

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY Library & Museum

Center for Digital Scholarship



The Center for Digital Scholarship (CDS) promotes access to the collections of the American Philosophical Society through innovative digital humanities projects, a robust digitization program, and experimentation with new modes of digital discovery. Since its founding in 2017, the CDS has published a range of projects, including:

- [A searchable database](#) of the account books and postal records of Benjamin and Deborah Franklin
- [Investigating Indentured Servitude](#), a learning tool for examining the practice of indentured servitude in Colonial British North America
- [Visualizing Women in Science](#), an interactive discovery tool for finding under-documented women in the APS's collections

Through our digitization program, we have digitized upwards of half a million pages of manuscript material from the APS's collections, and have been part of major collaborative digitization initiatives, including [For the Health of the New Nation](#) and [The Revolutionary City](#).

Additionally, under the Open Data Initiative, the CDS publishes a wide variety of datasets based on the APS's collections. These datasets are available for download on the [CDS's Github](#).

For inquiries please [contact the CDS here](#).

Featured CDS Event

Transcribing the Revolutionary City

Wednesday evening March 19 from 6-8pm ET.

Join the APS on March 19 at 6:00 p.m. to help transcribe 18th-century handwritten documents from [The Revolutionary City Portal](#). The event will feature our innovative digital transcription tool and material from the collections of the American Philosophical Society (APS), the Library Company of Philadelphia (LCP), and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP). No transcription experience is required but you will need to bring your own laptop or tablet.

[Registration is required.](#)



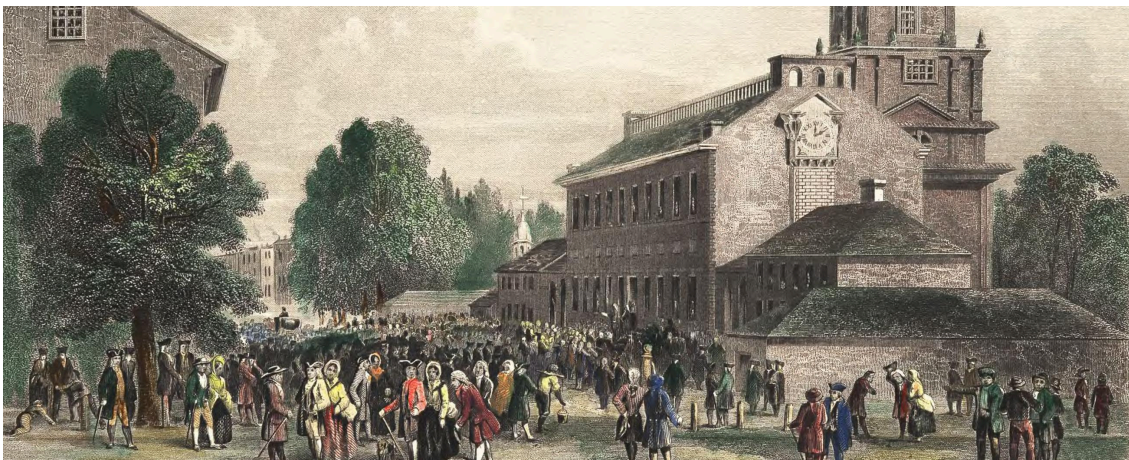
Looking back at the Revolutionary Transcribathon

In October, 2024, the CDS hosted a Transcribathon for Archives Month Philly featuring documents from *The Revolutionary City*. In three sessions over the course of a single day, volunteers transcribed 208 pages from three Rev City partner institutions. Over 50 transcribers joined us throughout the day! Not only will these transcriptions be featured in the Rev City Portal they will also be used to train and improve machine learning models for automatic transcription.





Project Updates



Recent Updates to The Revolutionary City

Now entering year five, [The Revolutionary City: A Portal to the Nation's Founding](#) has provided unfettered access to over 6,000 unique objects, 46,000 pages, and 99 collections from five institutions. We have officially launched our “mobile digitization unit” which will provide equipment and training for under-resourced institutions, helping them digitize their collections and contribute to the portal. Though still in an experimental phase, this unit will be crucial to the project’s growth, allowing us to include collections from the Lutheran Archives Center, Girard College, the Andalusia Historic House and Garden, Philadelphia City Archives and more.

Of course digitization is just one part of the project. In an effort to bridge the divide between scholars and younger generations, we have developed discovery tools, teacher resources, and programming designed to engage diverse audiences. Our active blog, [Dispatches from the Revolutionary City](#), publishes portal-based content from staff, students, and scholars while [Current Voices and Perspectives](#) offers timely examinations of the material in the portal, pushing towards critical insights about the meaning of these documents and their relevance today.

Contribute to Rev City

We are always looking for more partners—if you are interested in working with us or providing content for the project please contact us at revcity@amphilsoc.org.

Save the Date—April 11, 2025—Exhibition Opening *Philadelphia, The Revolutionary City*

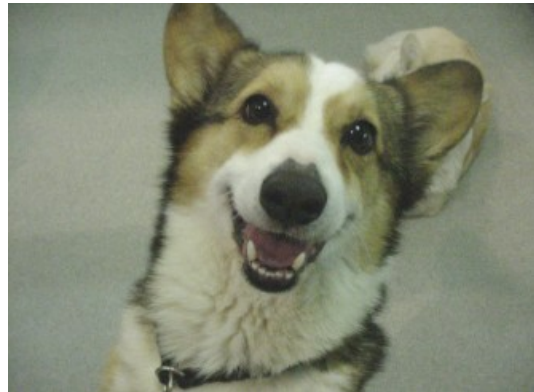


Experience APS's 2025 exhibition *Philadelphia, The Revolutionary City*. This exhibition illuminates the lived experiences of Philadelphians leading up to, during, and after the fight for independence. It showcases historic documents and material culture, ranging from diaries and newspapers to political cartoons and household objects. Beginning with the Stamp Act in 1765, the exhibition traces key events through the late 1780s and the impacts they had on communities living within and around the city. The exhibition features a range of voices and stories, offering windows into this turbulent period of change and presenting Revolution-era Philadelphia as a vibrant and growing city.

Registration is [required for this event](#).

Born Digital Backlog

The CDS is also enhancing the APS's ability to preserve and provide access to born-digital materials. The team, Kat Antonelli and Eli Larralde, is making significant progress in migrating data from various digital carriers, including floppy disks, CDs, hard drives, flash drives, desktops, laptops, and even iPods, onto APS servers.



Recent highlights include journals from astrophysicist Baruch S. Blumberg, photos of statistician John W. Tukey, and home videos from biochemist Britton Chance. A surprising find was a CD containing nothing but corgi photos (pictured). Kat and Eli continue to process a backlog of materials using various technologies, with the goal of making them accessible in the reading room for researchers.

[Photo of a Corgi.] Box 629. Disk 046. Mss.Ms.Coll.160 Britton Chance Papers. American Philosophical Society

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American Philosophical Society

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