

A historical importance of the battle of yorktown

War, Revolutionary War



On October 19, 1781, the final battle of the Revolutionary War ended in Yorktown Virginia, so it is known as the Siege of Yorktown. This battle also goes by the Battle of Yorktown, the Surrender at Yorktown, the German Battle, and the Siege of Little York. During this battle, the Americans and the French worked together to gain victory over the British army, which began negotiations with the British to end the War. Many people were killed or wounded on all sides of this battle, but only the British had any soldiers go missing as a result of the fight. The American people celebrated the victory at the Siege of Yorktown for several days, and in several different ways after the British surrendered to General Washington. This victory was very important to the American and French armies, and in 1884, more than 100 years later, a monument was erected in Yorktown to commemorate it.

In 1780, the French landed in Rhode Island to help the Americans defend themselves from the British and retake New York City. They had formed an alliance that would strengthen George Washington's army, which the General believed would help them to reclaim their city. A second French army, from the West Indies and led by Comte de Grasse, was asked to join the fight against the British at the Chesapeake Bay. As soon as the armies on land received word that the second French army would be coming, they began their march southward to meet the approaching troops in Virginia, but used deception tactics to lead the British to believe they would be attacking in New York. While he was waiting to join the French and American army at the Bay, de Grasse was able to defeat a fleet of British ships and prevent any escape via the water at that location. Once the armies all merged into one

force, they began the attack on the full British army, allowing them to weaken British defenses.

During that year, troops led by Benedict Arnold were dispatched from New York to Virginia to provide assistance for the British army. These troops helped to defeat the Continental soldiers in Richmond, Virginia before they arrived in Portsmouth. General Washington and his French counterpart, the Marquis de Lafayette, continued their southward march to launch a naval and land attack on the British, but they did not have as many warships as they had hoped, so their naval attack was tactically inconclusive. The year wore on and more British officers arrived with newer troops, and took control of the older troops as well. With each group of new soldiers came more British victories over the American militias, and more attacks on supplies for the Americans and French. Washington's army was eventually forced back to the northernmost parts of New York, where they had first begun their southward march, but when the British were recalled in June, the Continental Army once again decided to march south to Virginia. They began in Newport, Rhode Island and marched through Philadelphia in the beginning of September. They halted when the American soldiers refused to march further without being paid at least some of their wages in their native coins, rather than useless paper currency that they'd been paid in the past. To solidify their alliance, the French general lent some of his coins to Washington to pay his troops for the last time. Once both of the armies were as large and as ready as they felt they both could be, the battle finally began. The British did not think that the French and American army would be able to defeat them, even though they had the advantage of some soldiers

being on their home turf. Much to the delight of the Continental Army, the British began the process of surrendering in October of 1781. When all was said and done, Washington allowed the British officers to go home, but claimed the other soldiers as prisoners of war with the promise of fair treatment in American camps.

There was some confusion in the tallying of casualties and wounded soldiers when it came to the British counts. Originally, the British tally was 156 killed, 326 wounded, and 70 missing soldiers, but later it was determined that 14 of the soldiers originally marked as “killed” were in fact captured. Since Washington did take the British soldiers prisoner, the official tally of POWs was 7,685. The Continental Army consisted of both French and American troops, so their casualty and wounded counts were done both separately and together in order to track all of the numbers. The French part of the army had 60 killed and 194 wounded, and the Americans had 28 killed and 107 wounded; 88 killed and 301 wounded in the combined army.