



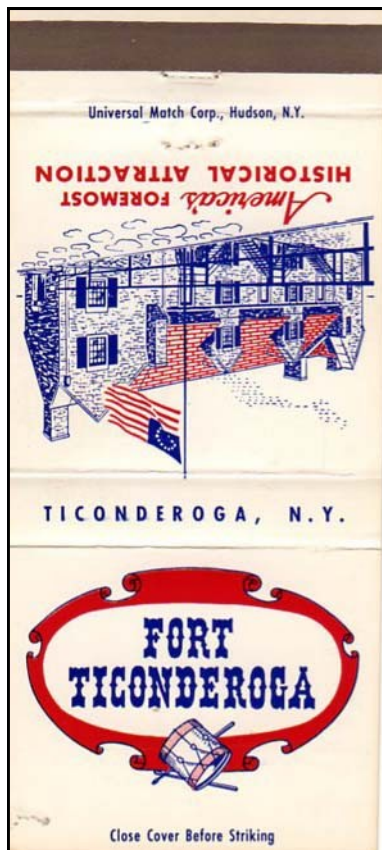
## An American Tour: 19



### New York's *Fort Ticonderoga*

Samuel de Champlain was the first European to visit the great lake that bears his name. The famed French explorer, accompanied by two other Frenchmen and an Algonquin war party explored the lake for France. It is believed that the Champlain party came ashore at the Ticonderoga peninsula. There they encountered a band of Iroquois. A skirmish ensued during which Champlain used guns. Several of the tribesmen were killed.

At the beginning of the Seven Years' War (French & Indian War) the Champlain Valley became an area of contested ground between the two superpowers of the day, France and England. Due to its strategic location on Lake Champlain that protected the portage to Lake George, Governor-General Vaudreuil, the French Governor of Canada, ordered a fort to be constructed on the Ticonderoga peninsula. This was the southernmost fort of the French Empire in the New World. Vaudreuil was anticipating attacks on Fort St. Frederic and the French settlements at today's Crown Point, New York and Chimney Point, Vermont and hoped to stop the push northward by the British army as it sought more land. The Canadian engineer Michel Chartier De Lotbiniere oversaw fort construction and French and French Canadian soldiers and civilians built it. Construction began in the fall, and continued for two more summer campaigns. The Fort was named Fort Carillon.



In 1820, William Ferris Pell, a New York merchant, bought the ruins of Fort Ticonderoga and the Garrison Grounds to preserve them. After Pell's first home burned in 1825, he built a gracious family home overlooking Lake Champlain and adjacent to the ruins of the Fort. By 1839, the home was named The Pavilion and began its life as a hotel catering to the growing tourist trade coming to see the ruins of Fort Ticonderoga. That same year, James Fenimore Cooper wrote *The Last of the Mohicans* concerning Montcalm's attack on Fort William Henry. This fueled Americans' interest in seeing sites from both 18th century wars on Lake George and Champlain. The Pavilion continued to thrive with the tourist trade coming via steamboat, but with the introduction of the railroad in the late 19th century, The Pavilion began to decline in popularity.

In 1908, Stephen Pell, the grandson of William Pell, began to restore the West Barracks of Fort Ticonderoga. He hired British architect Alfred Bossom to research and supervise the reconstruction. They restored The Pavilion and turned it into their private summer home. Funds for the Fort restoration came from Sarah's father, Colonel Robert Means Thompson, one of the wealthiest men in the country. In 2000, The museum completed a 9-year restoration of the King's Garden at Fort Ticonderoga, recreating Coffin's 1920 planting plan. [<http://www.fort-ticonderoga.org/history/timeline2000.htm>]