



0. SURRENDER AT YORKTOWN - Story Preface

1. TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION

2. THE BOSTON MASSACRE

3. COLONISTS REBEL

4. LET IT BEGIN HERE

5. LEXINGTON AND CONCORD

6. THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL

7. WASHINGTON TAKES COMMAND

8. AMERICA ESTABLISHES A NAVY

9. DRAFTING THE DECLARATION

10. THE VOTE: 13-0

11. AMERICA'S FIRST DOLLARS

12. LONDON'S REACTION

13. TREASON

14. TREASON MOST FOUL

15. EXECUTIONS

16. MARION'S BRIGADE

17. THE TABLES TURN

18. SURRENDER AT YORKTOWN

19. GENERAL WASHINGTON RESIGNS

20. UNANIMOUS PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

In 1836, Auguste Couder (1790-1873) created this painting entitled *Bataille de Yorktown* ("Siege of Yorktown") which began on September 28, 1781. The painting is currently on display at the Palace of Versailles, in France.

As Cornwallis moved north, his troops were demoralized and weakened. By the time he reached the Virginia village of Yorktown, England's second-in-command had made a series of blunders.

General Washington, meanwhile, was coordinating his scattered land and sea forces. With American infantry and artillery, French naval power and land forces, Washington surrounded the Redcoats and laid siege for twenty days. When the battle at Yorktown was fought, it would be the last of the war.

By October 17, 1781, Cornwallis sent a message to Washington:

I propose a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, and that two officers may be appointed by each side, to meet at Mr. Moore's house, to settle terms for the surrender of the posts of York and Gloucester.

Washington agreed. (Follow this link to his original message.)

An ardent desire to spare the further effusion of Blood, will readily incline me to listen to such terms for the surrender of your Posts of York and Gloucester, as are admissible.

By the next day, October 18, 1781, Cornwallis was ready to talk about complete capitulation:

I agree to open a treaty of capitulation upon the basis of the garrisons of York and Gloucester...

Washington proposed the terms of surrender and gave Cornwallis two hours to accept. If the British rejected, the battle would resume. Cornwallis agreed to the terms.

Although the Treaty of Paris, formally ending the war, would not be signed for two more years, the fighting stopped. (Follow the links to view the original signatures, seals and treaty negotiating map.) The United Colonies would soon become the United States of America.

This was a great victory for Britain's colonies, but many people in the "mother country" were also relieved that the war was finally over. One of the reasons for damaging London riots - in June of 1780 - was resistance to the seemingly never-ending fight in America.

Uncontrollable mobs - interested only in destruction - burned homes, churches and prisons. A future English poet, caught-up in the frenzy, watched what happened when London's Newgate Prison was at the mercy of the mob. Later, that poet - William Blake - used those powerful images, burned into his brain at the age of 17, to write *America* (in 1793) and *Europe* (in 1794). His poems - like "[A Poison Tree](#)" - remain popular to this day.

People like the young Blake - and many others throughout Britain - must have rejoiced when they learned about the surrender at Yorktown.

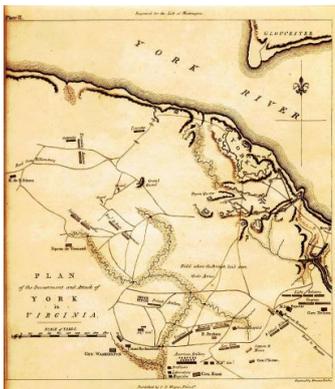
See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/SURRENDER-AT-YORKTOWN-American-Revolution-Highlights>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/SURRENDER-AT-YORKTOWN-American-Revolution-Highlights>

Media Stream



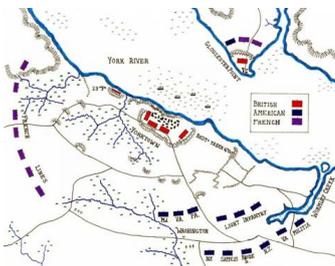
[Plan of the Investment and Attack of York in Virginia](#)

Plan of the Investment and Attack of York in Virginia, originally published in Philadelphia by C. P. Wayne, 1806.

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Plan-of-the-Investment-and-Attack-of-York-in-Virginia>



[Plan of Siege - Yorktown and Gloucester Point](#)

Image, courtesy British Battles web site.

Linked above - Map from the National Park Service historical handbook, *Yorktown, National Battlefield*.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Plan-of-Siege-Yorktown-and-Gloucester-Point>



[Engraving - Siege of Yorktown and Gloucester Point](#)

Engraving by O.M. Fontaine from painting by Conder.

U.S. National Archives, image 148-GW-516.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Engraving-Siege-of-Yorktown-and-Gloucester-Point>



[Lithograph - Battle of Yorktown](#)

Capture of Yorktown, Lithograph by Turgis.

U.S. National Archives, image 148-GW-565.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Lithograph-Battle-of-Yorktown>



Patriots Storm the Redcoats at Yorktown - Decisive Battle

Storming Redoubt No 10, painting by H. Charles McBarron for *Soldiers of the American Revolution*.

Image, information and quote from U.S. Army Center for Military History web site.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Patriots-Storm-the-Redcoats-at-Yorktown-Decisive-Battle>



Moore House, Yorktown

Image, U.S. National Archives.

