

## Pre-Visit Mapping Activity: *By Land and By Sea*

**Lesson Overview:** This activity compares modern transportation to traveling in the American Revolution. The students will use math and mapping skills with an excerpt from Lt. Jonathan Burton's diary. They will understand the difficulty of moving armies and supplies through rugged terrain during the war.

**Standards:** This activity addresses the following standards –

- 1.4 Reading Range of Text
- 6.4 Historical Connections
- 6.7 Geographical Knowledge
- 7.3 Arithmetic, Number, and Operation Concepts

**Background:** In the summer of 1776 many soldiers traveled to the Champlain Valley forts to prepare for a British attack from Canada. Lt. Jonathan Burton's diary describes his company's journey from Fort No. 4, New Hampshire, to Mount Independence and Fort Ticonderoga. The trip took 9 days, covering 80 miles by foot and boat (see map). From Fort No. 4 to Rutland they walked the Crown Point Military Road. At Rutland soldiers followed another road through Castleton to Skenesborough (now Whitehall, NY). There soldiers boarded small boats to travel on Wood Creek to Lake Champlain.

In the American Revolution the main road through Vermont was the Crown Point Military Road, finished in 1759 during the French & Indian War. Construction of this dirt road, mostly a narrow and rocky trail through the woods, was very helpful to travel across Vermont. Soldiers traveling on roads covered an average of 10 miles a day. Travel on lakes and rivers, if available, was more efficient. Lake Champlain was an important part of the water "highway." Soldiers traveled by boat, with only a few portages, or on the ice in winter from New York City to Quebec City and beyond (on the Hudson River, Lake George, Lake Champlain, Richelieu River, and St. Lawrence River). Moving armies by boat, especially those with sails, usually took much less time than moving them by foot.

**Procedure:** Give students the diary excerpts and the map. Burton was not a good speller, so you might want to read aloud his entries. Ask students to mark on the map where the company camped each night. Give students the question worksheet. They can use the mileage key and a ruler to approximate the distance between Fort No. 4 and Mount Independence and Fort Ticonderoga. With a state roadmap estimate the distance from their town(s) to Mount Independence.

**Connections:** What's the longest distance any of your students have walked? Imagine traveling to Mount Independence through the woods by foot, carrying all their supplies. Where would they sleep? What would they eat? Would they expect camp to be ready when they arrived?

## By Land & By Sea—Lt. Burton's Diary

(Burton, Jonathan. *Diary and Orderly Book of Sergeant Jonathan Burton...and Lieutenant Jonathan Burton*. Concord, N.H.: Republican Press Assoc., 1885.)

Lt. Jonathan Burton set out for Fort Ticonderoga in July of 1776. His company left Merrimack, New Hampshire, on July 22 and arrived at Fort No. 4 in Charlestown, New Hampshire, on July 31, 1776. Below are excerpts from his diary of the remaining trek to Mount Independence and Fort Ticonderoga.

August the 1<sup>st</sup> ... about two o'clock our compy Marched from No 4 and crosed the Greate River<sup>1</sup> and Logd in Springfield ... about nine Mild<sup>2</sup> from No 4 ...

Fryday August the 2<sup>nd</sup> we Marcht from ...Springfield and at Night we Encamped in the woods and Lay on the Ground about 20 Mild from oter creek<sup>3</sup> on this Side Now we begin to Experance what it is to be Solders in the Wilderness

Saturday August the 3<sup>rd</sup> after taking our Brekfast in our Little camp we Left it and Marchd to Darham<sup>4</sup>...

Sunday August ye 4<sup>th</sup> we marcht to New Rutland about Six Milds further up ... here we Recd our orders to March to Scheensborough<sup>5</sup> ...

Monday August ye 5<sup>th</sup> we Set of from Rutland ... on our March for Scheensborough and after a Long and worrysome March of about twenty five Milds About half of the compy got into the first house [in Skenesborough]

Tuesday August 6<sup>th</sup> we got to wood Creek ... and crosed the Creek about twelve o'clock hear we Picht our tents... it hapned to be a very havey Shower and in the Morning the Most of the Men wear as wet as so many Drownded Rats

Wednesday August 7<sup>th</sup> we built us a new camp...

Thursday August 8<sup>th</sup> 1776 This day in the afternoon we recd orders for to go to Ticonderoga ...

Fryday August 9 1776 about Ten o'clock this morning we Set off from Skeensborough in boats for the tie [Ticonderoga] and about Sunset we arrived at that Place and marched about half a mild up to the Encampment; It bing Dark before we got in we ware obliged to Lay on the cold ground...

[On Sunday Burton writes that his company is setting up camp on Mount Independence.]



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<sup>1</sup> Greate River is the Connecticut River

