Fort Stanwix

Warrior, Six Nations Confederacy
The Oneida and Tuscarora nations, part of the Six Nations Confederacy, supported the Americans during the Revolution. The other four nations, the Mohawk, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca, allied with the British. Mohawk warriors under Joseph Brant played a major role in the Battle of Oriskany.

FROM THE PAINTING "EASTERN WOODLAND INDIAN"
BIDON TROJIAN

Private, 34th Regiment
Elements of the 34th Regiment of Foot accompanied St. Leger’s little army and fought well during the siege of Fort Stanwix. Several companies were also with the Burgoyne expedition and were surrendered at Saratoga. After the siege, parts of the regiment participated in raids throughout the Mohawk Valley.

BIDON TROJIAN

Col. Barry St. Leger, advancing east toward Albany from Fort Oswego on Lake Ontario, laid siege to Fort Stanwix (then called Fort Schuyler) on August 3, 1777. (See highlighted area on map at right and the “Sketch of the Siege of Fort Schuyler” below.) He abandoned the siege on August 23 upon the approach of an American army under Benedict Arnold.
Colonial Fur Trader
Dutch traders out of Albany offered the Six Nations tribes a variety of trade goods, including iron tomahawks, knives, axes, awls, fish hooks, cloth of various colors, woolen blankets, linen shirts, brass kettles, assorted jewelry and beads, guns, and powder.

Private, 3rd New York
The 3rd New York Regiment, raised and trained by Col. Peter Gansevoort, had garrisoned Fort Stanwix (then called Fort Schuyler) since spring 1777. The regiment’s stalwart defense of the fort, assisted by elements of the 9th Massachusetts Regiment and New York militia, won Gansevoort the thanks of Congress and a promotion.
Oneida Carrying Place
Six Miles that Changed the Course of America

For thousands of years the ancient trail that connects the Mohawk River and Wood Creek served as a crossing point for travelers between the Atlantic Ocean and Lake Ontario. Travelers used this well-worn route through Oneida Indian territory to trade with one another and to spread diseases, to others far away. When Europeans arrived they called this trail the Oneida Carrying Place—thus beginning a new chapter in American history—a period when nations fought for control of not only the Oneida Carrying Place but also important fur trading routes and the Six Nations Confederacy, and the rich resources of North America as well. In this struggle Fort Stanwix...
Place
America

played as a vital link for people traveling between the territory to carry trade goods and news, as well as Fort Stanwix, but the Mohawk Valley, the homelands of Fort Stanwix would play a vital role.

The Arrogant Peace
The American Revolutionary War ended in 1783, but the United States and American Indians continued fighting. To end the war in New York, the United States negotiated the 1784 Treaty of Fort Stanwix with the Six Nations Confederacy. The United States dictated the terms of this treaty, took American Indian hostages until all prisoners of war were returned, and coerced representatives from the Six Nations into signing the treaty. The Six Nations were also forced to cede land claims to Ohio, western Pennsylvania, which renewed westward expansion. Additionally, American Indian people were recognized as belonging to sovereign nations within the boundaries of the United States. The 1784 treaty led directly to Ohio's American Indian War of the 1780s and '90s.

Treaties and Councils of 1788 and 1790
After the American Revolution, the site of Fort Stanwix continued to be used for American Indian relations. Four land deals were negotiated here by the state of New York with the Oneida, Onondaga, and Cayuga without the approval of the federal government. These land deals were later acknowledged in the federal 1794 Treaty of Canandaigua. Every June 1 for years afterward the Oneida, Onondaga, and Cayuga people came to Fort Stanwix with representatives from New York state to receive their annual payments for the land. As a result, the land opened by the American Indian-New York state deals allowed canals to be dug, ultimately leading to the opening of the Erie Canal in 1827.

The Saratoga Campaign, June–October 1777
The Saratoga Campaign was the brainchild of Maj. Gen. John Burgoyne, who believed the American Revolution could be ended by splitting the colonies along the Hudson River. His plan was to advance south from Canada, up Lake Champlain, capture Fort Ticonderoga, and then march south along the Hudson to Albany. There he would join Sir William Howe, advancing north from New York City, and Barry St. Leger, coming east along the Mohawk River. Howe, however, became engaged in a campaign to capture Philadelphia and never reached Albany, and St. Leger became entangled in the futile 21-day siege of Fort Stanwix and was forced to return to Canada.

After capturing Ticonderoga with an ease and speed that shocked patriot morale, Burgoyne continued his march south, defeating American troops at Hubbardton and forcing the evacuation of Forts Anne and Edward. Then his luck began to run out. A column of Hessians (German mercenaries) he sent to raid Bennington was defeated by troops under Brig. Gen. John Stark and Lt. Col. Seth Warner. Continuing southward, Burgoyne crossed the Hudson and halted his troops near present-day Stillwater, where the Americans under Horatio Gates, who had replaced Schuyler as American commander, had taken up position on Bemis Height. Burgoyne tried to break through the American lines at Freeman's Farm (Sept. 19) and at Bemis Heights (Oct. 7). Both attempts failed, and the British commander, finding himself outnumbered and surrounded and unable to retreat, surrendered on Oct. 17, 1777.

