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Benedict Arnold – Part I

Lead: For most of his career Benedict Arnold was one of most revered heroes in American military service, in 1780 became the most famous traitor in American history.

Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: Benedict Arnold was born in the bustling seaport town of Norwich, Connecticut in 1741. Apprenticed to an apothecary in his youth, he also fought for periods in the French and Indian War. At twenty-one Arnold started a drug and

bookstore in New Haven, Connecticut, eventually becoming a successful merchant, importing goods from the West Indies and Great Britain. Arnold's first wife was Margaret Mansfield, and the couple had three children before her death in 1775. He learned of his wife's death upon returning from the expedition in which he and Ethan Allen led militia forces to capture British Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain.

General George Washington sent Arnold to lead an assault on Quebec City in the fall of 1775. Although the attack was not successful, Arnold's maneuvers had the side effect of deflecting a powerful British advance on New York City. He was a brave

and effective leader but was initially passed over for promotion by Congress in early 1777. Disappointed, Arnold nearly left the Army but General Washington convinced him to stay and Washington's confidence was rewarded. During the Battle of Saratoga Arnold's leadership was decisive. The Saratoga Campaign is considered a milestone because this first major American battlefield victory convinced the French to assist American independence. An ambitious man, Arnold again was disappointed that his commander Horatio Gates did not accord him enough credit for the victory. Wounded in battle and bitter over his slights, Arnold became military commandant of Philadelphia after the

**British evacuation in 1778. Next
Time: Love and treason.**

**At the University of Richmond,
this is Dan Roberts.**

Resources

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