

The **Boot Monument** is an [American Revolutionary War](#) memorial located in [Saratoga National Historical Park](#), [New York](#). Erected during 1887 by [John Watts de Peyster](#) and sculpted by [George Edwin Bissell](#), it commemorates Major General [Benedict Arnold](#)'s service at the [Battles of Saratoga](#) while in the [Continental Army](#), but he is not named on the monument because Arnold later defected from the Americans to the [British](#). Instead, the monument commemorates Arnold as the "most brilliant soldier of the Continental Army".

While fighting at the [Battle of Bemis Heights](#), the second of the Saratoga engagements, Arnold was shot and severely injured in his left leg. His horse was also hit by gunfire and fell on Arnold, crushing his already injured leg. After this, Arnold continued to grow ever more bitter towards the Continental Army when he was passed over for promotion and was court-martialed. He later attempted to help the British capture the fortification of [West Point](#) but was discovered and fled to the [British army](#).

Background

American Major General [Benedict Arnold](#) contributed to both [Battles of Saratoga](#), two crucial engagements of the [American Revolutionary War](#) that took place near [Saratoga, New York](#).^[1] The extent of his contributions to the first battle, the [Battle of Freeman's Farm](#), are disputed.^{[a][3][4]} In the second conflict, the [Battle of Bemis Heights](#) on October 7, 1777, Arnold unexpectedly joined the fighting^{[5][6]} even after disagreements between him and Major General [Horatio Gates](#) resulted in Arnold's command being removed and given to Major General [Benjamin Lincoln](#).^[7] Gates attempted to send Arnold back to camp, but Gates's orders did not reach Arnold until the battle was over. Arnold led the American Continental Army in taking a [redoubt](#) commanded by [Lord Balcarres](#).^[8] At the end of the conflict, Arnold's left leg and horse were shot. When the horse fell, Arnold's leg shattered.^[3] Arnold refused to have his leg amputated and instead had it faultily set.^[9]

Gates did not make much mention of Arnold's contributions in his report of the aftermath of the battle, which angered Arnold.^[10] In addition, he was further embittered by his combat wounds, by not having been promoted by [Congress](#),^[11] and by eight court-martial charges of abusing his role as military commander of [Philadelphia](#).^[12] These troubles, along with the fact that his wife, [Peggy Shippen](#), came from a family of Loyalists, caused Arnold to start communicating with the [British](#). British General [Sir Henry Clinton](#) offered Arnold £20,000 (equivalent to £3,353,000 in 2023) for the capture of West Point,^[13] a fortification that was important to the control of the Hudson River.^[14] Arnold met with British Major [John André](#) so he could pass on information on how to best attack West Point.^[15] André was captured on his way back to New York and the plans for the West Point attack were discovered.^[16] Arnold fled to New York City to join the [British army](#)^[17] and [remained as a general there](#) until the war ended in 1783.^{[18][19]}