General John Burgoyne

(24 February 1722 – 4 August 1792)

Burgoyne is best known for his role in the American Revolutionary War. He designed an invasion scheme and was appointed to command a force moving south from Canada to split away New England and end the rebellion. Burgoyne advanced from Canada but his slow movement allowed the Americans to concentrate their forces. Instead of coming to his aid according to the overall plan, the British Army in New York City moved south to capture Philadelphia. Burgoyne fought two small battles including Bennington near Saratoga but was surrounded by American forces and, with no relief in sight, surrendered his entire army of 6,200 men on 17 October 1777. The inability to captured supplies at Bennington in August, 1777 contributed greatly to this defeat.

His surrender, according to the historian Edmund Morgan, "was a great turning point of the war, because it won for Americans the foreign assistance which was the last element needed for victory". France had been supplying the North American colonists since the spring of 1776.Burgoyne and his officers returned to England; the enlisted men became prisoners of war. He came under sharp criticism when he returned to London.

He died quite unexpectedly on 4 August 1792 at his home in Mayfair, after having been seen the previous night at the theatre in apparent good health. Burgoyne is buried in Westminster Abbey, in the North Walk of the Cloisters.