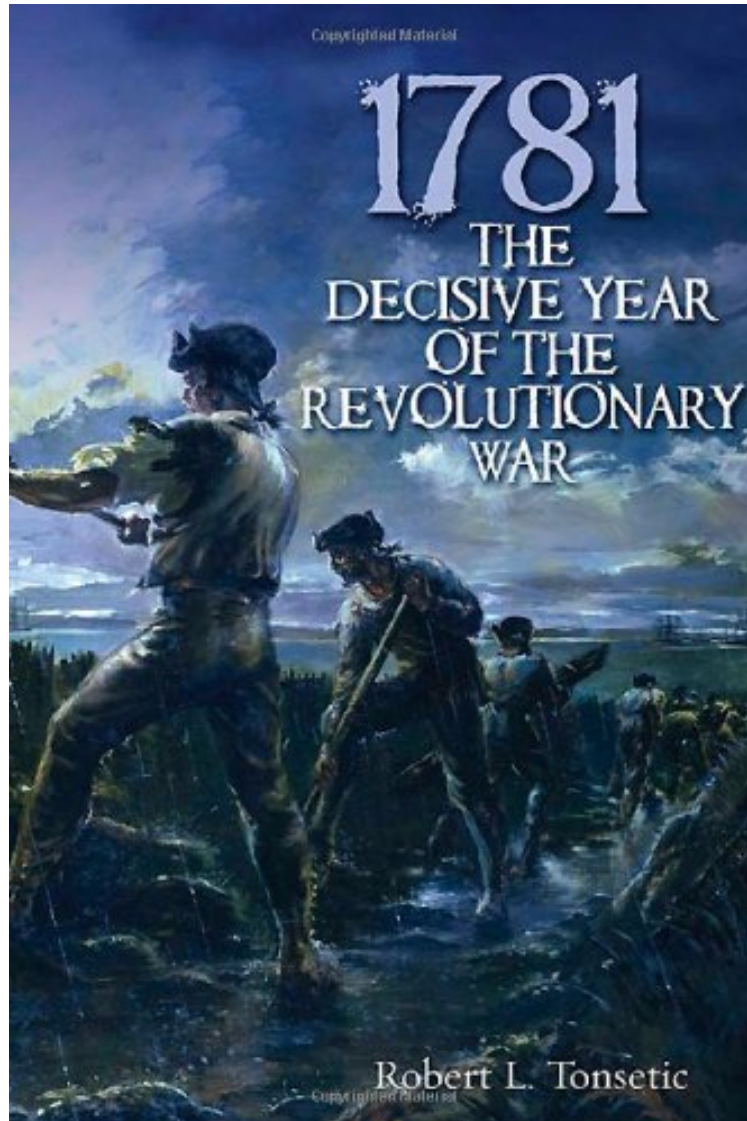


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1781: The Decisive Year of the Revolutionary War

Robert L. Tonsetic

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Robert L. Tonsetic : 1781: The Decisive Year of the Revolutionary War before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 1781: The Decisive Year of the Revolutionary War:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Interesting but LimitedBy Paul of OzI enjoyed the sweep and description of this book but found it an excellent Military History of the year.However I felt that it did not give enough emphasis on the politics of the war. In the description of Greene's strategy and battles I was reminded of the American conflict in Vietnam and how America would win battles but lose the Political War and this is what happened with Great Britain and its army in America.Indeed what the whole book showed was the need to tie the military means with

the political offensive, in other words von Clausewitz's war by other methods. I would have also enjoyed more of a discussion of the individuals in the conflict. It would also have been enjoyable to see how American society adapted to the war and the change in the status quo with Washington's and Greene's victories and the needs of the American army and Congress. I did also have a minor quibble with some editing the name Stewart and Stuart was used for the same person. 12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Enjoyable Read By Jeff9000 The Kindle Version of this book suffers from numerous editing errors including missing words, unnecessary hyphens, and just plain typos. That said, my biggest problem with the Kindle Version is that the maps are very poor resolution to the point of being unusable. The content itself is an enjoyable and fast paced read. The author presents a narrative history of the American Revolution in the year 1781. The Battles of Cowpens, Guilford Court House, and Eutaw Springs comprise some of the most interesting parts of the book with the climax at Yorktown. The real strength of the book in my opinion is that it develops the strategic situation leading to Yorktown. This book is a real treat to military history buffs, and the author deserves praise for his economy of words. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Book!! By Michael Lapelosa This book revolves around the year 1781, which the author claims was the critical year in which victory or defeat hung in the balance. While most people feel that the battle of Saratoga was the turning point of the revolutionary war, the author points out the perhaps overlooked importance of 1781 in determining the war's ultimate outcome. The troops were mutinous regarding lack of promised pay and disputes over term of enlistments. The British shifted their approach to a "Southern Strategy" and won a crushing victory at Charleston. The British were attempting to separate the colonies at retain the southern portion. Good, crisp prose, simple to read maps, vivid descriptions of battles and personalities give this narrative an urgency that engrosses the reader. The author highlights the overlooked importance of these campaigns and battles. This is an informative, entertaining and important book.

