

**Volume 9**

**Number 036**

**Benedict Arnold – Part II**

**Lead: Embittered by what he considered lack of recognition of his clearly superior leadership and bravery in battle, Benedict Arnold embarked on a course that made him the most famous traitor in American history.**

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

**Content: In the fall of 1777, Connecticut native Benedict Arnold was recuperating from a serious leg injury received at the Battle of Saratoga. In that most decisive**

**American victory in the Revolution, Arnold's leadership had been critical, but his commander Horatio Gates and the Continental Congress were tardy in according him proper recognition. This was not the first time Arnold had felt passed over for promotion and slighted by his superiors. Nevertheless, he had earned the great admiration of George Washington and eventually Congress recognized him for his role at Saratoga and restored his rank.**

**Washington then made Arnold military commandant of Philadelphia after the British retreated to New York in 1778. There Arnold met and married Peggy Shippen member of a prominent Philadelphia family, but**

**Peggy was a Tory and undoubtedly was not shy in voicing her Loyalist sympathies. Later that same year, Arnold was court-martialed and reprimanded for minor infractions during a financial dispute with local authorities. By that time, however, he was started corresponding with British commander Sir Henry Clinton. Arnold knew of Washington's intent to give him command of West Point, recognized by all parties as one of the most strategic strong points in North America, key to the control of the Hudson River and perhaps even winning the War. Arnold planned to surrender the fort to the British in exchange for payment and a commission. At the last minute his**

**plot was exposed and he barely escaped to a British vessel. Benedict Arnold fought for the British for the rest of the war and died, America's greatest traitor, in England in 1801.**

**Research assistance by Ann H. Johnson and Susan Murphy, at the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

## Resources

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