

## THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION INSTITUTE

**News, Events, and Commentary  
from the American Revolution Institute  
of the Society of the Cincinnati**

# today

August 1, 2021

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### ***Upcoming Author's Talk***

Join authors Claire Bellerjeau and Tiffany Yecke Brooks for a conversation about their book, *Espionage and Enslavement in the Revolution: The True Story of Robert Townsend and Elizabeth*. The work traces the life of Elizabeth, an enslaved African American woman, in the home of Robert Townsend in the Revolutionary era. As Robert and Elizabeth's story unfolds, prominent figures from history cross their path, including Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, John André, and John Adams, as well as participants in the Boston Massacre, the Sons of Liberty, the Battle of Long Island, Franklin's Paris negotiations, and Benedict Arnold's treasonous plot. Tune in online to learn about the lives of Robert Townsend and Elizabeth, the authors' research process, and the lives of enslaved people during the American Revolution. Registration is required for this free virtual talk.

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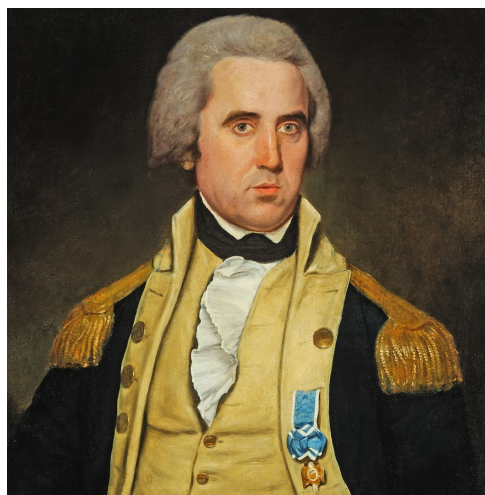


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### ***Who is this Officer?***

Portraits of unknown soldiers of the American Revolution are unfortunately common and can take decades, if not longer, to identify. One such painting in the Institute's collections has been the subject of a renewed effort to identify the mystery officer, aided by details revealed during much-needed conservation work. When we acquired the portrait, layers of dirt and grime, overpaint, and yellowed varnish obscured the original paint surface, and old water damage, flaking and lost paint, tears and cracks, and the delamination (or separation) of the painting from a lining canvas

threatened the stability of the artwork. Conservation treatment addressed these issues and returned the portrait as closely to its original appearance as possible, allowing our staff and other experts to better assess who the subject of the painting was.



The mystery officer wears the uniform of a United States Army staff officer from the period of 1787 to 1800. With no stars on the epaulets in our portrait, the sitter would have held the rank of major, lieutenant colonel, or colonel at the time the portrait was painted. On his left lapel, he wears a Society of the Cincinnati Eagle insignia—given the early post-Revolutionary War period of the portrait, his approximate age, and clues to his military career, he was probably an original member of the Society and, therefore, a veteran of the Revolution. Our research has taken us to eighteenth-century Philadelphia, Massachusetts, and the Northwest Territory and has resulted in a likely candidate for the sitter in the portrait and an attribution for the artist of the unsigned painting. Read about this journey in a new article in the Conservation section of our website.

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## ***The Regulator Rebellion - 250th Anniversary Lecture***

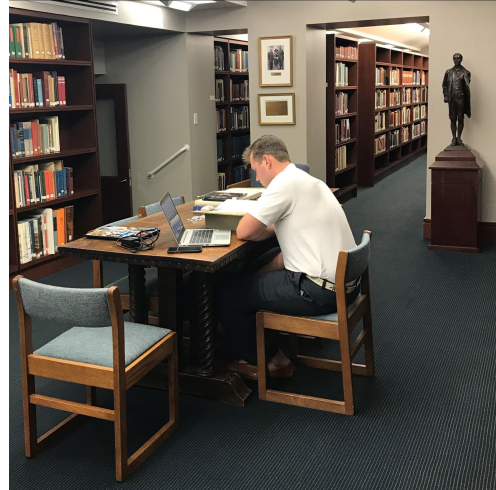
Join the Institute in observing the 250th anniversary of events of the American Revolutionary era with a lecture on the Regulator Rebellion from Marjoleine Kars. Years before shots rang out at Lexington and Concord, backcountry settlers in the North Carolina Piedmont launched their own defiant bid for economic independence and political liberty. The Regulator Rebellion of 1766-1771 arose from the conflict created by competing ideologies and goals between the religious outlook of evangelical Protestants and mainstream Anglicans; between the aspirations of ordinary people to secure their land claims and the intransigence of the colonial administration and the absentee English aristocrat who held formal title to the region but refused to set up a land office for the orderly sale and recording of land titles; and between tidewater planters anxious to maintain their hold on political authority and the new arrivals in the interior, most of them from Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, whose demands for just representation threatened to shift the regional balance of power in the colony. The conflict culminated in the Battle of Alamance on May 16, 1771, when a colonial militia defeated more than two thousand armed farmers in a pitched battle near Hillsborough. Registration is required for this free virtual lecture.



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## Welcoming Researchers

The Institute's library has been busy welcoming researchers back to the reading room. Visitors included Benoit Leridon, a 2021 Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati fellow, studying the enduring friendships formed among South Carolina officers of the Continental Line and French officers who served in America during the Revolutionary War. Library staff were also delighted to meet J.P. Beall [pictured], the Society of the Cincinnati American Scholar, who stayed at Anderson House in advance of his visit to France to continue to perpetuate the French-American friendship. In preparation for his travels, J.P. spent two days in the library reading two manuscript journals of Robert-Guillaume, baron de Dillon, a French colonel in Lauzun's Legion. The manuscripts document Dillon's experiences in Senegal from 1778 to 1779 and his service in America from November 1780 through the siege of Yorktown in October 1781. The library is open to researchers by appointment.



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*The American Revolution secured our independence, created our republic, established our national identity, and expressed ideals of liberty, equality, natural and civil rights, and responsible citizenship that have defined our history and will define our future. The American Revolution Institute of the Society of the Cincinnati promotes knowledge and appreciation of those achievements, fulfilling the aim of the Continental Army officers who founded the Society of the Cincinnati in 1783 to perpetuate the memory of that vast event. The Institute supports advanced study, presents exhibitions and other public programs, advocates effective classroom instruction, and provides resources to teachers and students to enrich understanding of the American Revolution and the principles of the men and women who secured the liberty of the American people.*



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