

Massachusetts in the  
American Revolution  
"Let It Begin Here"

BOSTON

An Exhibition from the  
Library and Museum Collections of  
The Society of the Cincinnati

BUNKER'S HILL, with the  
TOWN, June 17, 1775.



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Anderson House  
Washington, D. C.  
October 23, 1997 - May 2, 1998

**T**HIS catalogue has been produced in conjunction with the exhibit, *Massachusetts in the American Revolution: "Let It Begin Here,"* on display October 23, 1997 - May 2, 1998 at Anderson House, Headquarters, Library and Museum of the Society of the Cincinnati, 2118 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D. C. 20008. It is the first of a series of exhibitions focusing on the contributions of the individual states and the French alliance to the American Revolution.

Generous support for this exhibit was provided by the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati.

**I**N all the late *American* Disturbances, and in every Attempt against the Authority of the *British* Government, the People of *Massachusetts Bay* have taken the Lead. Every new Move towards Independence has been theirs: And in every fresh Mode of Resistance against the Laws, they have first set the Example, and then issued their admonitory letters to the other Colonies to follow it.

— Israel Mauduit. *A Short View of the History of the New England Colonies*. London: J. Wilkie, 1776.

Ellen McCallister Clark, Editor

Cover illustration: "View of the Attack of Bunker's Hill, with the Burning of Charles Town, June 17, 1775." [London, 1783]. See page 14.

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## INTRODUCTION

**M**ASSACHUSETTS was at the center of the political crisis that led to the American Revolution and became the setting for the first battles of the war. The brave and tenacious response of Massachusetts patriots to the outbreak of war inspired others throughout the colonies to enlist in the cause. It was to Massachusetts that the newly-appointed commander-in-chief, George Washington, came to take charge of the Continental forces—and when his army successfully forced the British to evacuate Boston, many Massachusetts regiments followed as the war effort moved south. The Massachusetts Continental line produced some of the Revolution’s greatest heroes—among them, Joseph Warren, Benjamin Lincoln, and Henry Knox.

As the war drew to a close, senior Massachusetts officers played a leading role in the founding of the Society of the Cincinnati, the nation’s first veterans’ organization. The Society’s Institution, authored by General Knox, called for the formation of constituent state societies. Fittingly, the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati was one of the first state societies to organize, counting among its original members many veterans of the war’s earliest engagements.

Drawing from the rich collections of the Society of the Cincinnati Library and Museum, this exhibit follows the course of Massachusetts’ participation in the American Revolution, from the earliest debates to the formation of the Society of the Cincinnati. The exhibition’s subtitle is taken from the famous words ascribed by tradition to Captain John Parker, commander of the band of militiamen who confronted British troops at Lexington on April 19, 1775: “Stand your ground. Don’t fire unless fired upon. But if they mean to have a war, let it begin here.”

## CASE 1: PREAMBLE

**H**ISTORIES, wrote William Gordon in his account of the events leading to the American Revolution, are written “for the purposes of showing the principles on which states and empires have risen to power and the errors by which they have fallen into decay...and of pointing out the fatal effects of...civil wars, whether arising from the ambition, weakness, or inattention of princes, or from the mercenary disposition, pride, and false policy of ministers and statesmen.” In a series of letters, Gordon relates the events that led inexorably to a war that some have called America’s first Civil War: among them the Seven Years’ War (referred to as the French and Indian War in the American theater), the Stamp Act, the Boston Massacre, the Port Bill and the Tea Party—events which are here represented by items selected from the Library’s collections.

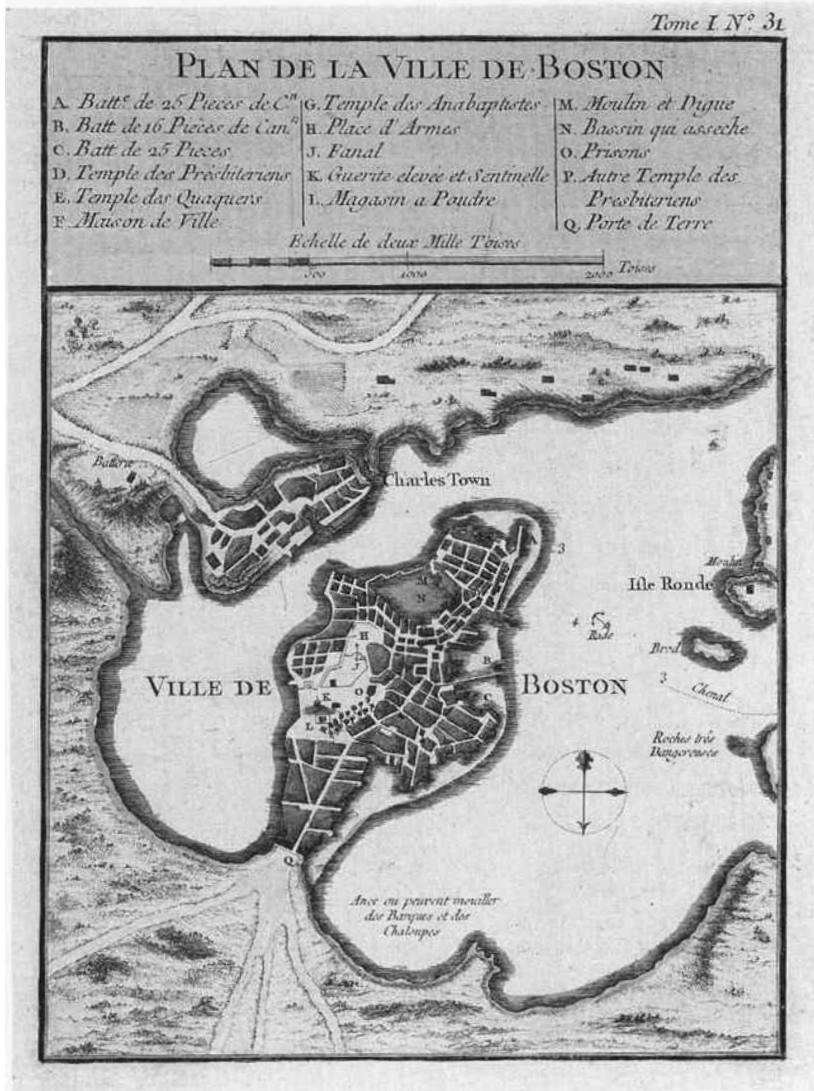
Jacques Nicolas Bellin (1703-1772). *Plan de la Ville de Boston*. [Paris, 1764].

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**T**HIS map of pre-Revolutionary Boston details her natural harbor as well as the military defenses then in place, remnants of the French and Indian War just ended. As the map shows, Boston was then a small town on a peninsula connected to the mainland only by a narrow neck of land to the south. The map’s legend specifies locations of batteries of cannon, the powder magazine and watchtower, as well as several churches. Bellin was royal hydrographer to King Louis XV of France.

William Gordon (1728-1807). *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America, including an Account of the Late War*. London: Printed for the Author, 1788.

Gift of Thomas B. Cormack, Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Virginia



**G**ORDON was an English divine who removed to America in 1770 and soon became a partisan of the American cause. As chaplain to the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, he had access to the “best materials, whether oral, written, or printed” and included them in this work, published— after serious editing—in England. Among the American subscribers listed in volume one were George Washington and John Adams, Massachusetts Governor James Bowdoin, and Lieutenant Governor (erstwhile General) Benjamin Lincoln. Francis Weaver, whose name is inscribed on the title page, was an English subscriber.

