

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION INSTITUTE

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

today

March 1, 2023

[Calendar of Events](#)

This Month in Revolutionary History - The Newburgh Address



October 1781 saw the high-water mark of the American rebellion, when a British-German force under the command of Lord Cornwallis surrendered to a combined army of French and American soldiers at Yorktown. A state of war persisted, however, with the British controlling the cities of New York, Charleston, and Savannah. Weeks turned to months, and months to years—war would not officially end until the signing of the Treaty of Paris on September 3, 1783.

In March of 1783, stemming from a lack of payment, the officers and men of the Continental Army grew increasingly dissatisfied with Congress. As the peace commissioners in Paris worked to end the war, the men of the army were encamped in several locations, with much of the men located at Newburgh, New York. On March 10, Washington, already concerned at the level of ill-feeling amongst his troops, received the “first Newburgh Address.” The mutinous document spoke of intentions to turn the army against Congress. In the hope of dissuading any such talk, Washington called for and then personally addressed a meeting of officers on March 15. In his address, Washington beseeched the men: “let me entreat you, Gentlemen, on your part, not to take any measures, which, viewed in the calm light of reason, will lessen the dignity, & sully the glory you have hitherto maintained.”

For arguably the most striking moment of Washington’s address, we turn to an account given by Capt. Samuel Shaw: “His Excellency, after reading the first paragraph, made a short pause, took out his spectacles, and begged the indulgence of his audience while he put them on, observing at the same time, that he had grown gray in their service, and now found himself growing blind.” This moment of vulnerability presented by a man unknown to be so, immediately impacted the assembled officers. After Washington vacated the room, a motion was passed to reject the initial Newburgh Address. Washington, through adept political instincts and masterful tact, had averted one of the Revolution’s great moments of crisis.

Our Featured Story - Women's Revolutionary History



March is Women's History Month! Over the years, the Institute has hosted a number of programs, created lesson plans, and provided a reading list all focusing on women and their various roles during the Revolution. Why not spend this month reading a book from our [reading list](#) or exploring topics ranging from the invisible labor of nursing, the legacy of the Revolution on the continuing fight for women's rights, or Mercy Otis Warren and her book of poetry published in 1790. Choose your own adventure!

Historical Program Videos:

[Women at War: Confronting Challenges and Hardships in the American Revolution](#)

["To Have the Bed Made": Invisible Labor and Material Culture of Nursing in the Revolutionary War](#)

[Mercy Otis Warren's *Poems, Dramatic and Miscellaneous*](#)

[Espionage and Enslavement in the Revolution](#)

[Deborah Sampson at War](#)

[Women in the American Revolution](#)

Lesson Plans:

[The Influence of Women in the American Revolution](#)

[Where did the Loyalists Go? One Woman's Journey](#)

[The Legacy of the American Revolution for Women's Rights](#)

EVENTS

A French General and American Independence



Join us on Thursday, March 2 at 6:30 p.m. for a lecture featuring Dr. Iris de Rode discussing François-Jean Chastellux—a major general in the French army, member of the Society of the Cincinnati, and cousin of the marquis de Lafayette—and the central role he played in the Franco-American alliance during the Revolutionary War.

Through her extensive research, Dr. de Rode has recently discovered a collection of more than four thousand pages of Chastellux's papers at his estate in Burgundy, France. Drawing from her discovery and other primary sources—including the first edition of his travel diary, a first-edition book on the advantages of the discovery of America for Europe, a "Military order" ("George Washington, extrait de l'ordre du 20 octobre 1781"), a letter by the hand of Chastellux to "a member of a

learned society," and a letter written by George Washington to Chastellux housed in the Society of the Cincinnati's library collections—Dr. de Rode highlights Chastellux's important involvement during and after the Revolution through his military, intellectual, scientific, commercial, and political exchanges.

This lecture will be held in-person at Anderson House and last approximately 45 minutes. Registration is requested. Virtual options are available.

[Learn more and register](#)

COLLECTIONS

A New York Orderly Book



As a part of our Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection, we recently acquired an orderly book of the Second New York Regiment kept by Maj. Nicholas Fish from December 26, 1781, to April 26, 1782. This orderly book covers several months after the Yorktown victory when the Second New York Regiment was encamped near Pompton, New Jersey. The contents of the book reveal the challenges of maintaining order and discipline in the ranks amidst the shortages and privations the army faced. Orders address conduct, drill, parade, camp guards, courts martial, building huts, and making clothing. An especially interesting detail from December 31, 1781, is the commands and detailed instructions about a square formation: “In forming a Square being a Manoeuvre unknown of in the Regulations, the Major directs that should it at any time be necessary to adopt it on

Parade; the following Mode be observed. The caution being given, on the Word of Command form the hollow Square!”

With the orderly book is a notebook that includes guard and fatigue assignments with numbers of men in the winters from December 1779 through September 1781, and lists of passes issued to individual soldiers organized by the company captain. This notebook also includes an itinerary of the march to Yorktown, starting at Dobb’s Ferry, New York, on August 19, 1781, through Philadelphia and Head of Elk, sailing from Plumb Point to Annapolis, and on land to the James River near Williamsburg.

