

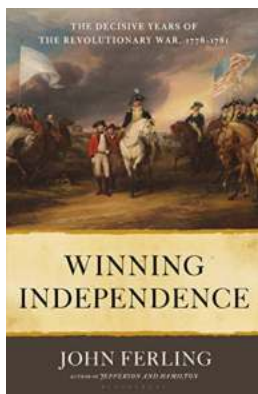
The Decisive Years Of The Revolutionary War 1778-1781: Unveiling the Turning Points

War. A word that holds great weight in history, shaping nations and altering the course of humanity. The Revolutionary War of 1775-1783 was no exception, as it set the stage for the birth of a new nation, the United States of America. Although the war lasted for several years, it was the period from 1778 to 1781 that proved to be the most decisive in determining the outcome.

During this time, key events and strategic decisions shifted the balance of power, ultimately leading to victory for the American colonists against the might of the British Empire. In this article, we will delve into the crucial moments and turning points that unfolded during these transformative years.

A Shifting Momentum: The French Alliance

By 1778, the American colonies were in dire need of external support to secure their independence. It was during this year that Benjamin Franklin, a prominent figure in the American Revolution, successfully negotiated a military alliance with the Kingdom of France. This development proved to be a game-changer.



Winning Independence: The Decisive Years of the Revolutionary War, 1778-1781

by John Ferling (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 68129 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

X-Ray : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 725 pages
Lending : Enabled



The French alliance not only provided the colonists with a powerful naval force but also brought in additional troops, expertise, and much-needed financial aid. This support bolstered the morale of the American troops and dealt a severe blow to British forces, who suddenly found themselves facing a larger and more formidable opponent.

One of the most significant elements of this alliance was the French decision to send troops and a fleet under the leadership of General Rochambeau and Admiral de Grasse to aid the colonists. This move would have a profound impact on the outcome of the war.

The Turning Point: The Battle of Saratoga

In the autumn of 1777, the American victory at the Battle of Saratoga marked a crucial turning point in the Revolutionary War. This triumph not only lifted the spirits of the colonists but also proved to be a turning point in gaining international recognition and support for the American cause.

The British plan to divide the colonies and control strategic points along the Hudson River was foiled by American General Horatio Gates and his troops. This decisive victory persuaded France to officially recognize the United States as an independent nation and enter into an alliance with them.

The Battle of Saratoga showcased the determination and military capabilities of the American forces, dispelling the notion of British invincibility. This victory

helped solidify the French alliance and set the stage for further significant developments in the coming years.

The Southern Campaign and the Siege of Yorktown

The year 1780 witnessed a shift in the British military strategy, as they turned their attention to the southern colonies. Their aim was to regain control of the region and divide the American forces. Though initially successful, this new campaign would ultimately lead to the downfall of the British Empire.

American General Nathanael Greene, known as the "Fighting Quaker," strategically employed guerilla warfare tactics, weakening British forces and hampering their advance. Additionally, the assistance provided by the French navy proved vital in preventing British reinforcements from reaching the southern colonies.

The climax of this southern campaign came in 1781 with the Siege of Yorktown. The combined forces of American and French troops, under the leadership of General George Washington and Admiral de Grasse respectively, successfully laid siege to the British-controlled town of Yorktown in Virginia.

On October 19, 1781, General Cornwallis, the British commander, surrendered, effectively ending the Revolutionary War. This victory was a culmination of the strategic maneuvers carried out during the decisive years of the war and marked the beginning of the end for the British Empire's hold on the American colonies.

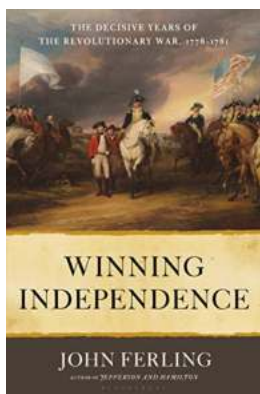
The Legacy of the Decisive Years

The years from 1778 to 1781 were undoubtedly pivotal in shaping the outcome of the Revolutionary War. The French alliance, the Battle of Saratoga, and the

Southern Campaign all played significant roles in securing American independence.

