





## The American Soldier, 1782

The British General Cornwallis surrendered his army at Yorktown to the allied American and French forces under Generals Washington and Rochambeau on 19 October 1781. That surrender is usually regarded as the end of the war, but it was not so regarded at the time. The capitulation at Yorktown involved the surrender of one of the three British armies in America and that one not the strongest. Charleston, the capital city of the south and a very strategic position, Wilmington, Savannah, and New York with its strong garrison were all in British hands. Peace was still more than a year away, and the forces in the south under General Nathanael Greene and in the north under General Washington had to keep the field in fair weather and in foul.

During that time the troops under General Greene, usually ill fed and clad, engaged in a series of minor actions and skirmishes and strenuous marches and countermarches. Under such leaders as Greene, Marion, Sumter, Sumner, and Lee, they forced the British to retire to Savannah and Charleston. In face of this constant American pressure the British gave up Savannah in July 1782 and evacuated Charleston in December of the same year.

In the right foreground is an enlisted artilleryman in the blue coat of that corps, faced and lined with red, and trimmed with yellow binding and buttons. His cocked hat is bound with yellow worsted binding and carries the black and white "Union" cockade. In the left and center foreground are shown a captain and a lieutenant. The captain wears an epaulette on his right shoulder and the lieutenant one on his left shoulder.

Both officers are wearing the uniform prescribed for the troops of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia in October 1779 of blue coats "faced with blue," i.e., blue collars, cuffs, and lapels, "button holes edged with narrow white lace or tape," lining of white cloth, and white buttons. Their coats, adapted to field service, reflect the shortages of supplies in that the buttonholes do not have the buttonholes edged with narrow silver lace which would have been worn by the officers in place of the prescribed "narrow white lace or tape" edging worn by the enlisted men on their buttonholes. In the background is seen a column of southern troops, in the prescribed uniform, with their wagons on the march.