

Scholar in the Park
“Lives of Women along the Battle Road” Research Project
Summer 2016

The Friends of Minute Man National Park and the Lincoln Minute Men, organizations dedicated to advancing and preserving our historic heritage, will sponsor a Scholar to research “The Lives of Women along the Battle Road” – the lives and circumstances of women and girls, free or enslaved, who resided in the Battle Road towns of Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington in 1775. Among other uses by the Park, the resulting research and written papers will support volunteer and NPS staff interpreters in the Park, as well as the creation of lesson plans by school teachers. Research questions and specifications for the written materials to be provided are described below. The Scholar will receive \$2,000, with up to \$500 additionally for research expenses (see Funding, below). The project must be completed by September 30, 2016.

Application Process

To apply: send a statement of interest in the project in the form of a cover letter, along with a résumé that includes contact information for two references. The résumé should demonstrate that the applicant can meet the qualifications outlined in the section on Applicant Qualifications below. Application materials should be sent via email to Leslie Obleschuk, Chief of Interpretation and Education of Minute Man National Historical Park, at Leslie_Obleschuk@nps.gov

The deadline for receiving complete applications is May 31, 2016. Questions about the project may also be addressed via email to Leslie Obleschuk.

Applicant Qualifications

- B.A., M.A. preferred, with specialization in the history of the American Revolution and/or the history of women and girls in early America
- Knowledge of Massachusetts history during the American Revolution
- Familiarity with research repositories appropriate for the proposed research project
- Excellent research and writing skills as demonstrated by recent research projects
- Experience in presenting authoritative historical research to non-academic audiences
- Ability to work independently and think creatively when interpreting research sources
- Ability to complete the proposed research project on schedule

Scope of Research

The research undertaken about “The Lives of Women along the Battle Road” will be guided by the following questions:

1. Who were the women in the households along the Battle Road in Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington on April 19th, 1775, i.e., number, age, status (free or enslaved), race, residence, household occupation, marital status, number of children, etc.?
2. What were women’s contributions to the economies of their households in Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington, e.g., did they participate in the occupations of their husbands, did they produce items for sale or barter, did women manage the household finances, etc.?

3. What opportunities for education were available to women and girls in Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington, either provided by the town or in households? What opportunities for public roles were available, in the churches, town meetings, etc.? Did these opportunities differ for women of color, free or enslaved?
4. What role did women in Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington play in the social, economic, and political forces leading up to April 19th, e.g., non-importation and boycott of British goods (drinking herbal tea, making homespun clothing, etc.)? Were these women involved in promoting revolution in a public forum (e.g., as in Philadelphia, writing in newspapers, forming Ladies Associations to support revolution, etc.)? Were there women involved against the revolution- ie loyalists?
5. What role did women in Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington play in the social, political, and military needs of their communities on April 19th? (Divide myth from fact in local lore, e.g., Catharine Smith caring for a wounded British soldier, Mary Hartwell personally spreading the alarm, Mary Hartwell ensuring proper burial of British soldiers, women taking their valuables and hiding in woods, etc.)
6. Did the roles and responsibilities assumed by women in Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington during the Revolution alter their status after the War?

Research Products – Specifications

The written report for the research undertaken about “The Lives of Women along the Battle Road” must conform to the following specifications:

1. Short essays should address each of the proposed questions in the Scope of Research section above. When appropriate, an essay may combine the answers to more than one question, as long as all questions are fully answered. These essays will be used as the basis for programs by volunteer interpreters and teachers, so the essays should be authoritative and also accessible to well-informed but non-academic readers. Whenever feasible, the essays should provide specific historical vignettes, appropriate for use by interpreters and teachers, that illuminate broader themes in the lives of women and girls along the Battle Road.
2. If a proposed research question cannot be answered, a short explanation of the research methods undertaken and sources consulted in pursuit of the question will be provided.
3. All essays and explanations must be accurately documented with citations. The citations should follow the format provided by the most recent edition of *A Manual of Style* by the University of Chicago Press.
4. A bibliography combining all of the resources consulted for all of the essays must be provided. The bibliographic citations should follow the format provided by the most recent edition of *A Manual of Style* by the University of Chicago Press.
5. The bibliography should also include a list of all repositories consulted with a description of the research value of the repository for the proposed project.

Funding

The Scholar in the Park will receive \$2,000 from the Friends of Minute Man National Park to research and create a report about “The Lives of Women along the Battle Road,” as described in the Scope of Research section. Partial payment will be made to the Scholar in the Park after receipt of fifty percent of the report. Additional funding for travel, photocopying, or other research costs necessary to complete the project may be available, upon written request from the Scholar. Such additional funding will not exceed \$500. Final payment to the Scholar will be made when the complete report is submitted. **The project must be completed by September 30, 2016.**

Minute Man National Historical Park

In 1959, the United States Congress created Minute Man National Historical Park to commemorate the Battle of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775, the opening of the American Revolutionary War. The Park is a unit of the National Park Service. It is located in the towns of Concord, Lexington, and Lincoln, Massachusetts. Over one million visitors come to the Park each year. The Park’s resources include historic structures, cultural landscapes, archaeological sites, and a collection of museum artifacts. Most notable of its resources are the North Bridge and The Minute Man, the 1875 sculpture created by the artist, Daniel Chester French.