“Die Einwohner von Boston Werfen den Englisch-Ostindischen Thee ins Meer am 18 December 1773.”  
Engraving by Daniel Chodowiecki (1726-1801).  
Published in M.C. Sprengel. *Historisch-genealogischer Calender, oder Jahrbuch der Merkwürdigsten Neuen Welt-Begebenheiten für 1784.*  
Leipzig: Haude und Spener von Berlin, [1783].

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**P**ASSED in order to save the mismanaged East India Company from bankruptcy, the Tea Act imposed a duty of three shillings per pound on some half a million pounds of tea destined for America. On December 16, 1773, outraged more by the unfairness of the Act than by the amount of the tax, a group of Bostonians disguised as Indians dumped 342 chests of



tea into Boston Harbor, incurring the wrath of King George and his advisors, who demanded recompense. Tensions then escalated on both sides of the Atlantic. (The 18 December date in the caption is incorrect.)

**Josiah Quincy (1744-1775). *Observations on the Act of Parliament Commonly Called the Boston Port-Bill.* Boston: Printed for and sold by Edes and Gill, 1774.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**J**OSIAH Quincy reviews the events leading to the Boston Tea Party and accuses England of the “calm deliberation of premeditated malice: I speak it with grief—I speak it with anguish—Britons are our oppressors: I speak it with shame—I speak it with indignation—we are slaves.”

Despite these long-held and strong sentiments, Quincy had four years earlier, out of a “strong sense of honour and duty,” acted as a defense attorney for the English soldiers accused in the Boston Massacre.

**Edward Holt. *The Public and Domestic Life of His Late Most Gracious Majesty George the Third.* (Vol. 1) London: Printed for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, 1820.**

Purchased, 1985

**K**ING George III (1738-1820) is today remembered as the monarch who lost America, then the “jewel in the crown” of the British Empire. One of the more articulate spokesmen opposing the king’s American policy was William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, who in January, 1775, moved to recall the troops from Boston: “Every danger impends to deter you from the present ruinous measures; foreign war hangs over your head by a slight and brittle thread; France and Spain are watching your conduct and waiting for the maturity of your errors. If ministers persevere in their present measures, I will not assert that the King is betrayed, but I will pronounce that the kingdom is undone.” Despite such warnings, the king continued to pursue his policy of intervention and punishment.

R. T. Haines Halsey (1865-1942). *The Boston Port Bill as Pictured by a Contemporary London Cartoonist*. New York: The Grolier Club, 1904.

Purchased, 1976

“THE Wise Men of Gotham and their Goose” depicts a power-loving king and his “wise” advisors who ignore the commercial value of the goose—the colonies whose golden eggs have long contributed to Great Britain’s coffers. Instead, Parliament attempts to levy further taxes despite the protests of the colonies and despite the inevitable outcome: “bloodshed of the people who were attempting to defend the liberty which they were entitled to possess all along.”

Though unsigned, the original engraving was probably the work of Phillip Dawe, a pupil of the more famous William Hogarth; the publisher was the well-known London firm of Sayer and Bennet.

Selectmen of Essex, Massachusetts, by John Baker, To[wn] Cler[k] to Daniel Potter, Constable of Ipswich, 13 December 1775. A.D.S., 1p. Endorsed with statement by Potter on verso.

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

THIS circular letter instructs the constable to notify the town’s freeholders of a meeting called to determine whether “the Town will Dismiss the Committee of Correspondence” as required by the Massachusetts Government Act.

Perhaps the most offensive of the Intolerable Acts foisted upon the colonists, the Massachusetts Government Act directed, among other things, that town meetings were to be permitted only with the royal governor’s permission. In short, the Act completely negated the Massachusetts Charter of 1691, and, it was argued, broke England’s own constitutional rules which required judicial not legislative proceedings. Potter’s endorsement on the verso indicates that he duly carried out the order.

“The Bloody Massacre Perpetrated in King Street Boston on March 5th 1770 by a Party of the 29th Reg!” Colored engraving after Henry Pelham and Paul Revere; possibly a contemporary forgery by Jonathan Milliken.

Collection of the late Irraine Barry Read; on loan from Oliver Read 3rd, Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina.

FOR at least two reasons, the Boston Massacre is among the best remembered of the catalytic events leading to the American Revolution. One is that five civilians died at the hands of the British soldiers, among them a young boy named Samuel Maverick, and Crispus Attucks, a mulatto believed to be one of the leaders of the mob. A second reason is this famous colored engraving of the event, advertized in the *Boston Gazette* of March 26th as “A Print containing a Representation of the late horrid Massacre in King Street.” Though bearing little resemblance to the actual melee—it occurred at night, in snow-covered streets; Attucks was not white; the soldiers organized in a semicircle not a straight line; and “Butcher’s Hall” was in fact the Customs House—it was an effective propaganda piece, serving further to rally citizens to the patriots’ cause.

Patrick Carr, though mortally wounded, survived four days—long enough to testify that the soldiers had been provoked beyond reason, that they had fired in self-defense, and that he bore them no malice. This testimony contributed to the acquittal of most of the soldiers, among them their commander, Captain Thomas Preston.

