

Stamps recall American invasion of Canada

CHARLES J.G. VERGE

On October 26, 1774, the First Continental Congress sent a letter to the French Canadians in Canada to invite them to join the American Revolution as the 14th colony. A follow-up letter from the Second Continental Congress was sent in May 1775, but no substantive reply was received to either letter.

That same spring, following the Battle of Lexington and Concord (United States Scott 617-619, 1563, Figure 1), the Revolutionary War was at a standstill, requiring diversionary tactics. Forts Ticonderoga (United States Scott 1071, Figure 2), Crown Point and St. Jean (Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu) were attacked. Forts Ticonderoga and Crown Point are in New York State and were captured by Benedict Arnold (1741-1801) and Ethan Allen (1738-89). Fort St. Jean is part of the Royal Military College of Canada's St. Jean Campus in St. Jean, Quebec (Figure 3).

Several Canadian stamps commemorate the 200th anniversary of the American Revolutionary War and forts in Canada that were involved in that war.

The text on the cover in Figure 3,

postmarked May 16, states that the Americans "wage a victorious battle and win control of St. John, Canada." The name (St. John instead of St. Jean) and date are in error; the fort was not conquered until November 3.

On the recommendation of Arnold, the first major military initiative by American revolutionaries was the planned invasion of Canada in 1775. The invasion was authorized by Congress and command was given to General Philip Schuyler (1733-1804), who planned the campaign but was too ill to command it. He delegated this portion of his orders to Brigadier General Richard Montgomery (1738-75). Arnold, who was passed over for command of the invasion, went to Boston and convinced General George Washington (1732-99) to appoint him to command a second force that would attack Quebec City through Maine.

Canada's governor, Sir Guy Carleton (1722-1808), who later became Lord Dorchester, was cognizant that an invasion from the south was im-

minent. He requested additional reinforcements from General Thomas Gage (1719-87), commander-in-chief of the British Forces in North America, but they were not forthcoming. During the summer of 1775, with little success, he attempted to raise local militias for the defense of Montreal and Quebec City.

In response to the earlier attack on Fort St. Jean, Carleton sent 700 soldiers to hold the fort. He relied heavily on these troops and their approximately 100 Mohawk allies to ensure that the American revolutionaries would not pass. He defended Montreal with 150 soldiers and left the defense of Quebec City under the command of Lieutenant Governor Hector Theophilus de Cramahé (born Théophile Hector Chateignier de Cramahé, 1720-88).

Schuyler and Montgomery's plans were to go up Lake Champlain and to proceed to Montreal and Quebec City. Their forces included troops from New York, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Ethan Allen's Green Mountain Boys from Vermont (United States Scott 643).

At the end of August, Montgomery decided on his own to proceed north. He led his troops, mustered at Fort Ticonderoga, to a more northerly position at Île-aux-Noix on the Canada-United States border. Much later, from 1819 to 1829, as a result of the War of 1812, Canada built Fort Lennox (Canada Scott 1057, Figure

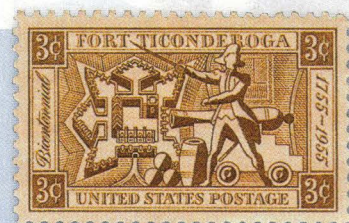
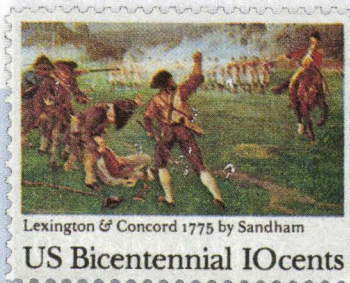


Figure 1. The Battle of Lexington and Concord is honored on three United States stamps — 1¢, 2¢ and 5¢ denominations (Scott 617-619) — issued in 1925 for the 150th anniversary of the battle, and on a 10¢ stamp (Scott 1563) issued in 1975 to commemorate the U.S. bicentennial.