The Treaty of Paris in 1783 formally ended the American Revolutionary War, but it was the pivotal campaigns and battles of 1781 that decided the final outcome. 1781 was one of those rare years in American history when the future of the nation hung by a thread, and only the fortitude, determination, and sacrifice of its leaders and citizenry ensured its survival. By 1781, America had been at war with the world's strongest empire for six years with no end in sight. British troops occupied key coastal cities, from New York to Savannah, and the Royal Navy prowled the waters off the American coast. The remaining Patriot forces hunkered down in the hinterland, giving battle only at opportunities when British columns ventured near. But after several harsh winters, and the failure of the nascent government to adequately supply the troops, the American army was fast approaching the breaking point. The number of Continental soldiers had shrunk to less than 10,000, and the three-year enlistments of many of those remaining were about to expire. Mutinies began to emerge in the Continental Army's ranks, and it was only the arrival of French troops that provided a ray of hope for the American cause. In a shift of strategy given the stalemate between New York and Philadelphia, the British began to prioritize the south. After shattering the American army under Horatio Gates at Camden, South Carolina, the British army under Lord Cornwallis appeared unstoppable, and was poised to regain the Carolinas, Georgia, and Virginia for the Crown. However, when General Nathaniel Greene arrived to take command of Patriot forces in the south, he was able to gradually turn the tables. By dividing his own forces, he forced the British to divide theirs, dissipating their juggernaut and forcing Cornwallis to confront a veritable hydra of resistance. 1781 was a year of battles, as the Patriot Morgan defeated the notorious Tarleton and his Loyal legion at Cowpens. Then Greene suffered defeat at Guilford Courthouse, only to rally his forces and continue to fight on in the Carolinas and Georgia, assisted by such luminaries as Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox," and "Light Horse Harry" Lee. Rather than continuing his campaign in the Carolinas, Cornwallis marched his exhausted army to Yorktown on the Peninsula, upon which the combined American and French armies under the command of General Washington, and Admiral De Grasse's French fleet all converged. On October 19, 1781, Cornwallis surrendered his weary and bloodied army. In this book, Robert Tonsetic provides a detailed analysis of the key battles and campaigns of 1781, supported by numerous eyewitness accounts from privates to generals in the American, French, and British armies. He also describes the diplomatic efforts underway in Europe during 1781, as well as the Continental Congress's actions to resolve the immense financial, supply, and personnel problems involved in maintaining an effective fighting army in the field. With its focus on the climactic year of the war, 1781 is a valuable addition to the literature on the American Revolution, providing readers with a clearer understanding of how America, just barely, with fortitude and courage, retrieved its independence in the face of great odds.

"...Rather than deal with one culminating victory at Yorktown, the author explains the actions in the major theaters leading up to that most decisive victory. This book provides a panorama of the war... - Edward M. Coffman - The History Book Club" In 1781, Robert Tonsetic charts the course of this pivotal year in a full-blooded look at how America, just barely, with fortitude and courage, retrieved its independence in the face of overwhelming odds." Military Book Club "... the principal strength of Tonsetic's book is that he never takes the victory at Yorktown for granted as so many writers do ..., nor should he: Americans need periodic reminders that they could just as easily have lost." Steve Donoghue - Open Letters Monthly an Arts and Literature "...Tonsetic has a really clear, vivid writing

style...he brings just the right amount of human interest into the manoeuvring of armies and the machinations of generals by picking out individuals, and timely quotes from the times. ...I intend to seek out Mr. Tonsetic's earlier books on Vietnam." Paul Robinson, Staff Writer, *The War Gamer*. About the Author Robert Tonsetic graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 1964. He entered the Army the same year, and spent 27 years as an infantry officer retiring at the rank of Colonel. He was subsequently employed at the University of Central Florida, where he also earned a Doctorate in Education. He is the author of three previous books, *Warriors*, *An Infantryman's Memoir of Vietnam*, *Days of Valor*, *An Inside Account of the Bloodiest Six Months of the Vietnam War*, and *Forsaken Warriors*, *The Story of an American Advisor with the South Vietnamese Rangers and Airborne, 1970-71*.