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In 1777, the Continental Army sent Thaddeus Kosciuszko to serve under Major General Horatio Gates at the Canadian border.

Canada was a British stronghold and Fort Ticonderoga in close proximity to the border had been thought to be one of the most formidable fortresses in America. Thaddeus reviewed the defenses of this fort and promptly made a strong recommendation to construct a battery on Sugar Loaf—a high point overlooking the fort, in order to eliminate its vulnerability.

The commander of Fort Ticonderoga disagreed that the fortification was necessary and turned down the recommendation. This proved to be a huge mistake.

When British came to attack the fort, they installed artillery in the exact location that Thaddeus had recommended the Americans to do. Now, British troops had control of the high ground above the fort, and the Continental Army saw that they were doomed and rapidly abandoned Fort Ticonderoga. The American soldiers fled south, but the British were pursuing them rapidly.

Major General Philip Schuyler was desperate to slow down the British advance and put distance between his men and the enemy. He turned to Thaddeus Kosciuszko for his help. Thaddeus had his men cut down trees, dam up streams, and destroy all bridges and causeways.

All the roadblocks bogged down the British, and the American troops safely retreated to the Hudson River.

General Gates called upon Thaddeus at this point to suggest the most defensible position to station the American troops in order to give the Continental Army the best advantage to fight the much more powerful and better-equipped British troops.

Thaddeus surveyed the area and recommended improvements that would make this position impregnable from any direction. His judgment was exactly right, and the British lost this battle in October 1777.

General Gates later told one of his colleagues:

The hills and forests were a great help in winning this battle, and the young Polish engineer was clever enough to select this spot for our encampment.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Chapter-4-Thaddeus-Saves-the-Day-Thaddeus-Kosciuszko-Hero-of-the-American-Revolution>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Chapter-4-Thaddeus-Saves-the-Day-Thaddeus-Kosciuszko-Hero-of-the-American-Revolution>

Media Stream



Fort Ticonderoga

Edward Pell Graduate School at Fort Ticonderoga

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In a ceremonial act, General Burgoyne formally "capitulates" to General Gates

British Surrender at Saratoga

BritishBattles.com

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