[Learn more about our orderly book collection](#)

EVENTS

Spring Brings Art in Bloom to DC



Celebrate the arrival of spring this month with the return of Art in Bloom DC to Anderson House—the exclusive venue in the nation’s capital for this prestigious exhibition. On March 27-30, floral arrangements inspired by the art and architecture of our historic headquarters will fill the museum. In addition to more than thirty individual floral designers, this year’s exhibition also includes representatives of the National Cathedral Flower Guild and the Daughters of the American Revolution—all showcasing their floral prowess. Their inspiration includes seventeenth-century Flemish tapestries, Buddhist sculpture, an Italian alabaster fireplace, and an eighteenth-century American cannon used during the Revolutionary War.

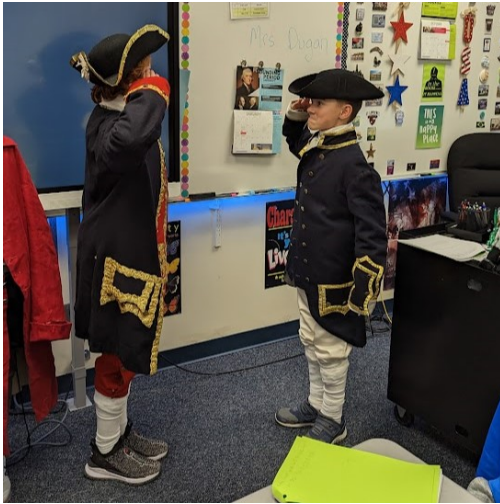
A festive evening reception—open to all—will cap off the first day of Art in Bloom DC on Monday, March 27. Guests will have the unique opportunity to explore the installations, mingle with the floral designers, and enjoy delicious bites and beverages. There will also be special ticketed presentations from floral designers Atelier Ashley Flowers, HBO’s Full Bloom Finalist

Sarah Khan Event Styling, and La Fleur Du Jour, held during public viewing hours on March 28-30. Follow our website and Art in Bloom DC Instagram (@artinbloomdc) for updates on these demonstrations and ticket sales.

[Learn more and register](#)

EDUCATION

Traveling Trunk Reservations for 2023-24 Accepted Beginning March 20!

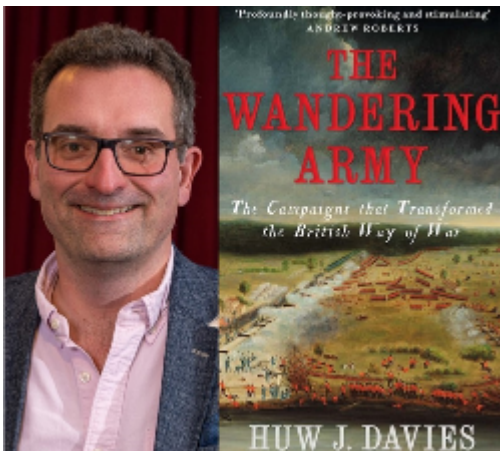


Reservations for our wildly popular classroom traveling trunks for the 2023-24 school year will be accepted online beginning Monday, March 20. This free student resource features replica clothing and artifacts with supporting lesson plans chronicling either the story of the Continental Army or the Revolutionary War at Sea. Since the program's inception, our trunks have traveled from teacher to teacher in forty-five states (including Alaska and Hawaii). Is your state one of the five our trunks have yet to visit?

[Don't miss out! Learn more and book your week](#)

EVENTS

The Revolutionary War's Impact on the British Way of War



On Tuesday, March 21, at 6:30 p.m., Dr. Huw Davies, deputy department head of defense studies at King's College London, joins us to discuss his new book, *The Wandering Army: The Campaigns that Transformed the British Way of War*.

In 1774, Gen. Sir Henry Clinton embarked on a “martial grand tour,” visiting the battlefields of Europe with his friend, the military theorist Henry Lloyd. What the two observed on their travels would change the British approach to the war that broke out in North America the following year. From his practical and theoretical study of military history Clinton had thought that battles should only be fought when decisive political objectives could be achieved, but he instead realized that armies should be used to maneuver their adversaries into positions of disadvantage. For his beliefs, Clinton found himself in direct conflict with his superiors during the early stages of the American Revolutionary War, but when he himself assumed command in 1778, he found himself bereft of the resources needed to execute such complex campaigns of maneuver. The resulting strategic defeats and the loss of the American colonies appeared to prove Clinton's approach wrong, but in the years following the Revolutionary War, the lessons the British learned caused gradual and distinct changes in the British way of war. Drawn from his research using archival sources housed in our own library collections, Dr.

Davies challenges the existing consensus that the eighteenth-century British army was an amateur and unprofessional organization while demonstrating that its officers and soldiers took the profession of arms seriously.

This lecture will be held in-person in the research library at Anderson House and last approximately 45 minutes. Registration is requested. Virtual options are available.

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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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