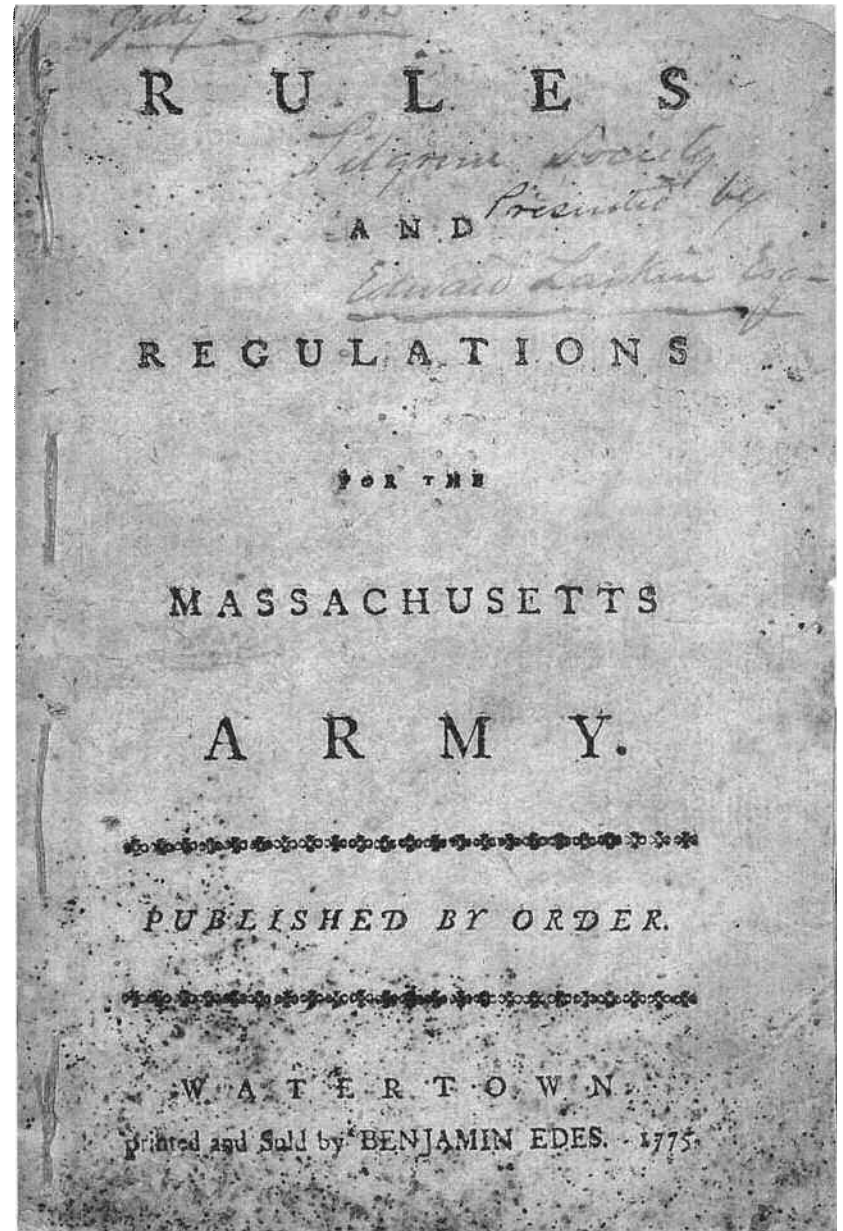
## CASE 2: THE BATTLES OF LEXINGTON AND CONCORD, APRIL 19, 1775

**O**N April 19, 1775, American resistance to British rule turned to armed rebellion. Under orders from General Thomas Gage, Lt. Colonel Francis Smith led a force of 700 British regulars on an expedition to seize colonial military supplies stockpiled at Concord, then the seat of the Provincial Congress. Warned of the British movements by Paul Revere, William Dawes, and Samuel Prescott, local militia and minutemen from dozens of towns answered the alarm. The first confrontation—and first bloodshed of the war—occurred at Lexington, when a British advance party met a waiting group of Massachusetts patriots standing in protest on the town green. Moving on to Concord, the British infantry managed to destroy some gun carriages and supplies, but suffered its first casualties at the North Bridge. Forced to retreat by the intensity of the American response, the British troops found their 20-mile route back to Boston had been turned into a battlefield as they were ambushed and harassed by nearly incessant gunfire from the militia along the way. At the end of the day, the British had suffered 73 killed, 174 wounded and 26 missing, while American casualties were 49 killed, 97 wounded and 5 missing. The War for American Independence had begun.

E. Boyd Smith (1860-1943). *Lexington, 19 April 1775*.  
Watercolor and ink, 1920.

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**I**N the early morning hours of April 19, 1775, a group of about 70 armed men under the command of Captain John Parker formed on the green at Lexington having been forewarned of the approach of six companies of British regulars from Boston. Parker's men were under orders to stand fast and not fire unless fired upon. As the British infantry advanced upon the Americans, a shot was fired—its source disputed—setting off a skirmish that left eight Americans dead.





**Rules and Regulations for the Massachusetts Army.** Published by Order. Watertown: Printed and Sold by Benjamin Edes, 1775.

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

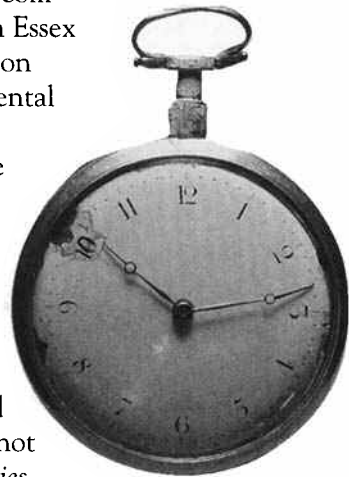
**A**DOPTED by the Massachusetts Provincial Congress on April 5, 1775, just two weeks before the battles of Lexington and Concord, this was probably the first manual issued for the use of American troops. The Watertown edition includes a resolution that the regulations will also apply to the “Soldiers rais’d for Defence of the Sea Coast.” The manual’s introduction, signed by John Hancock, states its sober purpose: “The great Law of Self-Preservation may suddenly require our raising & keeping an Army of Observation & Defence, in order to prevent, or repel, any farther Attempts to enforce the late cruel & oppressive Acts of the British Parliament....”

**Timothy Pickering’s Pocket Watch.** Made in London, 1795.

Gift of Mrs. John T. G. Nichols

**Portrait of Timothy Pickering.** Engraved by T. B. Welch from a drawing by J. B. Longacre after Gilbert Stuart, 1835.

**T**IMOTHY Pickering (1745-1829) commanded a militia regiment from Essex County that answered the Lexington alarm. He later served the Continental Army as adjutant general, quartermaster general, and member of the Board of War. A military scholar and author of a widely-used treatise on military discipline, Pickering wrote in 1775, “Almost every *free State* affords an Instance of a National Militia: For *Freedom* cannot be maintained without *Power*; and Men who are not in a Capacity to *defend* their *Liberties*, will certainly *lose* them.”



Massachusetts Committee of Safety. Cambridge, 24 April 1775. Partially printed document authorizing Samuel Leighton to “inlist a company to consist of 59 [corrected in ink to 56] able-bodied and effective men...for the preservation of American liberty...” [signed] Jos. Warren.

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**W**ITHIN a week of the battles of Lexington and Concord, the Massachusetts Committee of Safety began mustering companies of men. This document is signed twice by Joseph Warren (1741-1775), who only the previous day had succeeded John Hancock as president of the Provincial Congress. As a reward for his successful recruitment of soldiers, Samuel Leighton was given the position of captain in Colonel James Scammon’s Massachusetts Battalion, which served until December 1775.

“The Struggle on Concord Bridge.” Drawn by Alonzo Chappel, engraved by W. J. Edwards. Published in Robert Tomes, *Battles of America by Sea and Land* (Vol. 1), New York: Virtue, Yorston and Company, 1859.

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**T**HIS nineteenth-century engraving depicts the confrontation of the Massachusetts militia (under the command of Colonel James Barrett) and British soldiers on the North Bridge over the Concord River on April 19th. As the Americans advanced, the outnumbered British began removing planks from the bridge before retreating toward Concord to take up formation for street fighting. The militia, however, was moving too quickly in pursuit. The British fired first, instigating a three-minute exchange of fire that left three British regulars dead and eight wounded. The Americans lost two men killed and three wounded but succeeded in driving the British back into town.



### CASE 3: THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL, JUNE 17, 1775

**T**HE relationship between Britain and America was irreversibly changed by the Battle of Bunker Hill (also known as the Battle of Breed's Hill). Before the battle, the Americans maintained some hope of reconciliation and the British were not yet resigned to war, but the battle hardened the positions of both sides and made the continuation of war unavoidable. Unusually heavy casualties of British officers undermined the confidence of the British army, while the mere survival of American forces bolstered American confidence, as it had shortly before at Lexington and Concord. The American army was assembling a battery on the heights above Charlestown, and planned to attack British forces in Boston. The British, learning of the American plans, quickly attacked their fortifications and burned Charlestown to deny the Americans a source of supplies and a place of refuge. British forces, led by Generals Thomas Gage and William Howe, suffered 226 killed and 828 wounded, with 19 officers killed and 70 officers wounded. The Americans, under the command of Colonel William Prescott and General Israel Putnam suffered an estimated 140 killed, and 301 wounded, with 30 captured. The day marked a turning point for both sides. After that battle, the British never again displayed quite the same degree of confidence and contempt, and the Americans no longer viewed the British army as invincible.