Figure 2. Fort Ticonderoga, where the invasion of Canada began, is featured on this 1955 U.S. 3¢ stamp (Scott 1071).



CAPTURE OF ST. JOHN, CANADA - May 16, 1775 - Americans under Benedict Arnold wage a victorious battle and win control of St. John, Canada.



Canada 8

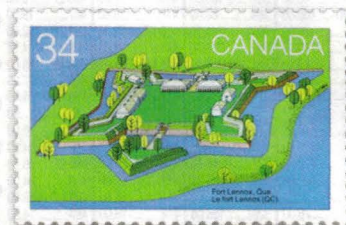


Figure 4. This 1985 34¢ stamp pictures Fort Lennox, a British fortification at Île-aux-Noix on the Canada-U.S. border.

4) on the island to protect the country against future invasions by the United States.

James Livingston (1747-1832), a Canadian leader of the pro-revolutionary forces who had put together the 1st Canadian Regiment of the Continental Army, captured supplies destined for Fort St. Jean. Montgomery took this opportunity to lay siege to the fort, which fell November 3, 1775, after 45 days of battle. In the meantime, Livingston attacked and captured Fort Chambly (Canada Scott 989, Figure 5).

As a result of these defeats and the increased number of defections, Carleton left Montreal, and on November 13, the city surrendered to Montgomery without a fight (Figure 6). The British fleet also surrendered, and Montgomery used the ships to carry his and Livingston's troops toward Quebec City.

Meanwhile, Arnold brought nearly 600 men through the wilderness of Maine and eastern Quebec to the

gates of Quebec City, but withdrew in the face of the walled city and awaited Montgomery's arrival December 2. On December 31, during a snowstorm, Arnold, Livingston and Montgomery attacked Quebec City and suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of Carleton. Arnold was wounded, and Montgomery was killed (Figure 7).

Awaiting reinforcements that were due to arrive in the spring, Carleton opted to stay in the city and did not pursue the Americans. Arnold maintained a siege until March 1776, when he was replaced as commanding officer by General David Wooster (1710-77). The troops retreated from Quebec City in May 1776. The retreat to Sorel, on the south shore of the St. Lawrence

River, resulted from the arrival in Quebec City of 3,000 relief troops and supplies under the command of Captain Charles Douglas, who later became Rear Admiral Sir Charles Douglas, 1st Baronet of Carr (1727-89).

Carleton left Quebec City for Trois-Rivières, on the north shore, facing Sorel, but he returned to Quebec City without pushing farther. Not realizing that reinforcements had arrived, the Americans at Sorel, under the command of General John Sullivan (1740-95), attacked Trois-Rivières.

Brigadier General William Thompson (1736-81) led the June 8 assault and, not knowing the geography of the area, sent his troops into swamps before they were faced with

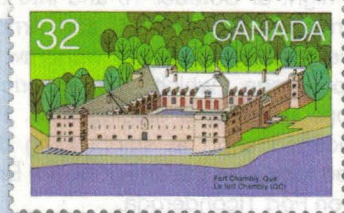
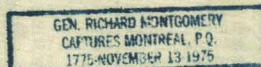
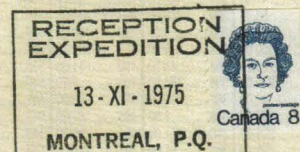


Figure 5. This 1983 32¢ stamp from the Canada Day Historic Forts series shows Fort Chambly on the Richelieu River in Quebec.



Figure 6. This cover commemorates the 200th anniversary of American Brigadier General Richard Montgomery's capture of Montreal November 13, 1775. The cachet features a map that shows the routes taken by Generals Benedict Arnold and Montgomery.



