred for a man who, with good reason for being dis-



BENEDICT ARNOLD

pointed and embittered, betrayed his trust. Without seeking in any way to excuse his treason, they can more readily understand why he acted as he did and they can recognize the fact that not even his one great act of faithfulness can obscure his greatness as a military genius.

Arnold proved that he was a great soldier many a time before that fatal day in 1780 when his plot to hand the stronghold of West Point over to the British was foiled. At the outbreak of the Revolution he led a company of militia from his native state of Connecticut to Cambridge to join Washington's army. But, tiring of the inactivity of the siege of Boston, he obtained permission to enlist men for an expedition against Crown Point and Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain.

This resulted in his first frustration. For another spirit as bold as himself—Ethan Allen with his Green Mountain Boys from Vermont—was ahead of him. So Arnold took part in the capture of Ticonderoga as a simple volunteer with Allen but he did lead an expedition which pushed forward and captured St. John's. However, when a committee came from Massachusetts, it was not to praise him for his feat but to inquire into his conduct. Disgusted at this, Arnold resigned from the service and returned to his home.

This inauspicious start to his military career was prophetic of the suspicion and jealousy that was to pursue him from that time forward. For Benedict Arnold always had enemies and his hot temper, his arrogance and his im-

patience with less impulsive men were responsible for most of them. They prevented his winning the recognition due him for one of the most brilliant exploits soon afterwards. That was his epic march to aid Gen. Richard Montgomery in the attack on Quebec late in 1775. Though the expedition was a failure, Arnold succeeded in bringing the remnants of his command back by way of Lake Champlain, beat off an attack by a British fleet and, although he had to beach his boats and burn them, he saved his army.

"Surely a more active, a more spirited and sensible officer fills no department of the army" was Washington's praise of Arnold after this exploit. But it did not save him from the machinations of his enemies, who spread false reports about him. So when congress, in February, 1777, promoted five brigadier generals to major generals, Arnold's name was omitted from the list.

That fall he was sent to aid Gen. Philip Schuyler in resisting Burgoyne's invasion. Then Gen. Horatio Gates replaced Schuyler as commander of the army of the north and the two armies came to grips at Saratoga on September 19. Arnold, commanding the left wing, distinguished himself while Gates was showing all the ineptitude that characterized his whole career. There was a furious quarrel between the two generals which ended in Arnold's sending his resignation to Washington. He was replaced by General Lincoln but remained with the army.

On October 7 came the final great battle at Saratoga and when the tide seemed to be running against the Americans Arnold could no longer remain sulking in his tent. Mounting his horse, he rushed into the battle "with the fury and impetuosity of a tiger," led his men in a successful assault on the Hessian camp, and went down with a bullet through his leg. This was the turning point of the battle.

Although Gates and his friends tried to disparage Arnold's great contribution to that victory, congress made him a major-general, Washington presented him with a "pair of elegant pistols" and he was named commander of the American forces in Philadelphia. Then the hatred of his enemies began to dog him again. Eight charges of personal and official misconduct were brought against him and although he was virtually acquitted by a court martial, he was sentenced to be reprimanded by Washington, who carried out the distasteful duty as considerately as possible.

But this was the last straw for the embittered, disappointed man. Soon afterwards followed his appointment as commander at West Point, his plotting with the British to hand that post over to them, the exposure of the plot, the capture of Maj. John Andre, adjutant-general of the British army and Arnold's fellow-conspirator, and Arnold's flight to the British.

After the war was over Arnold went to London to live. Although the king received him graciously he found that the English had little admiration or liking for the "American traitor." When he walked the streets, he was always conscious of their sneers as much as he was of the undisguised hostility of Americans in the British capital. Later he engaged in trading in the West Indies, then lived for a time in St. John, New Brunswick, where many American Loyalists had settled. But they had little more use for him than the English and eventually he went back to London, where he died June 14, 1801, a broken-hearted, poverty-stricken old man.

Law in the Making

With the turn of the year a new Congress—the 77th—began its job of determining what shall be the laws of this nation. It's a long and sometimes rough road between the introduction of a bill in one of the houses of Congress and its enactment into law. These pictures take you over that road. This particular bill is the Vinson bill, authorizing the "construction or acquisition of naval aircraft." We take it as an example.



Debut of a Bill . . . Rep. Carl Vinson of Georgia, chairman of House Naval Affairs committee, drops a resolution into the "hopper" at the Speaker's table in the House of Representatives—the first step in the making of a law.

HR-9848, William J. McDermott Jr., bill clerk of the House, puts a number on the resolution—HR-9848. The "H. R." is for "House Resolution." Resolutions indicate legislation of temporary nature. Bills become continuing laws.



Next milestone on the bill's journey is at the desk of Lewis Deschler, parliamentarian of the House, an encyclopedia of legislative procedure, who sits at the Speaker's table during sessions. Mr. Deschler decides which House committee will get the resolution.



And now HR-9848 is delivered to Robert H. Harper, a clerk of the House Naval Affairs committee. Many copies are run off.

Chairman Vinson, having decided to call a hearing, checks the resolution with Commander I. C. Bogart.



