



American Victories of the Revolutionary War

The Revolutionary War began in 1775 and the battles between British troops and the American Continental Army continued until 1781. Dozens of major battles were fought all across the colonies, from Massachusetts and Vermont, south to Georgia, and west to the area of Kentucky. Both sides won important victories but, as you well know, the colonies succeeded in gaining their independence from Great Britain when the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1783, officially ending the war. Some of the battles were critical to the American army in their final defeat of the British forces.

The opening battle of the Revolutionary War occurred at Lexington, Massachusetts on April 19, 1775. Since fighting also occurred in the nearby town of Concord the battle is named the Battle of Lexington and Concord. British military officers were planning a secret raid to destroy the supplies of American militia forces stored in Concord. However, an informer provided information about the raid to the militia. Paul Revere and William Dawes made their famous nighttime ride to warn the militia in the towns outside of Boston that the British troops would be marching. This first battle of the Revolutionary War was a surprise attack on British troops conducted by militiamen of Massachusetts and they were successful.

A turning point in the Revolutionary War was the Battles of Saratoga that were fought in New York 18 days apart in September and October 1777. British General John Burgoyne had a strategic plan to divide the colonies by controlling the land in New York and he had the Continental Army in retreat. After the battles at Saratoga, General Burgoyne surrendered his troops and the colonies remained united.

The last major battle of the Revolutionary War was the Battle of Yorktown in Virginia in October 1781. In this battle, British troops faced a combined army of American and French soldiers. The British troops, under the command of General Cornwallis, were pinned in Yorktown because the city is a port on the Atlantic Ocean. Once the combined American and French forces sealed off exit routes, the British troops had no place to retreat. General Cornwallis surrendered and this was the last major land battle of the Revolutionary War.