8C
J Howe

U.S. MINT F-VF, NH SUPER SALE

Scott #	Price	Scott #	Price	Scott #	Price	Scott #	Price
210	132.00	299	220.00	401	36.00	478	1,000.00
211	560.00	300	16.00	402	92.00	479	467.50
212	200.00	301	20.00	403	240.00	480	382.50
213	80.00	302	76.00	404	1,100.00	481	1.35
214	132.00	303	76.00	405	8.80	482	2.30
215	420.00	304	76.00	406	8.80	483	21.20
216	460.00	305	100.00	407	104.00	484	16.00
217	840.00	306	80.00	408	2.00	486	1.35
219	48.00	307	100.00	409	2.00	486 LP	6.80
219D	400.00	308	68.00	410	8.80	487	19.50
220	40.00	309	240.00	410 LP	52.00	487 LP	152.00
221	140.00	310	720.00	411	12.00	488	4.25
222	180.00	311	1,200.00	411 LP	68.00	488 LP	28.00
223	156.00	312	1,840.00	412	32.00	489	7.20
224	140.00	314	32.00	412 LP	145.00	489 LP	44.00
225	108.00	315	510.00	413	64.00	490	90
226	340.00	319	8.00	413 LP	375.00	490 LP	6.00
227	460.00	320	28.00	414	62.50	492	14.50
228	720.00	323	44.00	415	72.00	492 LP	66.30
229	1,120.00	324	36.00	416	56.00	493	24.00
230	30.00	325	132.00	417	68.00	493 LP	152.00
231	26.00	326	156.00	418	116.00	494	14.50
232	90.00	327	290.00	419	265.00	494 LP	96.00
233	120.00	328	40.00	420	160.00	495	16.00
234	130.00	329	46.00	421	580.00	495 LP	112.00
235	120.00	330	176.00	422	340.00	496	5.00
236	100.00	331	11.00	423	690.00	496 LP	42.00
237	188.00	332	9.00	424	3.80	497	38.00
238	356.00	333	48.00	425	3.50	497 LP	172.00
239	450.00	334	52.00	426	19.00	498	65
240	940.00	335	64.00	427	48.00	499	65
246	52.00	336	89.00	428	45.00	500	340.00
247	120.00	337	64.00	429	68.00	501	16.50
248	48.00	338	89.00	430	110.00	502	20.50
249	280.00	339	56.00	431	52.00	503	14.85
250	48.00	340	88.00	432	65.00	504	11.90
251	540.00	341	428.00	433	65.00	505	552.00
252	220.00	342	700.00	434	35.50	506	18.75
253	200.00	343	8.80	435	36.00	507	35.00
254	260.00	344	12.80	437	180.00	508	16.30
255	180.00	345	26.80	438	280.00	509	18.75
256	280.00	346	36.00	439	350.00	510	22.50
257	220.00	347	64.00	440	775.00	511	13.00
258	480.00	348	60.00	441	1.95	512	13.00
259	500.00	349	96.00	441 LP	13.60	513	15.00
260	920.00	350	215.00	442	13.60	514	52.50
261	1,700.00	351	235.00	442 LP	80.00	515	63.75
264	11.00	352	120.00	443	35.00	516	52.50
265	48.00	353	120.00	443 LP	210.00	517	97.50
266	54.00	354	297.50	444	50.00	518	82.50
267	8.80	355	310.00	445	350.00	519	550.00
268	60.00	367	8.00	446	190.00	523	880.00
269	68.00	368	29.95	447	70.00	524	296.00
270	68.00	369	265.00	447 LP	335.00	525	3.50
271	200.00	370	10.80	448	10.50	526	34.00
272	108.00	371	33.00	448 LP	68.00	527	26.50
273	156.00	372	16.80	450	14.50	528	12.00
274	380.00	373	36.00	450 LP	125.00	528A	72.00
275	480.00	374	9.00	452	19.00	528B	29.00
276	1,200.00	375	9.00	452 LP	98.00	529	4.50
276A	2,400.00	376	22.25	453	204.00	530	2.60
277	1,800.00	377	40.00	454	136.00	531	13.50
278	3,800.00	378	40.00	455	15.00	532	67.50
279	16.00	379	52.00	455 LP	72.00	533	268.50
279B	16.00	380	145.00	457	43.00	534	19.95
280	47.00	381	145.00	458	49.50	534A	52.50
281	55.00	382	348.00	458 LP	245.00	535	15.00
282	64.00	383	4.50	460	1,190.00	536	26.00
282C	300.00	384	9.00	461	215.00	537	12.00
283	220.00	385	48.00	462	11.00	538	15.00
284	240.00	386	104.00	463	6.50	540	17.00
285	41.00	387	276.00	464	96.00	541	56.00
286	37.00	390	6.50	465	64.00	542	17.75
287	225.00	390 LP	51.00	466	96.00	543	1.15
288	195.00	391	51.00	467	765.00	545	240.00
289	268.00	392	32.00	468	130.00	546	156.00
290	268.00	393	60.00	469	160.00	547	280.00
291	1,120.00	394	85.00	470	76.00	548	5.75
292	2,200.00	395	85.00	471	84.00	549	8.00
293	3,200.00	396	85.00	472	132.00	550	45.00
294	26.00	397	24.00	473	56.00	551	25
295	27.00	398	22.00	474	72.00	552	1.85
296	120.00	399	96.00	475	240.00	553	3.20
297	132.00	400	190.00	476	320.00	554	2.10
298	168.00	400A	340.00	477	1,440.00	555	22.50