<sup>2</sup> Mild is Burton's spelling of Mile

<sup>3</sup> Otter Creek

<sup>4</sup> possibly near Clarendon

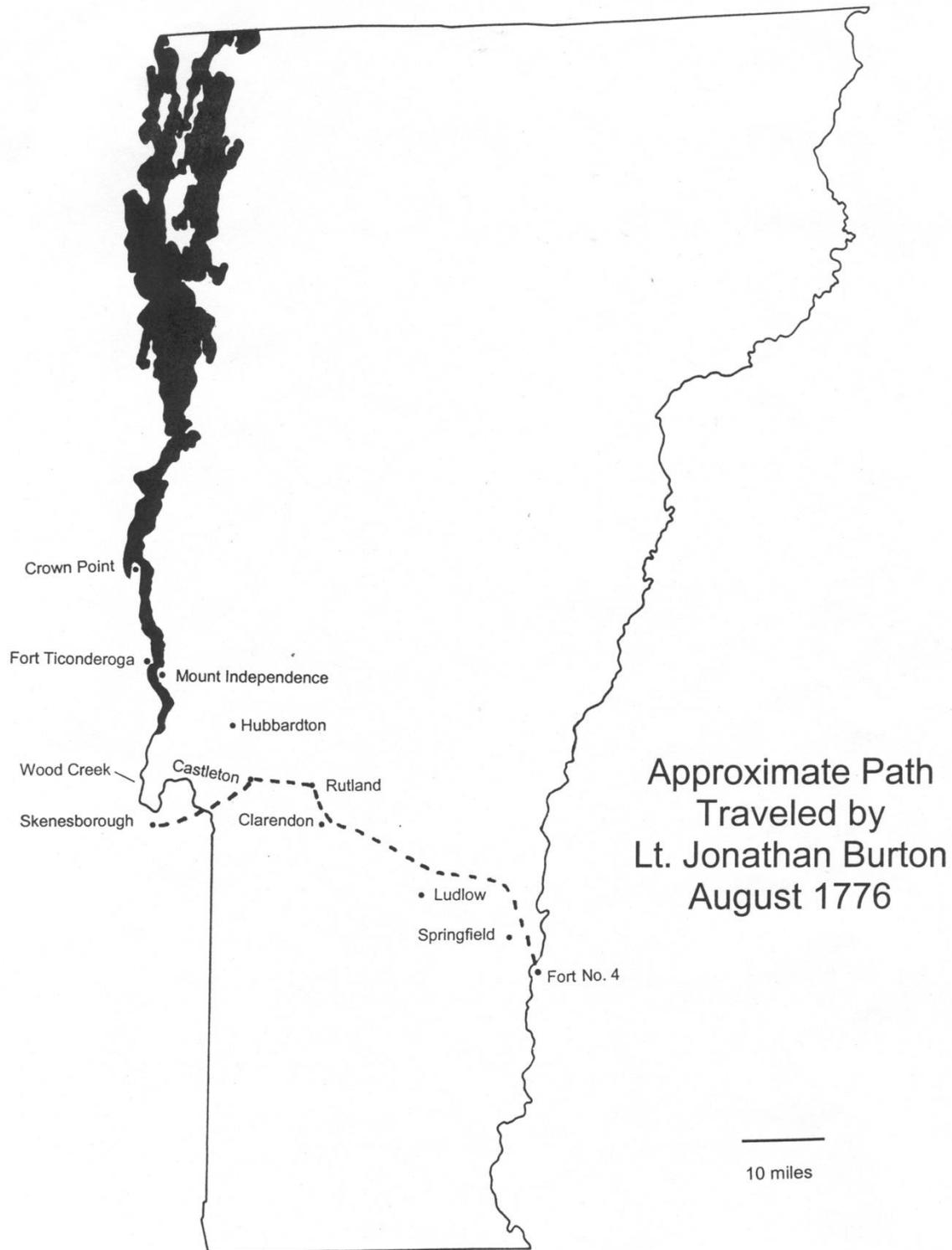
<sup>5</sup> Scheensborough or Skeenesborough is now Whitehall, New York

## ***By Land & By Sea–Questions***

Use the diary entries and the map to answer the following questions.

1. Approximately how many miles did Lt. Burton travel by foot from Fort No. 4, New Hampshire, to Skenesborough, New York?
2. How many days did the trip take?
3. On average, how many miles per day did he walk?
4. Approximately how many miles did Burton travel by boat from Skenesborough to Mount Independence?
5. How many hours did that trip take?
6. On average, how many miles per hour did he sail?
7. Why do you think historians refer to Lake Champlain as a “highway?”
8. Using a modern road map, estimate the number of miles you would travel from your house (or school) to reach Mount Independence?
9. Based on your answers from questions # 3 and 8, if you were a soldier in the Revolutionary War, how many days would it take for you to walk from your house (or school) to Mount Independence?
10. Could you travel from your house (or school) to Mount Independence by boat?

## By Land & By Sea—Burton's Travel Route



## **By Land & By Sea—Answer Key**

1. Approximately how many miles did Lt. Burton travel by foot from Fort No. 4 to Skenesborough?

**60 miles**

2. How many days did the trip take?

**5 days**

The soldiers marched into Skenesborough late on Monday.  
The walk to Wood Creek on Tuesday was a very short distance.

3. On average, how many miles per day did he walk?

**12 miles/day**

The least amount of walking was 6 miles on Sunday.  
The greatest distance was 25 miles on Monday.

4. Approximately how many miles did Burton travel by boat from Skenesborough to Mount Independence?

**20 miles**

5. How many hours did that trip take?

**10 hours**

10:00 am – sunset (approximately 8:00 pm)

6. On average, how many miles per hour did he sail?

**2 miles/hour**

7. Why do you think historians refer to Lake Champlain as a “highway?”

Because Lake Champlain and its tributaries were the fastest and most efficient way to travel through Vermont’s rugged terrain at a time when few roads existed, and those that did were in poor shape.

8. Using a modern road map, estimate the number of miles you would travel from your house (or school) to reach Mount Independence?

**# of miles will vary**

9. Based on your answer from questions # 3 and 8, if you were a soldier in the Revolutionary War, how many days would it take for you to walk from your house (or school) to Mount Independence?

**# of days will vary**

10. Could you travel from your house (or school) to Mount Independence by boat?

**Answers will vary**