**“View of the Attack of Bunker’s Hill, with the Burning of Charles Town, June 17, 1775.” [London, 1783]. Hand-colored engraving after a drawing by George Henry Millar, engraved by John Lodge for Edward Barnard’s *The New, Comprehensive and Complete History of England*.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection  
[cover illustration]

**T**HE British artillery began the attack on Charlestown in the early afternoon of June 17, 1775 and most of the town of about 300 houses was in heavy flames by 4:00 p.m. The burning of civilian homes especially shocked the people of Boston and provided the American troops with even more incentive to fight. British General John Burgoyne, who witnessed the battle from Copp’s Hill, described the scene as “a complication of horror and importance beyond anything that ever came to my lot to witness. Sure I am, nothing ever has or can be more dreadfully terrible than what was to be seen or heard at this time. The most incessant discharge of guns that ever was heard with mortal ears....”

**John Clarke. *An Impartial and Authentic Narrative of the Battle Fought on the 17th of June, 1775: between His Britannic Majesty’s Troops and the American Provincial Army, on Bunker’s Hill, near Charles Town, in New-England: with a True and Faithful Account of the Officers who were Killed and Wounded in that Memorable Battle...* London: Printed for the author. Sold by J. Millan, J. Bew, – Sewell, 1775.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**T**HIS eye-witness account of the battle, written by a first lieutenant in the British Marines, emphasizes the heavy casualties among British officers: “As it is very uncommon, that such a great number of officers should be killed and wounded more than in proportion to the number of private men...Another remarkable circumstance of the heat of this action, is, that all the Grenadiers of the Fourth or King’s own Regiment, were killed or wounded, except four....” He notes that in addressing his troops, General Howe said “We have no recourse to any resources, if we lose Boston, but to go on board our ships, which will be very disagreeable to us all ....”

**Edward Drewe. *Military Sketches*. Exeter: Printed by B. Thorn and Son: Sold by J. Debrett (Successor to Mr. Almon), 1784.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**E**DWARD Drewe was a major of the 35th Regiment of Foot who served in North America and the West Indies from 1775 to 1781. He was wounded at Bunker Hill and wrote this poem to a friend in the army while heading back to England for treatment. According to the poem, they had been friends since childhood and were sent to Boston when "Discord rear'd her torch." The author reminisces about the two playing as soldiers while they were young and prophesies that his friend's life will be spared and that the rebellion will be crushed. In a footnote Drewe writes that he was wrong about the rebellion, but that his friend returned home safely.

**Silver-Mounted Flintlock Pistols (pair; 3/8" bore). Maker: J. King, London, England, ca. 1775-1780.**

Gift of Mrs. Eleanor Ward Wheeler Reichner and Mrs. Christabel Ward Wheeler Priestley



**T**HESE pistols were presented to Colonel Joseph Ward (1737-1812) by General George Washington. Ward had joined the Minutemen at Lexington and served with distinction at the Battle of Bunker Hill. He was captured by a British scouting party in 1778, was exchanged in 1779, and was subsequently commissioned commissary general of musters. Upon Colonel Ward's retirement from that office in January 1781, Washington wrote to him commending the "zeal you have discovered at all times and under all circumstances to promote the general good of the service and the great objects of our cause."

**David Humphreys (1752-1818). *An Essay on the Life of the Honourable Major General Israel Putnam: Addressed to the State Society of the Cincinnati in Connecticut: and First Published by Their Order...With an Appendix Containing an Historical and Topographical Sketch of Bunker Hill Battle* by S. Swett. Boston : Published by Samuel Avery, 1818.**

Gift of Bryce Metcalf, President General of The Society of the Cincinnati, 1939-1950

**H**UMPHREY'S account of the life of General Israel Putnam was written as an address to the Connecticut Society of the Cincinnati in 1788, but it appears from the dedicatory letter that his duties as a secretary to George Washington at Mount Vernon prevented him from delivering it in person. The appendix to this 1818 publication is an account of the events at Bunker Hill by Samuel Swett (1782-1866), including the chart shown of the organization of the Massachusetts regiments that participated in the battle.

**Perez Morton (1751-1837). *An Oration Delivered at the King's-Chapel in Boston, April 8, 1776, on the Re-interment of the Remains of the Late Most Worshipful Grand-Master Joseph Warren, Esquire, President of the Late Congress of this Colony, and Major-General of the Massachusetts Forces, who was Slain in the Battle of Bunker's-Hill, June 17, 1775*. Boston: Printed, and to be sold by J. Gill, 1776.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**J**OSEPH Warren was an early supporter of American independence and a president of the Provincial Congress who led a committee to raise an army. Visiting Bunker Hill, he realized a battle was imminent and volunteered as a soldier. He was shot through the face and killed instantly during the final assault. General Howe is said to have declared that Warren was worth five hundred of his men. Warren's body was initially buried in an unmarked grave on the battlefield, and it was not found until the following spring when Paul Revere identified it by Warren's false teeth. In April 1776, his remains were re-interred with appropriate ceremonies, when Morton delivered a eulogy, saying of Warren, "the greatness of his soul shone even in the moment of death;...in his last agonies he met the insults of his barbarous foe...with the true spirit of a soldier...."

**"The Battle at Bunker's Hill near Boston, June 17th 1775."**  
Engraved by Johann Gotthard Müller, 1788, after the original painting by John Trumbull (1786). Published by A.C. de Poggi, London, 1798.

**T**RUMBULL'S original painting, now in the collection of the Yale University Art Gallery, was the first of his series of scenes of the American Revolution painted under the tutelage of Benjamin West. Trumbull had himself witnessed the battle through field glasses while stationed across Boston Harbor at Roxbury. His image of the death of General Warren was widely acclaimed in Europe and America; Benjamin West called it "The *best picture* of a modern battle that has been painted...*no Man* living can paint such another picture of that scene." Because English engravers were reluctant take on images sympathetic to the American side, Trumbull took his painting to Stuttgart, Germany, where it was engraved by Müller.

#### **CASE 4: THE SIEGE OF BOSTON, JUNE, 1775 - MARCH, 1776**

**O**N June 15, 1775, the Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia appointed George Washington commander-in-chief of the Continental Army and directed him to go immediately to Boston to take command of the forces. According to William Heath, news of the appointment reached the Massachusetts soldiers in camp on June 21st, four days after the Battle of Bunker Hill. When General Washington finally arrived at Headquarters in Cambridge on July 3, 1775, he met ragged and battle-worn troops. He immediately began to institute administrative changes in preparation for a major reorganization of the army that would go into effect at the beginning of the new year. The British forces also underwent a change of command in September when General Thomas Gage received orders to return to England, and General William Howe became his successor.

Washington's campaign to end British occupation of the city was greatly strengthened by the arrival of cannon and mortar captured from Fort Ticonderoga, along with fresh troops sent by Congress in January 1776. In early March, the American forces were able to gain strategic position on Dorchester Heights, while a late-winter storm thwarted the British plans for assault. Finally General Howe announced plans for evacuation, offering to spare the city itself if Washington would allow the British forces to leave without further incident. On March 17, 1776, the British forces sailed away from Boston, never to return.