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O CANADA



Figure 7. The bicentennial of the Continental Army's unsuccessful attempt to capture Quebec City December 31, 1775, is the subject of this cover.

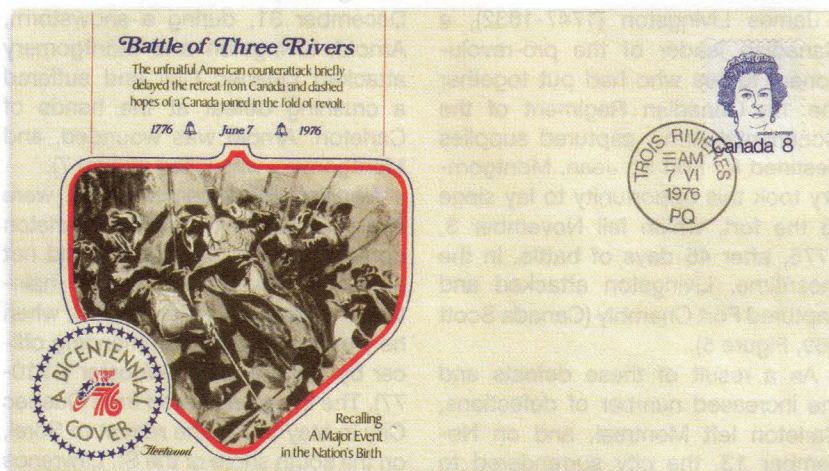


Figure 8. The defeat of the Americans at the Battle of Trois-Rivières (Three Rivers) is recalled on this cover postmarked June 7, 1976, at Trois-Rivières, Quebec.

the might of the newly strengthened British forces. Thompson, most of his senior officers, 200 men and most of the ships were captured. The cachet-maker of the cover pictured in Figure 8 used the wrong date of June 7 to commemorate the battle that actually started at 3 a.m. June 8.

The remainder of the force retreated from Sorel June 14, down the Richelieu River to Chambly and St. Jean. On June 15, in Montreal, Arnold learned of the defeat and received news that Carleton's fleet was approaching. Arnold hastily abandoned the city.

He and Sullivan joined their armies June 17 and retreated to Crown Point. Arnold surrendered his command to

General Horatio Gates (1727-1806), while taking responsibility for the small navy that patrolled Lake Champlain and reinforced it. The British inflicted serious damage to Arnold's fleet on the night of October 10 and into the morning of October 11, and Arnold gave up Crown Point to withdraw to Ticonderoga, which the American troops used as a staging area. His concerted effort at shipbuilding delayed for a year the attack by the British on Fort Ticonderoga.

The invasion of Canada resulted in numerous losses on both sides. In a letter to Sullivan, Arnold urged, "Let us quit ... and secure our own country before it is too late."