Key Events in Fort Stanwix History

1758
British build Fort Stanwix, from which troops successfully capture French forts at Kingston, Ontario (1758), Oswego and Niagara (1759), and St. Lawrence River and Montreal (1760).

1768
Boundary Line Treaty negotiated at Fort Stanwix with Six Nations tribes opens Indian lands east and south of Allegany and Ohio rivers to settlement. Treaty anger other tribes living on these lands.

1777
Siege of Fort Stanwix begins August 3. Gansevoort vows to hold the fort "to the last extremity." St. Leger abandons siege after 21 days as American reinforcements approach.

Battle of Oriskany, August 6. British and Indians ambush 800 militia under Nicholas Herkimer, repulsing an attempt to relieve Fort Stanwix. Troops from Fort Stanwix loot loyalist and Indian camps.
1779
Troops led by Gens. John Sullivan and James Clinton destroy Onondaga towns in the heart of Six Nations country in retaliation for raids in the Mohawk Valley. Indian hostility intensifies.

1784
Treaty signed at Fort Stanwix ends war with those Six Nations tribes allied with the British during the war and forces them to give up all claims to lands west of New York and north of the Ohio River.

1788
New York state negotiates land deals with Oneidas and Onondagas at Fort Stanwix, gaining large tracts of Indian land and challenging both federal authority and Indian sovereignty in the process.

1790
Onondaga and Cayuga people confirm negotiated land deals with New York state at Fort Stanwix. Much of the land acquired was sold to pay war debts or granted to soldiers in lieu of back pay.
The Fort Today

Guide to Fort Structures

Fort Stanwix appears below much as it did during the Revolutionary War. The City of Rome and the National Park Service partnered to rebuild a faithful replica of the original fort in 1976, using many original plans and documents. The headquarters building, guardhouse, sally port, necessary, and ravelin, however, have not been reconstructed. Numbers on the illustration, keyed to the numbered text blocks below, identify principal parts of the fort; labels identify technical elements explained in the following glossary.

Berm A narrow space between the parapet and the ditch, intended to prevent the earth from rolling into the ditch.

Bastion The projecting angles or corners of the fort.

Casemate Log buildings constructed against the interior walls of the fort to store supplies or to house men.

Covered Way A kind of road which runs around the ditch and is protected by a small parapet created by the glacis. It was used to move light artillery and troops around the fort.

Curtain Wall That part of the fortification that connects the bastions.

Ditch An excavation around part or all of the walls of a fort to hinder the advance of an attacker.

Embrasure An opening in the parapet through which cannon were fired. The widening angles allowed a sweeping fire.

Fraise A palisade of sharpened wooden stakes projecting outward in a horizontal fashion from the rampart to prevent an enemy from taking the fort by surprise.

Glacis A gently sloping earthwork around the fort stretching from the covered way toward the surrounding country.

Parapet A breastwork raised atop the rampart designed to protect the fort's soldiers and armament from enemy fire.

Sentry Box A small structure built atop the parapet of each bastion to shelter the sentry during inclement weather.
**Things You Should Know**

The entrance gate to the fort requires a short walk from the Marinus Willett Center. Three short trails encircle the fort. One follows a portion of the Oneida Carrying Place. The other two help interpret the events of the siege of 1777. Park rangers conduct regularly scheduled interpretive programs daily, averaging 45 minutes in length. Check with the ranger on duty in the visitor center for times and locations of all programs offered that day. The park is accessible to people with disabilities, and many programs are accessible to those who are visually impaired. Staff is available to provide assistance.

Because the fort is an accurate reconstruction, there are hazards that require your alertness. The grounds in and around the fort are often rough and uneven, so please walk carefully. Many areas of the fort are made of wood; be mindful of splinters. Keep children off the walls and cannon and out of the fireplaces, and follow the instructions during weapon-firing demonstrations. There are no picknicking facilities at the fort. Pets must be leashed at all times. Do not smoke inside the buildings.

**To Preserve and Interpret**

Fort Stanwix National Monument tells a significant part of a complex story in American history. Many groups and agencies, both public and private, in New York state and throughout the eastern United States, work with the park to tell aspects of our shared heritage and preserve related historic sites. To better understand Fort Stanwix and colonial America's history, visit the partner sites, from local historical societies to state and national parks. Specific information about the park's partners may be obtained from park staff.

The Marinus Willett Collection Management and Education Center, opened in 2005, is the result of partnerships between the National Park Service, City of Rome, Oneida County, State of New York, and Oneida Indian Nation. The Center provides visitor orientation and exhibits, as well as state-of-the-art storage space for more than 400,000 artifacts in the park's museum collections.
Exploring the Fort

1 Willett Center
Start here for an orientation to Fort Stanwix and the American Revolution in the Mohawk Valley. Explore interactive programs, shop for one-of-a-kind gifts and souvenirs.