**William Heath (1737-1814). *Memoirs of Major-General Heath. Containing Anecdotes, Details of Skirmishes, Battles, and other Military Events, during the American War. Written by Himself. Published according to Act of Congress.* Boston: By I. Thomas and E. T. Andrews, 1798.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**H**EATH, an early and ardent supporter of the patriot cause, was a member of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress and Committee of Safety. A general in the militia, he served with distinction at Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill. When the Continental Congress took charge of the army, he was appointed brigadier general under Washington and commanded the lines at Roxbury during the Siege of Boston. He was promoted to major general in 1776, in which position he served until the end of the war. His *Memoirs* are presented in journal form, offering a day-by-day account of events of the war from the perspective of a member of the Massachusetts line.

*“On the 15th [of June, 1775], Congress appointed GEORGE WASHINGTON Commander in Chief; . . . and made provision for raising an army for the defence of the United Colonies.”*

*“January 1st, 1776 presented a great change in the American army. The officers and men of the new regiments were joining their respective corps; and those of the old regiments were going home by hundreds and by thousands. . . Such a change in the very teeth of the enemy, is a most delicate manoeuver, but the British did not attempt to take advantage of it.”*

*“17th. [March, 1776]—In the morning the British evacuated Boston; their rear guard, with some marks of precipitation. . . The [Continental] troops on the Roxbury side, moved over to the neck and took possession of Boston; as did others from Cambridge, in boats. On the Americans entering the town, the inhabitants discovered joy inexpressible. . . .”*

**Small box made from wood of “The Washington Elm.”  
Inscription: “This box was made from the wood of the Washington Elm by John E. Winston of Cambridge, Massachusetts and presented by him June 30th 1895 to Oswald Tilghman (father of Harrison Tilghman)”**

Gift of Colonel Harrison Tilghman

**G**EORGE Washington took command of the Continental forces in Cambridge on July 3, 1775. While there is little tangible evidence to support the tradition that he did so under

an elm that stood on the northwest corner of the Cambridge Common, the tree served as a symbol of Massachusetts’ contributions to the cause for independence until it fell in 1923.

**Edmund Bancroft (d. 1777). Manuscript Orderly Book, Cambridge, Massachusetts, September 16 - December 26, 1775. 108 p.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**T**HIS early example of field paperwork records daily paroles, countersigns, disciplinary actions, discharges and supply shortages, and provides an eyewitness account of General Washington’s reorganization of the army during the Siege of Boston: “Head Quarters/26 th of October 1775. . . The General Directs, that Every officer in the army do forthwith Declare. . . whether he will or will not continue in the Service. . . the times and Importance of the Great Cause we are Engaged in allows no Room for hesitation & Delay when Life Liberty & Property are at Stake, when our Country is in Danger of being a Malloncolly Scene of Blood Shead & Desolation when our towns have been laid in ashes and Innocent women & children are dreaven from their Peacable habitation. . . .”

A sergeant in Colonel William Prescott’s Regiment at the time this book was kept, Edmund Bancroft rose to the rank of first lieutenant in the 15th Massachusetts before he died in service on June 25, 1777.

**“H Knox.” Steel engraving after Alonzo Chappel, published by Jackson, Fry & Co., New York, 1862.**

Gift of Walter F. Rucker, Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Virginia

**H**ENRY Knox (1750-1806) was the successful proprietor of a Boston bookstore when he volunteered to serve under General Artemas Ward during the Battle of Bunker Hill. An avid student of the art of war, Knox’s knowledge and enthusiasm impressed General Washington when he arrived in Cambridge. On November 17, 1775, Knox was appointed colonel of the Continental Regiment of Artillery, in which

capacity he would carry out his proposed plan to bring badly needed cannon and mortar to Boston from recently captured Fort Ticonderoga 300 miles away. The transporting of heavy artillery across snow-covered New York and New England in boats and oxen-drawn sledges—



Knox’s “Noble Train of Artillery”—was a remarkable feat of engineering and perseverance.

### Cannon Ball.

Gift of Timothy H. Holden

**T**HIS four-pound British cannon ball was fired at Captain Jonas Holden during the struggle to capture Fort Ticonderoga. Retained as a souvenir of the war, it remained in the Holden family for more than 200 years.

## CASE 5: SERVICE IN THE MASSACHUSETTS LINE

**A**CCORDING to Robert K. Wright, Jr., *The Continental Army* (Washington, D.C., 1983), Massachusetts fielded 37 Continental Regiments during the American Revolution. One, Henry Jackson’s Continental Regiment, organized at West Point in November 1783, took part in no engagements; eleven others served only during the Siege of Boston. The remaining 25 regiments took part in 14 engagements during the course of the war. (See chart on page 28.)

In addition, companies from the 1st through 8th Massachusetts formed a temporary regiment under Colonel Elijah Vose (MA), and two Massachusetts companies serving under Washington joined with companies from Rhode Island and Connecticut to form a temporary regiment under Colonel Jean-Joseph Gimat (FR), both of which served in the 1781 campaign in the South.

**Henry Burbeck (1754-1848).** Engraved portrait by Charles Balthazar de Saint-Mémin, 1806.

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**L**IKE many in the Massachusetts line, Henry Burbeck’s service extended for the full duration of the war. He was only 21 when he enlisted as a volunteer in Colonel Richard Gridley’s Artillery Regiment shortly before the Battle of Bunker Hill. With the reorganization of the army, he was appointed 1st lieutenant in General Knox’s Continental Artillery and rose through the ranks of the artillery corps. Following the evacuation of Boston, Burbeck marched with Washington to New York, and took part in the action at Saratoga, Brandywine, Valley Forge and Monmouth. After the war, he remained in military service and became a brevet brigadier general of the artillery during the War of 1812. Burbeck played a key role in the founding of the United States Military Academy at West Point and was an original member of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, serving as its president from 1846 to 1848.

[Samuel Bever]. *The Cadet. A Military Treatise by an Officer.*  
London: Printed for W. Johnston, 1756.

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**T**HIS military treatise belonged to General Henry Burbeck, and descended to his son, William Henry Burbeck (1823-1905), who succeeded him as a member of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati in 1850. Of his own education, General Burbeck wrote in later life that it was modest, “but on a par with the rest of the officers in general. As they obtained the object they desired (viz. the independence of the country), a classical education could not have done more or better.”

**Massachusetts State Treasury. Bill of Credit issued October, 1778, for One Shilling Six Pence.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

**T**HIS was one of a series of bills in small denominations issued by the state of Massachusetts in accordance with an Act of the House of Representatives, October 13, 1778, as part of the funding of the war effort. The face is a pine tree design from a reworked plate by

Paul Revere. The reverse states that the bearer is to receive “Eighteen pence out of the Treasury of the State by the 18 of Octo. 1784” and is signed by George Partridge, a member of the House committee appointed to number and sign bills.