Debate . . . In due course hearings are heard on HR-9848. Here Rep. L. B. Johnson of Texas, member of the Naval Affairs committee, is having his say.

Read in Session . . . After making a few changes, the committee reported favorably on HR-9848. Roger Calloway, reading clerk, reads it in session.



Author-Booster . . . After the Vinson measure was given the green light in committee, it went to the House, where its author said his piece in its favor.

For Defense . . . And here is the first page of HR-9848, calling for the construction or acquisition of naval aircraft. It was a long route, but it is the democratic way.



The public is privileged to listen to committee arguments.

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, D. D., Dean of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

Lesson for January 19

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THE SLIGHTED INVITATION

LESSON TEXT—Luke 14:15-24.
GOLDEN TEXT—Come; for all things are now ready.—Luke 14:17.

Actions speak louder than words. What a man says is important, but it is his life which determines whether we accept his words as true. In spiritual things men have too often professed to follow Christ but failed to do His will. It is the business of the church to press home the necessity of an acceptance of Christ as Saviour which also makes Him the Lord of our life.

I. Pious Words—(v. 15). We do not know whether the man who said, "Blessed is he that eateth bread in the kingdom of God," was expressing the sincere longing of his heart or merely making a bit of pious conversation. Jesus had just been dealing with some rather disconcerting matters (vv. 1-14). On such occasions there is usually someone on hand to spoil the effectiveness of the admonition by uttering some religious platitude which will direct conversation into more comfortable channels.

Even though the man was sincere, he had evidently not made any preparations to be present at that great feast. This appears from the story Jesus related in response to his words.

II. Poor Excuses—(vv. 16-20). It is not enough that we know that God has prepared a place of blessedness, nor does it suffice to speak approvingly of God's invitation to come; we must accept. God graciously bids all men to come; but all too many, while willing to admit the desirability of coming and admiring it as the ideal thing to do, begin to make excuses.

Observe that the men gave excuses, not reasons. There is a great difference. Note also that the excuses were poor ones. One had a new possession—a field—which he "must go out and see." The second had a business matter to care for—trying out oxen he had bought. The third had a personal affection he wanted to foster—a new wife whom he could not leave.

The fact is that none of them wanted to come, and these were but excuses. What man buys a field without seeing it, or oxen without trying them? And we agree with Dr. Morgan that the one who had married a wife "was the most foolish of all. Why didn't he take her with him? Just excuses." Reader, what excuse is keeping you from accepting God's invitation?

III. Urgent Invitations—(vv. 21-24). Those who reject God's invitation hurt only themselves, for He will find guests to fill the banquet hall at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Let us not fail to observe that it is the duty of the Lord's servants (and that means every born-again Christian) to be diligently about the business of urging men to respond to God's call. Let us beware that we do not miss that point by uttering some pious platitudes about soul-winning, and then failing to do anything to reach others.

It is the first business of every Christian who reads these lines to be engaged in personal soul-winning. If you want to do it and do not know how to start, I shall be glad to send you free, a copy of "Lessons in Soul-Winning," by Dr. Will H. Houghton. The important matter is that we get busy giving out these urgent invitations.

It is the first business of the unconverted to accept that invitation. Dare you refuse? In one of his last meetings in Kansas City, Dwight L. Moody graphically portrayed the invitation referred to in our lesson. In closing his message he pointed to the wall of the auditorium and seemed to be writing out a reply to the invitation. He first wrote a note declining, the final words being, "I pray these have me excused." He said, "Would you sign that, young man? Would you, mother? Would you come up to the reporter's table, take a pen and put your name down to such an excuse? I doubt if there is one here who would sign it. It is a loving God inviting you to a feast and God is not to be mocked. Go play with the forked lightning, go trifle with pestilence and disease, but trifle not with God."

Must Have His Spirit
A young Italian boy knocked one day at the door of an artist's studio in Rome, and when it was opened exclaimed: "Please, madam, will you give me the master's brush?" The painter was dead, and the boy, inflamed with a longing to be an artist, wished for the great master's brush. The lady placed the brush in the boy's hands, saying: "This is his brush; try it, my boy." With a flush of earnestness on his face he tried, but found he could paint no better than with his own. The lady then said to him: "You cannot paint like the great master unless you have his spirit." So it is with us in the Church today; if Christians have not the Master's spirit they cannot successfully carry on the Master's work.—F. M. Townley.

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Water Added
Diner—Take this coffee, waiter. It's like mud.
Waiter—Well, sir, it was just ground this morning.

A hen is the only creature on earth who can sit still and produce dividends.

About Turn
"You do keep your car well cleaned."
"It's only fair. My car keeps me well cleaned, too."

Mad Modes
"I say," said the first man, "has your wife been fighting?"
"Fighting?" exclaimed the second man, startled. "Of course not! What makes you think that?"
"Well, what's that pad over her eye for?"
"Pad? That's not a pad; it's her new hat."

Two Figures
"So you met Marian today?"
"Yes, I hadn't seen her for 10 years."
"Has she kept her girlish figure?"
"Kept it? She's doubled it."

The Question
Lawyer—Do you think that your writing will live on after you?
Editor—That isn't what worries me. What I want to know is will my writing keep me living on before I go.

How To Relieve Bronchitis

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