On September 3, 1783, representatives from Great Britain and the United States of America signed the Treaty of Paris formally ending eight years of bloody conflict between the two nations. The first article, and the foundation of all else that followed, states that the British crown “acknowledges the said United States, viz., ... to be free sovereign and Independent States.” With Britain’s recognition of the United States, the goal set out in the Declaration of Independence and voted for by the Continental Congress on July 2, 1776, was achieved. With recognition gained, the threat of British force had to be removed. Article seven of the treaty states, “there shall be a firm and perpetual Peace between his Britanic Majesty and the said States, ... wherefore all Hostilities both by Sea and Land shall from henceforth cease, and his Britanic Majesty shall with all convenient speed, ... withdraw all his Armies, Garrisons & Fleets from the said United States.”

With recognition of the U.S. established and the British forces due to leave, the remaining eight articles of the treaty addressed points including establishing the boundaries of the new nation, fishing rights, the payment of outstanding debts, the “restitution” of property confiscated by either side, and free movement along the Mississippi River.

The Treaty of Paris ended the tumult between the Revolutionary War’s original belligerents. In addition, a series of separate treaties was signed between Britain and the three key allies of the U.S.—France and Spain on September 3, 1783, and the Netherlands on May 20, 1784. Only then was the Revolutionary War truly over.

Our Featured Story - New Life for William Judd’s Diary

Among the quiet treasures of the library collections is the original diary kept by Capt. William Judd during the first year of the Revolutionary War. Donated to the Institute in 2010 by Captain Judd’s great-great-great-grandson, William Hard Judd III, and his four sisters, this unpublished gem documents Captain Judd’s role in the conflict between Connecticut and Pennsylvania over possession of the upper
Susquehanna frontier—a conflict that threatened to undermine the colonial union in the fight for American independence. The diary has been studied and appreciated by scholars who have been able to examine it in person in the library, but we have not been able to share it with a wider audience because its fragile condition makes it a poor candidate for digitization. Fortunately, the Society of Three Crusades, through the auspices of its president general, Brantley Bolling Knowles, has come to the rescue with a grant to support the conservation, custom boxing, and digitization of the sixty-two-page manuscript—work that will be carried out over the next several months at the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia. We look forward to posting the Judd diary on our Digital Library when the work is completed.

EVENTS

Registration is Open for Our Next Battlefield Tour!

Join us September 30-October 1 in Spartanburg, S.C., to explore two critical victories of the Revolutionary War’s southern campaign: the battles of Kings Mountain and Cowpens. This two-day experience includes a Friday evening dinner and a lecture given by Dr. Melissa Walker, professor emerita at Converse College, discussing the Revolutionary War in the southern backcountry. The next day, we will explore the engagements on private guided tours of Kings Mountain National Military Park and Cowpens National Battlefield, led by a National Park Service interpretive ranger.

In addition to the two-day full experience option, a dinner and lecture only option is also available. Bus seating for the guided tours is limited to fifty-three attendees and is being honored on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Registration closes on Thursday, September 22.

Learn more and reserve your spot

EDUCATION

How We Spent Our Summer Vacation

The Institute has been remarkably busy preparing for the 2022-2023 academic year! This summer our education team introduced over two hundred teachers to our museum and library primary source collections and online classroom resources; prepared eight Continental Army and Revolutionary War at Sea trunks to visit five thousand students at seventy-two schools in forty-three states; uploaded sixteen posts, tweets, and stories that received more than seven hundred likes and eighty-seven shares and retweets; hosted six master teachers at our headquarters (pictured here as the gun crew manning our American-manufactured six-pounder); added two new master teacher lessons to our website; and increased our Revolutionary Choices educational game user base by more than forty thousand! We are ready to go back to school!
COLLECTIONS

“I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country.”

The words Nathan Hale is said to have uttered just before being hanged as a spy on September 22, 1776, have become among the best remembered of the Revolution. The story of the young schoolteacher-turned-officer-turned-spy embodied patriotism and sacrifice for nineteenth-century Americans. But with no contemporary portrait of Hale, citizens did not know what their hero looked like. It took until the turn of the twentieth century for two American sculptors—Frederick MacMonnies and Bela Lyon Pratt—to give Hale a face. Their vision of the young hero—represented in three important works in the Institute’s collections—have shaped the way Americans have imagined Hale for more than a century. Learn more about Hale’s life and the sculptures of him in the Masterpieces of Detail section of our website.

LIBRARY

Join the Ranks of our Fellowship Program!

The Institute’s library is offering several week-long research fellowships to graduate students and advanced scholars of early American history for the year 2023. The fellowship program, founded in 2007, boasts over sixty alumni from more than forty-five institutions. We are looking forward to continuing the tradition of welcoming scholars who will use the library collections to support their work. Our collections include contemporary books, manuscripts, maps, and works of art which support the in-depth study of military history and the art of war in the Revolutionary era.

The deadline for applications is Friday, November 4, 2022.
EVENTS

Explore the Fascinating Voyage of the Marlborough

Join us on Thursday, September 22, at 6:30 p.m., for our next author’s talk featuring historian Christian McBurney discussing his new book, Dark Voyage: An American Privateer’s War on Britain’s African Slave Trade. His groundbreaking book is the first to explore the harrowing voyage of the Marlborough, an American privateer vessel that sailed across the Atlantic to attack British slave trading posts and ships on the coast of West Africa during the Revolutionary War and the efforts of the Marlborough’s officers and crew, along with other American privateers that targeted British slave ships. McBurney fosters a better understanding of the Atlantic slave trade during the Revolution and the role American privateers played in diminishing Britain’s slave trading enterprise.

This author’s talk will be held in-person at Anderson House, but virtual options are available. The talk will last approximately 45 minutes followed by a book signing. Copies of the book will be available for purchase.

COLLECTIONS

Rare American Cartridge Box Acquired

We are excited to announce the acquisition of an American “new construction” cartridge box. This rare survival was one of the most important accoutrements to a Revolutionary War soldier. Why? Because it held his ammunition.
The cartridge box is made of leather panels stitched together with a flap to cover the contents. Inside is a wooden block with twenty-nine holes to fit cartridges. Consisting of everything a soldier required to fire one shot from their musket, a cartridge held a measure of black powder to prime the weapon, plus a larger measure of powder to pour down the barrel, and a lead ball, all kept within a casing of paper that—after the ball was sent to the bottom of the barrel—was rammed down with the aid of an iron ramrod to seat the powder and ball ready to be fired. The box was designed to be worn over the shoulder by a long strap, which is no longer present.

This design for a cartridge box—differentiated from previous iterations by the phrase “new construction,” which appeared in George Washington’s writings—was produced beginning in 1778 and was a marked improvement on the older boxes, especially its ability to keep its contents dry. This example of the “new construction” cartridge box is believed to have been carried by Benjamin Hale of the Seventh Massachusetts Regiment of the Continental Army. The Seventh Massachusetts participated in the Battle of Saratoga, the Cherry Valley massacre, and Sullivan’s campaign.
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