**Paymaster's Scales.**

Gift of Mrs. Joseph Manley Mellen

**T**HESE scales were used by Captain Henry Sewall, 2nd Regiment Massachusetts Continental Line, in his role as army paymaster. Later, as an aide to General William Heath, Sewall would assist with the early paperwork involved in forming the constituent state societies of the Society of the Cincinnati. In May of 1783, with General Heath at Newburgh, New York, Sewall wrote to his parents of the new veterans' organization: “The officers of the army, desirous to perpetuate as well the remembrance of this great revolution as the mutual friendships which have been formed under the pressure of common danger, are about to form themselves into one *Society of friends* to be stiled the *Society of the Cincinnati* from that illustrious Roman Quinctius Cincinnatus, who after having served his country in the day of danger in the field in the character of general, returned again to private life ‘nobly seized the plough and greatly independently lived.’”

**Henry Jackson (1747-1809). “Return of the 4th Massachusetts Regiment of Foot commanded by Henry Jackson, Esq. Colonel... Completed at the Cantonment of the 1st Massachusetts Brigade 31 Jan. 1783.”** Partially printed document, published by Francis Bailey, Philadelphia; signed by Henry Jackson.

Purchased, 1984

**T**HIS return made in the last year of the war enumerates by rank officers and men of nine companies, including the names of those sick and absent. The totals indicate 376 men fit for action, 11 of whom were “wanting arms.” Also listed is Lieutenant [Andrew] Garrett, a prisoner of war who was captured at Cherry Valley, New York, on November 10, 1778, and held until March 1783. Henry Jackson had commanded an additional Continental regiment, known as the “Boston Regiment” between 1777 and 1781, and also served in the 16th and 9th regiments of the Massachusetts line. He was a life-long friend of Major General Henry Knox and served as the first treasurer of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati.



**Captain-Lieutenant John Johnston (1753-1818). Self portrait; pastel on paper, 1783. Signed: "J Johnston P[inxt] Aeta 30."**

Gift from the estate of Parker Soren, a descendant of the subject

**B**ORN into a family of artists, John Johnston was himself working as an artisan-painter when he interrupted his career to serve in the American Revolution. He joined Colonel Richard Gridley's Artillery Regiment in April 1775, and was commissioned a captain-lieutenant in Knox's Artillery Regiment in January 1776. He was severely wounded and taken prisoner by the British at the Battle of Long Island in August 1776. Later exchanged, he received an honorable discharge in 1777, and became a successful portrait painter in Boston.



Cincinnati, apparently overlooked Earl's earlier Tory sympathies in commissioning this portrait of his wife.



**Mrs. John Johnston (Martha Speare Johnston) Oil on canvas by Ralph Earl (1751-1801). Signed: "R. Earl Pinxt 1785"**

Gift from the estate of Parker Soren, a descendant of the subject

**R**ALPH Earl painted this portrait of Martha Speare Johnston shortly after his return to America following seven years of study in England. Considered a landmark of Earl's work, this painting demonstrates his mastery of the fashionable British style of portraiture and the strong influence of the work of George Romney. Fellow artist, John Johnston, a war veteran and founding member of the Massachusetts Society of the

# Engagements in Which Massachusetts Continental Units Took Part

Compiled by the late Walter B. Smith II,  
Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Campaign:</b>	<b>Number of Massachusetts Regiments:</b>
June 75- Mar. 76	Siege of Boston	36
May-June 1776	Defense of Canada	3
Aug.-Sept. 1776	City of New York	11
Oct. 1776	Lake Champlain	5
Nov.-Dec. 1776	Northern New Jersey	9
Dec. 76-Jan.'77	Trenton-Princeton	11
Oct. 1777	Saratoga	14
1778	Mohawk Valley	1
May-June 1778	Defense of Philadelphia	11
June 1778	Monmouth, New Jersey	14
1778	Iroquois	1
August 1778	Rhode Island	7
1779	Iroquois	1
June-July 1780	New Jersey	1

## CASE 6: THE FOUNDING OF THE MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY OF THE CINCINNATI

ON April 19, 1783, the eighth anniversary of the battles of Lexington and Concord, General Washington announced to his army the cessation of hostilities. This welcome news gave impetus to a long-circulating plan to create an organization of veteran officers. On May 10th, a delegation of officers gathered at General Steuben's headquarters in Fishkill, New York to organize the Society of the Cincinnati. Their purpose, set forth in the Society's Institution, was: "To perpetuate the remembrance of the achievement of national independence, as well as the mutual friendships which had been formed under the pressure of common danger."

The Institution further stipulated that "for the sake of frequent communications" the General Society would be divided into constituent state societies. The officers of the Massachusetts Continental line were among the first to answer this call, organizing the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati on June 9, 1783. Their first meeting, called by General William Heath, was held at New Windsor, New York, with Brigadier General John Paterson presiding. Ballots were taken for the state officers, and on June 20th it was announced that Major General Benjamin Lincoln had been chosen president; Major General Henry Knox, vice president; Colonel John Brooks, secretary, and Colonel Henry Jackson, treasurer. The Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati was the largest of the constituent state societies, with 341 original members—nearly half the officers who would have been eligible to join.

**Institution of The Society of the Cincinnati. Cantonment of the American Army on Hudsons River (Newburgh), 10th May 1783. Contemporary manuscript copy, endorsed by Major General Steuben. 8 p., folio.**

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. William Randolph Hearst, Jr., in memory of Mr. William Randolph Hearst, Sr.

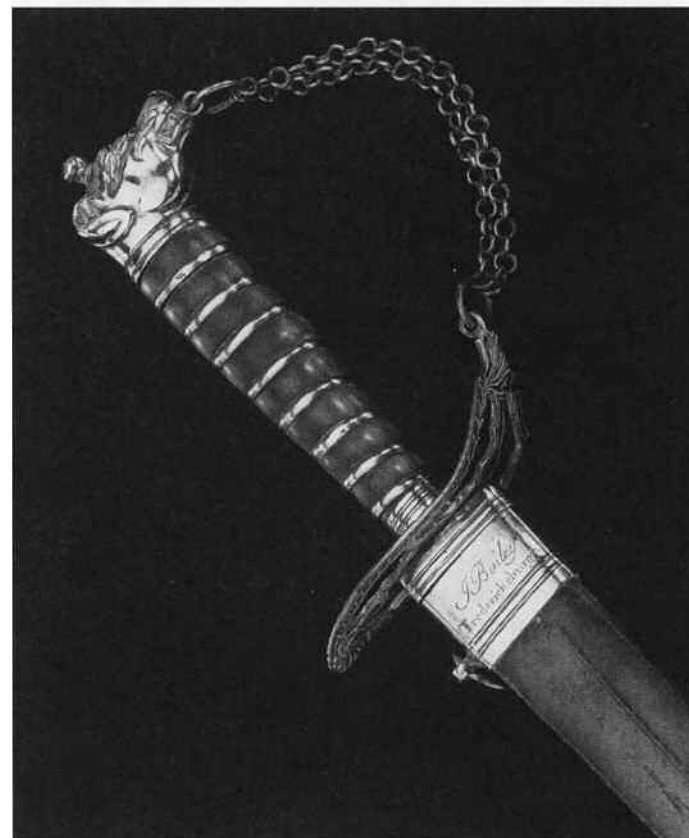
**T**HIS manuscript copy of the Society's Institution belonged to Major General Friedrich von Steuben, who, with Henry Knox, was one of the guiding forces behind the formation of the Society of the Cincinnati. A Prussian officer who joined the American cause in 1778, Steuben became a member of the New York State Society of the Cincinnati.

