

# Revolutionary Women

The Museum of the American Revolution explores the personal stories of many women of the Revolutionary era. Objects help tell their stories and include an intricately carved busk (part of a woman's undergarments), a signed copy of the 1773 book *Poems on Various Subjects* by Phillis Wheatley, the first published female African American poet, and a religious book owned and signed by Martha Washington. Another installation recreates the furniture seized from the Philadelphia household of Elizabeth Drinker, and women like the German Baroness von Riedesel reveal new viewpoints on how people experienced and remembered the Revolution.

*Explore the stories of these and many more remarkable women in the exhibits today!*

## Baroness Frederika von Riedesel

When her husband, Friedrich, and the Hessian soldiers he commanded, left Germany to fight against the American Revolutionaries in 1776, Frederika von Riedesel was pregnant. Soon after giving birth, she gathered her three daughters and joined her husband in 1777. She recorded her journey and wartime experiences on the Saratoga campaign and as a prisoner-of-war in a detailed personal journal.

*Battle of Brandywine Theater*



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*See reverse for more!*



*Look for objects and stories related to these women.*

## Abigail Adams

From her home outside Boston, Abigail Adams and her children watched smoke rise from the Battle of Bunker Hill. Amid the noise of cannons, she described her distress to her husband, John, as he served in the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. It was one of many letters Abigail Adams shared with him during the Revolution. Her accounts testify to her early advocacy of women's rights and to her own personal courage. *Boston, 1775 and Declaration of Independence*

## Esther Reed

In her broadsheet, "Sentiments of an American Woman," Esther Reed argued that women's love of their country was equal to that of men. To demonstrate her devotion to the cause of American liberty, Reed organized a group of Philadelphia women who went door to door to collect money for the Army. They raised the extraordinary sum of \$300,000. *Declaration of Independence*

## Elizabeth Freeman

Elizabeth Freeman, called "Mumbet," was an enslaved woman in Massachusetts in the years before the Revolution. As new ideas about liberty and equality emerged, she fled her master's household and successfully achieved her freedom through the state's court system. Freeman's case and similar ones effectively ended slavery in Massachusetts. *Declaration of Independence*

## Deborah Sampson

Deborah Sampson disguised herself as a man to serve in the Continental Army. She enlisted in 1782 and served in New York's Hudson Valley. She was finally discovered when she became ill in Philadelphia. In recognition of her service, the Army awarded her with an honorable discharge. *Declaration of Independence*

## Two Kettles Together

Oneida women played a key role in their nation's decision to ally themselves with the American Revolutionaries. Two Kettles Together, the wife of an Oneida war chief, participated in the violent Battle of Oriskany during the Saratoga Campaign. She is one of the figures recreated in the Oneida Nation Theater. *Oneida Nation Theater and Patriots Gallery*

## Martha Washington

Martha Washington spent every winter of the Revolutionary War in camp with General Washington. She was beloved by his troops and boosted morale by hosting dinners and dances. She also improved relations with local civilians by helping respond to their concerns. *Valley Forge*

## Elizabeth Drinker

A Philadelphia Quaker, Elizabeth Drinker kept a remarkable record of daily life throughout the Revolution. During the war, she and her husband, Henry, were often in conflict with Pennsylvania's Revolutionary government for their pacifist views. Their suspected loyalism cost Drinker some of her household goods, which were confiscated to pay their tax debts. *Privateer Ship*

## Eve

Enslaved to the Randolph family in Williamsburg, Virginia, Eve escaped to the British Army with her son, George, so that he might have the chance to live in freedom. *Finding Freedom*

## Martha Githens

Between 1776 and 1807, women and free people of color could vote in the state of New Jersey. Martha Githens, whose image is on display here, was one of the nation's first women voters. *When Women Lost the Vote*