

# General John Burgoyne

General John Burgoyne commanded the British forces invading America from Canada in the summer of 1777. He issued written instructions to Lieutenant Colonel Baum, whom he chose to lead the Bennington raid. He originally directed Baum to go by way of Arlington and Manchester over the Green Mountains to Rockingham and Brattleboro on the Connecticut River, and from there to head to Albany. Burgoyne changed his mind when he learned about the lightly guarded (or so he was told) Continental supply depot at Bennington. Burgoyne's instructions were found on Baum when Baum was wounded and taken prisoner. They begin:



“The object of your expedition is to try the affections of the country, to disconcert the councils of the enemy, to mount the Riedesel's dragoons, to complete Peters' corps, and to obtain large supplies of cattle, horses and carriages.”

After the Battle, Burgoyne wrote to Lord Germain, his superior back in London, paying an unintended compliment to the fighting spirit and tactics of the Americans, especially those in the territory that would become Vermont:

“The great bulk of the country is undoubtedly with Congress, in principle and zeal. And their measures are executed with a secrecy and dispatch that are not to be equaled. Wherever the King's forces point, militia, to the amount of three or four thousand, assemble in twenty-four hours. They bring with them their substance, etc., and, the alarm over, return to their farms. The Hampshire Grants [Vermont] in particular, a country unpeopled and almost unknown in the last war, now abounds in the most active and most rebellious race on the continent, and hangs like a gathering storm upon my left.”