**Henry Knox's copy of *The Institution of The Society of the Cincinnati: Formed by the Officers of the Army of the United States, for the Laudable Purposes therein Mentioned.* New-York: Printed by Samuel Loudon, 1784. Signature of Henry Knox on title page.**

**T**HIS published version of the Society's Institution contains numerous annotations and deletions in the hand of Henry Knox, the author of the original document. Outside objections, especially to the hereditary aspects of the Society, were sufficiently vehement that Knox, Washington and others prepared to revise the Institution at the first General Convention of the Society in May 1784.

**Henry Jackson, West Point. Receipt of one month's pay from Adams Bailey for membership in the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, August 4, 1783. A.D.S., 1 p.**

**T**HE Society's Institution specifies that "in order to form funds which may be respectable, and assist the unfortunate, each officer shall deliver to the Treasurer of the State Society one month's pay..." Henry Jackson, elected treasurer of the Massachusetts Society at its founding, held the office for 26 years. Adams Bailey served as a member of the Standing Committee of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, assistant secretary in 1808, and assistant treasurer from 1809 to 1824.



**Sword of Adams Bailey (1749-1824). Maker: John Bailey, Fredericksburgh, NY, ca. 1778. Green-stained ivory grip; silver hilt with dog's head pommel; 27 3/4" blade.**

Gift of Dr. Adams Bailey, a great-great-grandson of Captain Bailey

**A**DAMS Bailey participated in the Battle of Lexington, April 19, 1775, and served as quartermaster of Thomas' Massachusetts Regiment, May-December, 1775. He rose to captain in the 2nd Massachusetts Regiment, serving until November 3, 1783. After the war, he returned to the town of his birth, Scituate, Massachusetts, and, like Cincinnatus, to the life of a farmer. At the time of his death, the *Essex Register* published the following tribute: "Captain Bailey was in the Army of

Independence during the whole struggle for Liberty. His course to the end has been marked by all the noblest virtues, but cheerfulness led the van and closed the rear. He stood erect on the level and the square was his favorite instrument.”

*The Institution and Proceedings of The Society of the Cincinnati ...With the Proceedings of the Massachusetts State Society of the Cincinnati, from its Organization, June 9, 1783, to July 4, 1811. Boston: Printed by Thomas B. Wait and Co., 1812.*

Gift of Francis A. Foster, Secretary General of The Society of the Cincinnati, 1932-1948

**I**NCLUDED in this record of Society proceedings is a list of the original members of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, with those who had died by 1812 marked with an asterisk. Remarkably, 202 of the 336 individuals listed survived 29 years after the conclusion of the war, an indication of how young so many of the Massachusetts officers were when they joined the fight for America's independence.

**Major General Henry Knox (1750-1806). Oil on canvas by Charles H. Granger, after Gilbert Stuart, ca. 1781.**

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Francis Whiting Hatch; Mr. Hatch was President General of The Society of the Cincinnati, 1962-1965

[above mantle]

**H**enry Knox was the leading spirit in the formation of the Society of the Cincinnati and drafted the original Institution that continues to guide the Society today. Evidence that Knox had conceived the idea of such an organization as early as 1776 is found in an entry in Thomas Jefferson's diary, which notes that Knox had expressed to John Adams a "wish for some ribbon to wear in his hat or in his button-hole, to be transmitted to his descendants as...proof that he had fought in defence of their liberties." He was elected the Society's first secretary general and served as vice president of the Massachusetts Society in 1783 and 1784.

**Major General Benjamin Lincoln (1733-1810). Oil on canvas by Jacob Wagner, ca. 1892, after original portrait by Henry Sargent, 1804.**

On loan from Robert R. Baylies, Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati

[wall opposite]

**B**ENJAMIN Lincoln was a Massachusetts farmer and deacon who became one of the highest ranking generals in the American Revolution. He served as secretary to the Massachusetts Provincial Congress in 1774-1775, and rose to commander of the Massachusetts Militia before transferring into the Continental Army as a major general in 1777. Severely wounded at Saratoga, New York, on October 7, 1777, he rejoined the army in August, 1778, and was put in command of the southern campaign. One of Washington's most trusted advisors, he was appointed secretary of war in 1781. He resigned in November, 1783 and returned to the life of a farmer in Hingham, Massachusetts. In 1783, he was elected first president of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, a position he held until his death in 1810.

This oversized 3/4-length portrait depicts General Lincoln in his military uniform, holding in his right hand a letter signed by George Washington.

## CASE 7: THE INSIGNIA OF THE SOCIETY OF THE CINCINNATI

The Institution of the Society of the Cincinnati, adopted on May 13, 1783, included the following resolution:

“The Society shall have an Order, by which its members shall be known and distinguished, which shall be a medal of gold, of proper size to receive the emblems, and suspended by a deep blue ribbon, two inches wide, edged with white, descriptive of the Union of America and France.

“The principal figure, Cincinnatus—three Senators presenting him with a sword and other military ensigns. On a field in the background, his wife standing at the door of their cottage; near it a plough and instruments of husbandry. Around the whole,

**Omnia Reliquit Servare Rempublicam**

“On the reverse, sun rising, a city with open gates and vessels entering the port. Fame crowning Cincinnatus with a wreath, inscribed Virtutis Praemium. Below, hands joined supporting a heart, with the motto Esto Perpetua. Around the whole,

**Societas Cincinnatorum Institua A D 1783”**

Original member and distinguished French engineer, Major Pierre Charles L’Enfant (who later planned the city of Washington) was asked to prepare the design of the insignia. He suggested that the bald eagle, a bird “peculiar to this continent,” be adopted as the Society’s emblem. L’Enfant submitted water color sketches of his proposed design to the presidents of the State Societies and, upon approval, traveled to France where the first Orders (or Badges) of the Society were produced in 1784.

Since the Eagles were largely made by hand, many different varieties exist, of which three examples owned by Massachusetts members are displayed in this exhibition. The Eagle (insignia) was incorporated into the design of the official flag of the Society of the Cincinnati and subsequently repeated in many different media for Society members as illustrated by the pieces of chinaware owned by Benjamin Lincoln and membership certificate also on display.

In addition to those in this exhibition, the Society Eagle can be seen throughout other rooms at Anderson House in wall and ceiling murals and carvings as well as on the facade of the building. These, too, were commissioned by a Society member, Larz Anderson III, as an integral part of his private residence. According to his wishes, Anderson House now serves as the Headquarters, Library and Museum of the Society of the Cincinnati.

### The Daveis-Lafayette Eagle. Made in France, ca. 1832.

From the Estate of Miss Mabel S. Davies, Portland, Maine

CHARLES Stuart Daveis was president of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati from 1853 to 1865. While on a trip to France in 1832, he visited Lafayette’s home *La Grange*, where he had copied an Eagle originally owned by George Washington, which Mrs. Fielding Lewis had presented to Lafayette on his visit to America in 1824.

The central design is of colored enamels. The motto is in gold letters against a blue background and includes a notable mistake. It reads OMNIA VINCIT SERV. REMPUBLICAM. On no other badge is the second word of the motto VINCIT. In this piece, the body of the eagle swivels within the wreath.



**The Horatio Appleton Lamb Eagle. Made in America.**

Gift of Misses Aimee and Rosamond Lamb, Boston.