Linked above: Information and image from the National Park Service historical handbook: *Yorktown, National Battlefield*.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Moore-House-Yorktown>

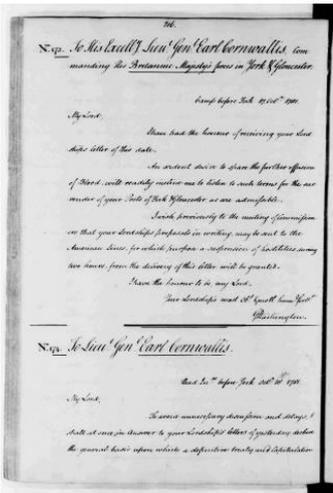


Surrender Room at the Moore House, Yorktown

National Park Service historical handbook: *Yorktown, National Battlefield*.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Surrender-Room-at-the-Moore-House-Yorktown>

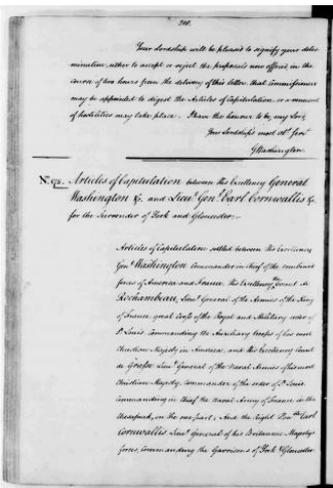


Surrender Terms - Washington to Cornwallis

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Surrender-Terms-Washington-to-Cornwallis->



Yorktown Surrender Terms - Accept in Two Hours

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Yorktown-Surrender-Terms-Accept-in-Two-Hours>

Treaty of Paris, Granting American Independence

On September 3, 1783—about two years after the actual fighting ceased—America’s Revolution officially ends when Britain and the American Colonies sign the Treaty of Paris.

This image depicts a duplicate original of the document ending hostilities between the “mother country” and her colonies. It also officially recognizes America as an independent nation and allows for the newly formed country to continue its westward expansion.

This key document, in America’s history, is maintained by the U.S. National Archives where [curators provide this description](#):

The American War for Independence (1775-83) was actually a world conflict, involving not only the United States and Great Britain but also France, Spain, and the Netherlands. The peace process brought a vaguely formed, newly born United States into the arena of international diplomacy, playing against the largest, most sophisticated, and most established powers on earth.

The three American negotiators, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and John Jay, proved themselves to be masters of the game, outmaneuvering their counterparts and clinging fiercely to the points of national interest that guaranteed a future for the United States. Two crucial provisions of the treaty were British recognition of U.S. independence and the delineation of boundaries that would allow for American western expansion.

The treaty is named for the city in which it was negotiated and signed. The last page bears the signatures of David Hartley, who represented Great Britain, and the three American negotiators, who signed their names in alphabetical order.

Many treaty documents, however, can be considered as originals. In this case, for example, the United States and British representatives signed at least three originals, two of which are in the holdings of the National Archives. On one of the signed originals the signatures and wax seals are arranged horizontally; on the other they are arranged vertically. In addition, handwritten certified copies were made for the use of Congress.

Some online transcriptions of the treaty omit Delaware from the list of former colonies, but the original text does list Delaware.

Click on the image for a more detailed view.

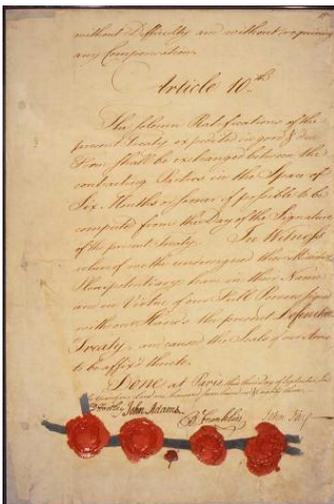
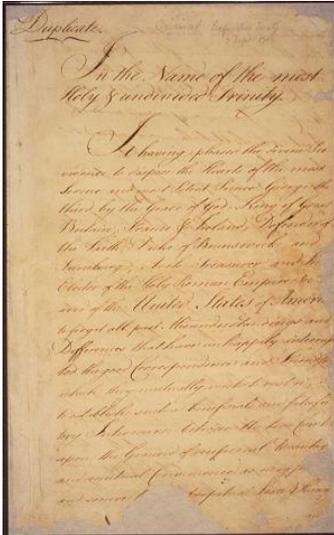
See, also:

Signature Page of the Treaty of Paris, 1783

Image of the Treaty of Paris, 1783, online via the U.S. National Archives; International Treaties and Related Records, 1778-1974; General Records of the United States Government, Record Group 11.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Treaty-of-Paris-Granting-American-Independence>



Signature Page, Peace of Paris

Image online, courtesy the U.S. National Archives.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Signature-Page-Peace-of-Paris>



Treaty Map, 1782 - America's Most Famous

John Mitchell, A Map of the British Colonies in North America with the Roads, Distances, Limits and Extent of the Settlements. London: Jefferys & Fadden, 1775, with hand-written additions, 1782.

Image (58vc), quote and information from the Library of Congress, John Bull and Uncle Sam, Four Centuries of British-American Relations.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Treaty-Map-1782-America-s-Most-Famous>



Yorktown Surrender - John Trumbull Painting

Image, courtesy U.S. Library of Congress.

Quoted passage and painting information, courtesy [Architect of the Capitol](#).

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Yorktown-Surrender-John-Trumbull-Painting>



SURRENDER AT YORKTOWN

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/>