

Walking in the Footsteps of Major John Andre'



Benedict Arnold

The Treason of Benedict Arnold

In 1780 General Benedict Arnold decided to do the unthinkable. His decision would make him one of the most hated men in history. Arnold's treason was caused by many things. He was mad at the Continental Congress, frustrated with his position in the army and in love with his loyalist wife Peggy.

The British did not want Arnold alone; they wanted more than just another general. To sweeten the deal Arnold chose to become commander of the United State's most important fortress. When the time came for his treason he would turn himself and it over to the British. The fortress was West Point, what made it so valuable was it guarded the Hudson River. If Arnold's treason had happened it would have been in George Washington's words: "one of the severest

The Importance of the Hudson River

The Hudson River was referred to by George Washington as "An Object of Great Importance". It was a link between New England and the South. With the British Navy out at sea and the Appalachian Mountains to the west, there was no efficient way to move men and supplies from north to south without crossing the Hudson River. Both sides during the American Revolution knew how important it was, both fought for and defended it with their lives

Possible Effects

If Arnold's treason had happened the effects could have been disastrous for the Americans. Without the use of the Hudson River the Americans would have been divided. Washington's Army would not have been able to move north to south and supplies would have been even worse than they already were. The final victory in Yorktown Virginia would have not been possible without the Hudson River being open for American use. Overall the Revolution could have been an American loss had Major John Andre' and Benedict Arnold's plan worked.



John Andre'

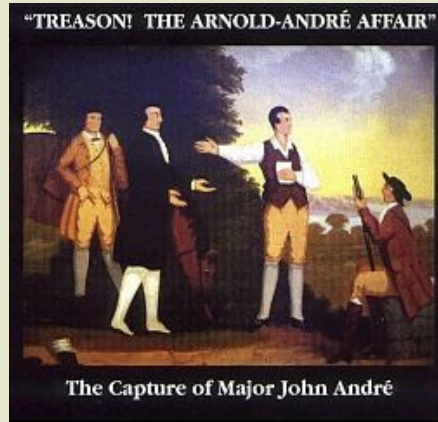
Major John Andre'

Andre' was born in London in 1750. He was an officer in the British Army and an aide de camp to General Sir Henry Clinton. Clinton was the British commander in North America in 1780 and was behind the Arnold treason. On September 22, 1780 Andre' and Arnold met on the western shores of the Hudson River. Arnold turned over the plans of West Point and sealed his treason. Andre' then crossed the Hudson and decided to go over land to the British lines near Tarrytown. On September 23, he travel along what is now Crompond Rd (Route 202) heading towards Pine's Bridge (near present day Route 100). The road you see before you was one of the only main avenues between the Hudson and Pine's Bridge which crossed the Croton River.

Andre' rode past where you stand today and traveled to the Isaac Underhill House which still stands on California Road in Yorktown. It was in what is now Yorktown he ate his last meal as a free man and road south to decide the future of the struggling United States.

The Capture of Major John Andre'

After traveling and eating in what is now Yorktown, Major John Andre headed south through Westchester County. Near Tarrytown he was stopped by three militiamen. They were John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart and David Williams. John Paulding lived on VanCortlandt's Manor and is buried only a few miles away. They arrested Andre' and found in his boot the plans of West Point. The three men turned him over to the American Army and were awarded medals and land for their efforts. Arnold would hear of the capture of Andre' and escape, only to return as a British General in a red coat. Major John Andre's fate was much worse. Since he had disguised himself as a civilian he was tried as a spy. He was brought back through Westchester County and across the Hudson to Tappan, NY. There he was found guilty and hanged. Without the capture of John Andre' by Paulding, Van Wart and Williams the Revolution could have had a dramatically different ending. For their brave efforts we salute them as the heroes they are.



The Capture of Major John Andre'

This sign was created by Mr. DiPasquale's 7th and 8th grade Living History Classes 2009-2010 with help and support from the following:

- Yorktown Central School District
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(left) James Johnson, a ensign with the 5th New York Regiment and Executive Director of the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College, checks the uniforms of the Mildred E. Strang Middle School Living History Class during a dedication of a plaque marking the trail of British Major John Andre during his ride towards New York at the school Oct. 5, 2010. (Ricky Flores / The Journal News)

(below) Students, teachers and guests stand next to a plaque marking the trail of British Major John Andre during his ride towards New York at the Mildred E. Strang Middle School in Yorktown Oct. 5, 2010. (Ricky Flores / The Journal News)





From left, Members of the 5th New York Regiment, Pvt. Fred Campisano, Ensign James Johnson, executive director of the Hudson River Valley Institute, and Pvt. Joseph Ryan, president of the Living History Education Foundation, attend a dedication of a plaque marking the trail of British Major John Andre during his ride towards New York at the Mildred E. Strang Middle School in Yorktown Oct. 5, 2010. (Ricky Flores / The Journal News)