

HISTORIC ROOTS

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THE GHOST WITH TWO HOMES

By JOSEPH A. CITRO

Do you believe in ghosts? Even if you say you don't, an awful lot of people do. Many people believe ghosts are memories that have taken on a life of their own. Often ghosts remind us of lost love or tragic death. Sometimes ghosts recall evil deeds, miracles, or strange events that have no clear explanation. Sometimes they are of men and women whose deeds or personalities were so powerful that others could not accept the fact that they were dead.

Whatever the deeds, whoever the people involved, ghosts live on in stories and often in the places they haunted in their lifetimes. For haunt has two meanings. The first is what ghosts do when they appear in certain places. The second is to go or stay often in a certain place. Such places are even called "haunts."

General Anthony Wayne was larger than life. His troops called him "Mad Anthony" because he was so fierce in battle during the Revolutionary War. He was equally daring in his scouting expeditions,¹ when he went out to

¹ Expedition (ex-pe-di-shun) means a trip with a purpose: a shopping expedition, for example, or an expedition to explore the South Pole.



Fort Ticonderoga Museum

Anthony Wayne

see where British troops were and try to learn their plans. It is not surprising that people still see his ghost. What is surprising is that he has two ghosts, in two different places. One of those places is in Vermont. The other is very near by.

Early in the American Revolution, in 1775, Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys captured Fort Ticonderoga from the British. This act opened Lake Champlain to travel by the Americans. It was a feat² that made Allen and his troops famous throughout the colonies.³ George Washington, who was then commander of the American forces, sent Anthony Wayne to keep control of the fort and of the lake.

Wayne was glad to have some time away

² Feat (feet) means an act of daring and courage.

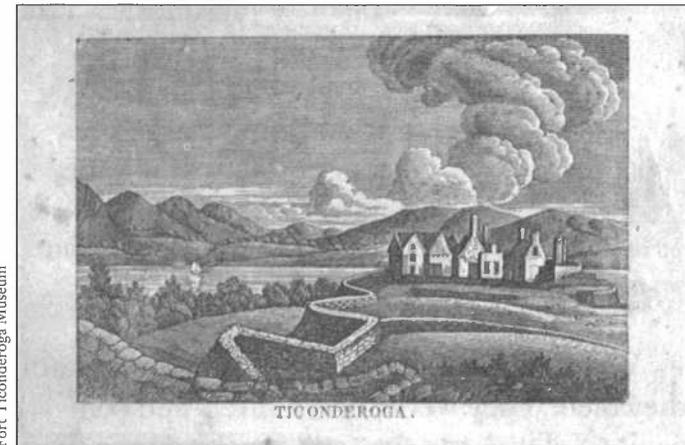
³ Until they won independence in the Revolutionary War, the American settlements belonged to England. They were called colonies.

from the battlefield. At Fort Ticonderoga he could relax and be with friends. He was happy there. In fact he was so happy that his ghost returned after his death.

Even today he is said to appear from time to time in the dining room of his old quarters. He sits at a table and studies maps during the night. At dawn he rises, stretches—and then disappears.

Other times he sits in front of the fire, puffing on a pipe, drinking from a mug. Those who have seen him say he is huge and in uniform, that he looks exactly as he looks in his portraits.

Wayne's other ghostly home is in Vermont. The story begins earlier in the Revolution, before the taking of Fort Ticonderoga. Wayne was leading a scouting party through Vermont up toward Canada.



Fort Ticonderoga Museum

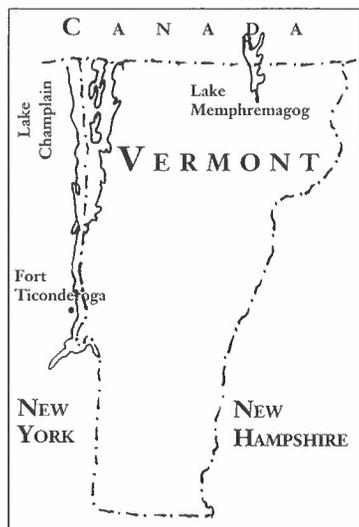
Fort Ticonderoga as it looked in 1818.

Somewhere near Lake Memphremagog, in the northwest corner of what is now the North-east Kingdom, one of his guides told him about a place where bald eagles were nesting. There were eaglets in the nest, he said. Now when Wayne wasn't hunting British soldiers he liked to hunt animals. He knew that if he caught the young eaglets he could train them to help him hunt.

General Wayne wanted those young birds. He climbed up a high rock ledge as one of the parent birds circled overhead, guarding the nest. As he snuck closer he could just see the heads of two small eaglets in the nest. He had one of his men shoot the older eagle with a bow and arrow. Then he raced forward to grab the young birds.

The eaglets were scared and strong. They fought to remain in the nest. One of them clawed Wayne on the cheek and nose. He had the scars for the rest of his life.

Wayne trained the birds and kept them until they died. They were good hunters and companions. Some say they still are. From the time



A map showing Anthony Wayne's haunts.

Wayne died in 1796 until the present people have seen him in places along the shore of Lake Memphremagog. He is huge and dressed in the leather clothes of his scouting uniform.

Sometimes he is alone. Sometimes he walks with his arms in front of him. When he does this he carries on each wrist a bald eagle.

Rooting Around

This story is from Joseph Citro's book, *Green Mountain Ghosts, Ghouls and Unsolved Mysteries*. It and his new book, *Passing Strange, True Tales of New England Hauntings and Horrors*, are filled with stories about famous and not so famous long ago people and events that are still with us in some form or another.

Are there ghosts in your town? Haunted houses? Your library or historical society might be able to help you find out who these people were and what happened that makes them stay here so long after they have died.

If you find some good stories, Joseph Citro would like to hear about them. You can write to him in care of this magazine: P.O. Box 1228, Middlebury, VT 05753.