**T**HIS Eagle was worn by Horatio Appleton Lamb (1850-1926), a member of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati. A characteristic of this badge is the near globe shape of the medallion. The obverse design on the medallion shows three Roman senators presenting a sword to Cincinnatus as his wife stands in the door of their “house” (sometimes depicted as a “log cabin”). The motto reads: OMNIA • RELINQUIT • SERVARE • REMPUBLICAM.



**The MacDonald Douglass Eagle. ca. 1920.**

Gift of Mrs. MacDonald Douglass, in memory of her husband

**T**HIS Eagle was worn by MacDonald Douglass, a member of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati (1941-1956), and a great-great-grandson of original member Lieutenant Samuel Cooper of the 3rd Regiment Continental Artillery. Lt. Cooper married Mary Horton whose father's estate was on the Hudson River, below Newburgh, New York. The day before the wedding, Cooper was called back to duty, and the bride asked who would give them away. General Lafayette had arrived in her home to be a wedding guest and promptly said “I shall.” He did and Lafayette and the groom became close friends for life.



The central medallion of this Eagle shows the three Roman senators approaching Cincinnatus at his plow, without his house or wife in the background. This version of the Society badge is known as “The Delaware Eagle.” It appeared about 1920 and is the largest single regular issue Eagle.

**Saucer and cup from Benjamin Lincoln's Cincinnati China Service. Made in Canton, China, late 18th century.**

**C**APTAIN Samuel Shaw, Original Member of the Massachusetts Society, was commissioned to have special porcelain made in Canton, China, for four members of the Society of the Cincinnati; one set of porcelain he had made for himself, one set went to General George Washington, one to General Henry Knox, and one to General Benjamin Lincoln. These pieces from Benjamin Lincoln's service include the Society of the Cincinnati Eagle and the letters “B L” hand-painted in gold in their design.

**Original Membership Certificate of William Hull (1753-1825). Issued at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 5 May 1784. Signed by George Washington and Henry Knox.**

**T**HE Society of the Cincinnati's certificate of membership (or “diploma”) was also designed by Major L'Enfant, who had it engraved in France. In addition to the Eagle and medallion of Cincinnatus, the design incorporates the image of American Liberty (the male figure holding the flag and sword) driving away Britannia, whose crown is falling from her head. To the right, the figure of Fame bears messages that peace and independence have been obtained.

William Hull, to whom this certificate was issued, served in the 3rd Regiment Massachusetts Continental Line. In 1788, he presented a Fourth of July oration to his fellow members of the Massachusetts Society assembled in Boston, concluding with the statement: “Let our actions be the best comment on our words—and let us leave a lesson to posterity, that the glory of soldiers cannot be completed, without acting well the part of citizens.”

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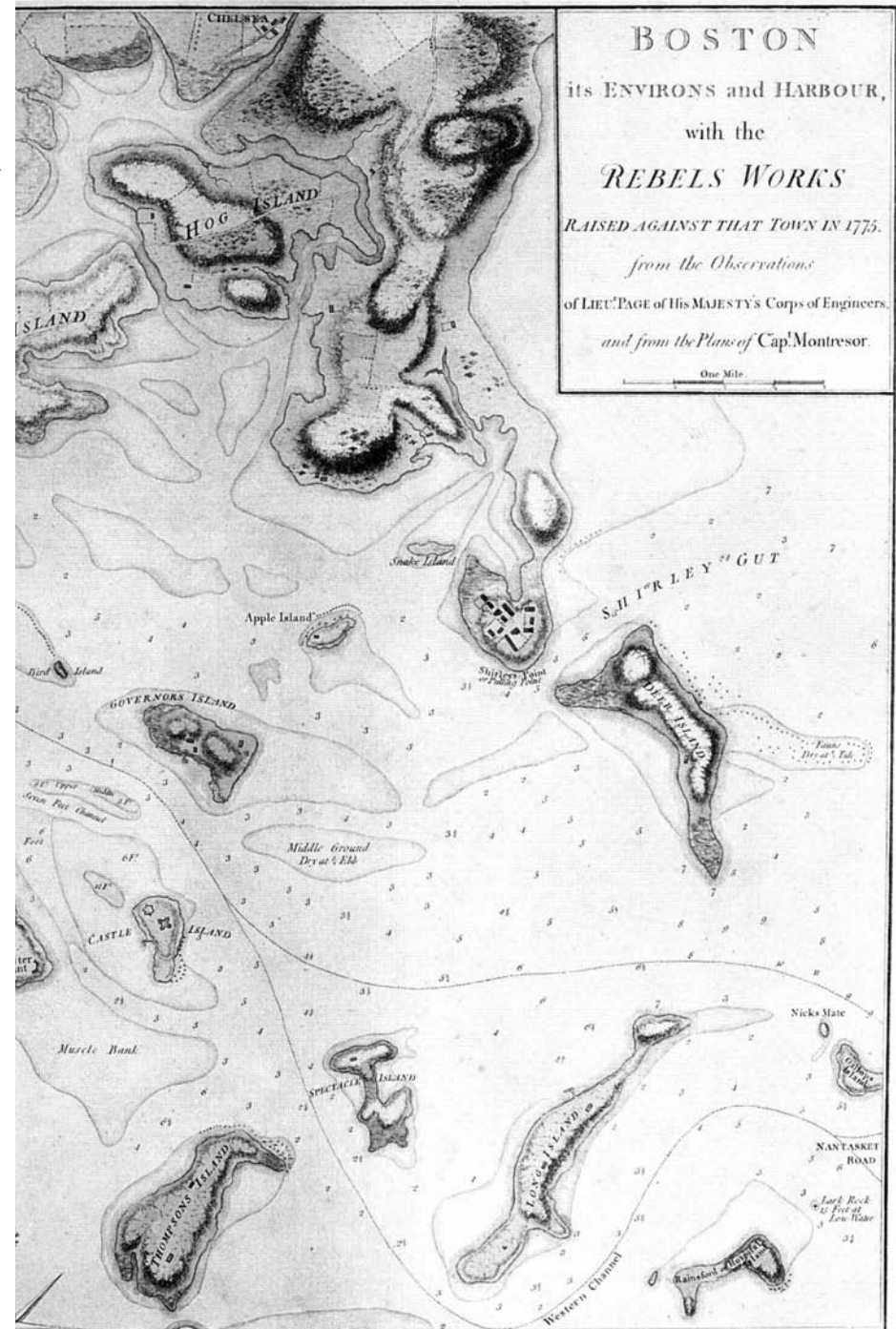
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*Boston: Its Environs and Harbour, with the Rebels Works Raised against that Town in 1775. From the Observations of Lieut. Page of His Majesty's Corps of Engineers, and from the Plans of Cap<sup>t</sup>. Montresor. [London]: Engraved and Published by Wm. Faden, 1st Oct<sup>r</sup>. 1777.*

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

This British map shows the locations of fortifications and troops, with an emphasis on “rebel lines” around Roxbury and Cambridge, during the first year of the war. The presence of American fortifications is indicated on Dorchester Neck; on Dorchester Hill the mapmaker noted “work begun.” Captain John Montresor (1736-1799), upon whose plans this map is based, was a military engineer whose service in America dated back to the time of the French and Indian War. Commissioned chief engineer of the British forces in America in 1775, he was present at the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill.



Act directa. 1<sup>o</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup>. 1777.



Engraved for BARNARD'S, New Comp



BOSTON

View of The ATTACK on  
Burning of CHARL