



After Yorktown: The Final Struggle for American Independence

Don Glickstein

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After the Humiliating Defeat at Yorktown in 1781, George III Vowed to Keep Fighting the Rebels and Their Allies Around the World, Holding a New Nation in the Balance

Although most people think the American Revolution ended with the British surrender at Yorktown, Virginia, on October 19, 1781, it did not. The war spread around the world, and exhausted men kept fighting—from the Arctic to Arkansas, from India and Ceylon to Schenectady and South America—while others labored to achieve a final diplomatic resolution.

After Cornwallis's unexpected loss, George III vowed revenge, while Washington planned his next campaign. Spain, which France had lured into the war, insisted there would be no peace without seizing British-held Gibraltar. Yet the war had spun out of control long before Yorktown. Native Americans and Loyalists continued joint operations against land-hungry rebel settlers from New York to the Mississippi Valley. African American slaves sought freedom with the British. Soon, Britain seized the initiative again with a decisive naval victory in the Caribbean against the Comte de Grasse, the French hero of Yorktown.

In *After Yorktown: The Final Struggle for American Independence*, Don Glickstein tells the engrossing story of this uncertain and violent time, from the remarkable American and French success in Virginia to the conclusion of the fighting—in India—and then to the last British soldiers leaving America more than two years after Yorktown. Readers will learn about the people—their humor, frustration, fatigue, incredulity, worries; their shock at the savage terrorism each side inflicted; and their surprise at unexpected grace and generosity. Based on an extraordinary range of primary sources, the story encompasses a fascinating cast of characters: a French captain who destroyed a British trading post, but left supplies for Indians to help them through a harsh winter, an American Loyalist releasing a captured Spanish woman in hopes that his act of kindness will result in a prisoner exchange, a Native American leader caught “between two hells” of a fickle ally and a greedy enemy, and the only general to surrender to both George Washington and Napoleon Bonaparte. Finally, the author asks the question we face today: How do you end a war that doesn't want to end?

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