



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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## Colonial National Historical Park News Release

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### Yorktown Battlefield Presents *Award-winning historian and actor-interpreter Jerome Bridges*

*Saturday, July 25<sup>th</sup>*

YORKTOWN, Va. – Beginning Saturday, July 25th, Yorktown Battlefield, the headquarters and a unit of Colonial National Historical Park, proudly presents its own Ranger Jerome Bridges and his portrayal of a soldier of color assigned to the Rhode Island Light Infantry, present at the battle of Yorktown, September and October of 1781. The outcome of this famous battle signaled the birth of a new nation, and the beginning of the end of British control of the thirteen American colonies.

Little is made of the fact that a substantial number of the soldiers of the Rhode Island regiment were indeed black men. Several historical references, most notably by French soldiers here during the battle, describe them as well-drilled, well-dressed, and well-respected. By the time of the battle at Yorktown in the fall of 1781, attrition had claimed a large percentage of the 1st Rhode Island "Black Regiment" and resulted in the consolidation of its companies with that of the 2nd Rhode Island. It would be thereafter referred to as simply the Rhode Island Regiment. The Rhode Island Regiment would be chosen by Major General La Fayette to execute the battle-changing attack on a part of the British outer defenses referred to as Redoubt #10. This attack is famous for not having fired a shot, but rather was accomplished at the point of a bayonet in darkness! This attack, combined with the simultaneous French attack on Redoubt #9, expedited the battle and forced a British surrender before the British relief fleet could arrive. Interestingly, that British fleet sent to relieve the besieged Lord Cornwallis would arrive only a few days after the surrender. One could only guess at the outcome had Redoubts 9 and 10 not been successfully taken, prolonging the battle, with the British fleet imminent!

Come visit with Jerome Bridges at the Yorktown Battlefield and learn about a black soldier in the American Revolution, on Saturdays, beginning July 25<sup>th</sup> and will run through September 5, 2015. Jerome will welcome visitors between 10 AM and Noon at the renowned Redoubt #10, and then at the historic Moore House (site of the surrender negotiations) from 1 PM until 3 PM. These presentations are free with normal park admission fee. Adults are \$7 each, good for seven days. Children 15 and under are free. National Park passes, including Senior passes, Access passes, and Military passes are welcomed. Visitors that do not already possess one of the aforementioned passes can obtain them at the Yorktown Battlefield visitor center.

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Colonial National Historical Park includes both Historic Jamestowne and Yorktown Battlefield. Historic Jamestowne is jointly administered by the National Park Service and Preservation Virginia and preserves the original site of the first permanent English settlement in the New World. Yorktown Battlefield interprets the final major battle of the American Revolution, the victory of General George Washington's army which secured independence for the United States. The Colonial Parkway continues to link the sites in its 23 miles, and is today recognized as an "All-American Road."

**ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System and its 406 National Park sites for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service works with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world. For more information, visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