These years also highlighted the resilience and determination of the American colonists and their ability to overcome seemingly insurmountable odds. The victories achieved during this period boosted the confidence of the fledgling nation and solidified its position on the global stage.

The Revolutionary War not only laid the foundation for the birth of the United States but also had far-reaching implications for the future of democracy and independence movements around the world. The decisive years of 1778-1781 stand as a testament to the power of perseverance, collaboration, and the unwavering pursuit of freedom.



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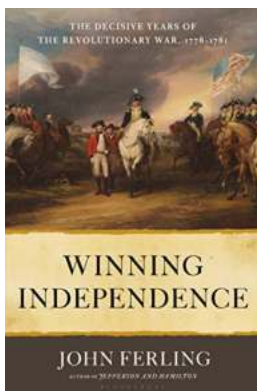
From celebrated historian John Ferling, the underexplored history of the second half of the Revolutionary War, when, after years of fighting, American

independence often seemed beyond reach.

It was 1778, and the recent American victory at Saratoga had netted the U.S a powerful ally in France. Many, including General George Washington, presumed France's entrance into the war meant independence was just around the corner.

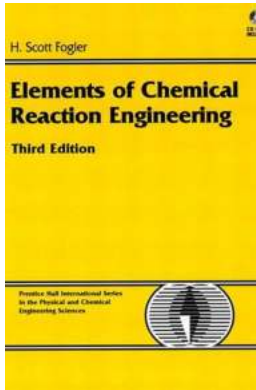
Meanwhile, having lost an entire army at Saratoga, Great Britain pivoted to a “southern strategy.” The army would henceforth seek to regain its southern colonies, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, a highly profitable segment of its pre-war American empire. Deep into 1780 Britain's new approach seemed headed for success as the U.S. economy collapsed and morale on the home front waned. By early 1781, Washington, and others, feared that France would drop out of the war if the Allies failed to score a decisive victory that year. Sir Henry Clinton, commander of Britain's army, thought “the rebellion is near its end.” Washington, who had been so optimistic in 1778, despaired: “I have almost ceased to hope.”

Winning Independence is the dramatic story of how and why Great Britain—so close to regaining several southern colonies and rendering the postwar United States a fatally weak nation ultimately failed to win the war. The book explores the choices and decisions made by Clinton and Washington, and others, that ultimately led the French and American allies to clinch the pivotal victory at Yorktown that at long last secured American independence.



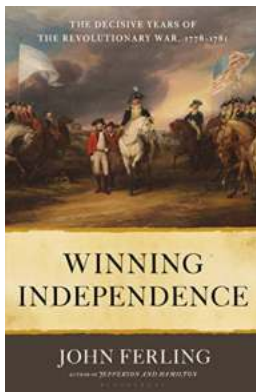
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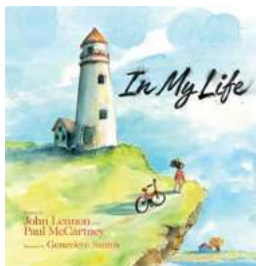
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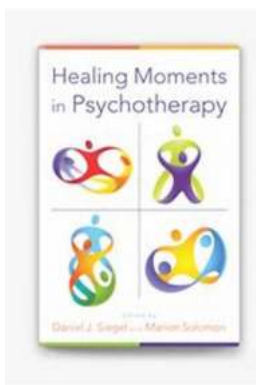
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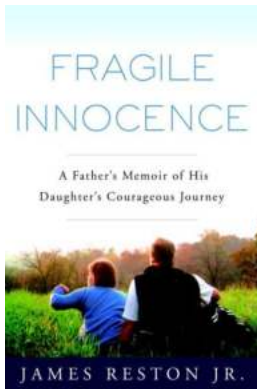
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