2 Drawbridge
It is not known what type of drawbridge Fort Stanwix possessed. This type was commonly used at the time. Operating on a counterweight system, the 1,200-lb. weights on each side, started by manpower, would roll down the track to bring the bridge up. To lower the bridge, it is believed that heavy poles were used to push the bridge down until the weight of the bridge brought the weights back up to the top of the tracks.

3 Southeast Casemate
This structure was used as soldiers' barracks. The name by the door (Jansen) denotes the company commander. The long straw-filled beds, called "cribs," slept 10 to 12 men side by side.

4 Southeast Bastion
The fort's bakery was located under this bastion. Bread was a mainstay of the soldiers' diet, and each soldier was supposed to receive one pound of bread or flour per day. A large opening in the bastion wall was the entryway to the Necessary (toilet), which has not been reconstructed.

5 Storehouse
This building was originally used as a storage area for supplies and may have contained the Quartermaster's room as well. Today the public restrooms are located here.

6 East Barracks
This complex housed sparsely furnished officers' quarters, workmen's quarters, sutler's quarters, soldiers' quarters for companies commanded by DeWitt and Bleecker, and junior officers' quarters.

7 Sally Port
The sally port, common to forts like Stanwix, was used to move small parties of soldiers out of the fort under cover to, among other things, replenish the water supply from the stream just outside the fort. Lt. Colonel Willett used it to sneak through the British lines to get help during the siege. The casemates on either side of the sally port served as barracks for soldiers.

8 Northeast Bastion
At the time of the siege, this bastion was not completed. Due to this weakness the British concentrated their early siege operations against this point. The British cannon were placed about 600 yards to the north, about where the tall, red brick building in the distance stands today. The main encampment of St. Leger's army was just beyond that point.
Officers' Quarters
The combination of lack of space and bedding often led to the situation represented here: simple soldiers' bunks and little in the way of furnishings officers would have been accustomed to. From four to eight officers might have shared this space during the siege.

Commandant's Quarters
Col. Peter Gansevoort would have occupied this room. As commanding officer's quarters, they were probably the most lavishly furnished. Gansevoort also had more variety in his food, writing of eating "veal, pigeons, and fish of different sorts."

Staff Room/Dining Room
During the day these quarters served as both an office for Colonel Gansevoort and a staff room for officers. In the evening it could be used as an officers' dining room and a place for their social gatherings.

Officers' Quarters
Normally two to three officers would share a room this size. Its empty appearance represents what fort quarters might have looked like when the garrison was changing from one regiment to another.

Hearth Room
Originally an officer's quarters, this room now preserves the foundations of an original fireplace uncovered during archeological excavations in the 1970s.

Northwest Bastion
The magazine located beneath this bastion made it a target during siege operations as the British attempted to destroy the fort's powder supply.

West Casemate
Originally this, too, served as soldiers' barracks, furnished with the cribs shown in the Southeast Casemate.

West Barracks
Originally this, too, served as soldiers' quarters for the company command- ed by Gregg. Today the building serves as a ranger station and offers a short film about what life was like for the Americans during the Revolution.

Southwest Bastion
Underneath this bastion, on which the flagpole currently stands, lies a makeshift hospital where soldiers were treated. A variety of medical tools are on display.

Southwest Casemate
This area served as living quarters for the fort's civilian workmen. It currently houses park offices and is not open to the public.
From time to time the park invites French and Indian War, Revolutionary War, and American Indian organizations or units to garrison the fort and participate in park encampments and living history programs. This group of reenactors portraying American soldiers are seen firing a volley during the park's 225th commemoration of the Siege of Fort Stanwix in 2002. The flag is a replica of the flag flown over the fort during the siege as described by Lt. Colonel Willett.
All Roads Lead to Rome

Fort Stanwix is located in downtown Rome, N.Y., at the corner of James Street and Erie Boulevard. The Willett Center and the fort are open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., except Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and January 1. All major state routes through Rome (26, 46, 49, 69, and 365) pass within sight of the Monument. To get to Rome from the New York Thruway, take exit 32 at Westmoreland to N.Y. 233 north to N.Y. 365 west, and follow the signs to downtown Rome. City parking is available within sight of the Monument. The bus terminal on Liberty Street is within two blocks of the site. The Amtrak railroad station at Martin Street and Route 233 is within a mile of the site. The nearest commercial airport is in Syracuse, N.Y.

For More Information

Fort Stanwix National Monument
112 East Park Street
Rome, NY 13440.
(315) 338-7730
www.nps.gov/fost

Fort Stanwix National Monument is one of more than 380 parks in the National Park System. The National Park Service cares for these special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. Visit www.nps.gov to learn more about parks and National Park Service programs in America’s communities.