The Dangerous Falsehood of the “1619 Project”

The American Revolution Institute

July 1, 2020

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 Society’s founders that “the history of the General Congress and of the American Revolution may be the means of exalting our country in the estimation of mankind.”

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Lesson 15: The Abolitionists

On July 14, 1789, American soldier Pierre Oyré wrote in his notebook: “I am marching. I have been 44 hours in the trenches. I am now at the top of a hill, near a French camp. I am writing in order to write to a friend in France: ‘The siege is finished; I saw the English garrison pass, lay down their arms . . . . Good night, my friend, I am going to sleep after having been more than 50 hours in the trenches.’” Following the allied victory at Yorktown, Oyré was one of the many French soldiers who never returned home to France after the Revolution. Oyré died in France in 1802.

The American Revolution Institute has acquired the letters and papers of Oyré from the private collection of Robert A. Schorr. In a letter to a friend earlier in the year, Oyré asserted that “nothing can be more important than the liberties of the American people.” Oyré’s papers, which span the years 1776–1784 and are now part of the Digital Library of the American Revolution, offer an intimate glimpse into the life of a soldier in the French army fighting to secure American independence.

Oyré’s letters provide a first-hand account of life in the French army after the American Revolution. The letters begin in April 1780 when Oyré was preparing to depart from Brest with Rochambeau’s army and document the French engagement in the American war. The letters from Oyré to his family—his chère amie and his good and dear friend—are intended to keep them informed of his wartime experiences—have been added to our Digital Library of the American Revolution. The letters begin in April 1780 when Oyré was preparing to depart from Brest with Rochambeau’s army and document the French engagement in the American war. The letters from Oyré to his family—his chère amie and his good and dear friend—are intended to keep them informed of his wartime experiences, which ends on June 30.

Some 250,000 Americans served in the armed forces that secured our independence. While many of these soldiers never returned home after the American Revolution, the sacrifices of Oyré and others like him made our nation possible.

Learn More About America’s First Veterans

Read the Letters

Teacher Training... Now More Than Ever

This year’s symposium—hosted by The American Revolution Institute, the National Museum of American History, and the Library of Congress in the classroom—will offer a limited number of teachers, educators, and interested citizens the opportunity to learn how to teach, discuss, and share the story of the American Revolution.

You can register to attend the symposium online. And you can register to attend one of two in-person sessions in Washington, DC: May 20-21, 2021, or August 19-20, 2021.

Attendance is free, but space is limited. Register today to secure your spot.

Learn More About the Symposium

A Minute Man’s Sword

Washington used the Revolutionary-era weapon known as the minuteman’s sword, using it for most of his military service against the British. The sword was often engraved with the name of the owner or the regiment it had served.

For a limited time, you can purchase a replica of a minuteman’s sword made by a master swordsmith at the Museum Store online. The replica sword is not an exact replica of Washington’s sword, but rather a modern interpretation. Both the original Washington sword and the replica are currently on display at the Museum.