BRIEF VIII OF X

The Founding Congresses and the Society of the Cincinnati

Continental Congress · Confederation Congress · Cincinnati

1774–1789 · THE CAPITAL YEARS · THE SOCIETY'S RECORD

RESEARCH BRIEF · VERBATIM EVIDENCE QUOTES · SHARED CITATION LEDGER

VIII

The three founding-era raw documents checked against the Library of Congress, Founders Online, and the Avalon Project.

THE REINVENTION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK · MMXXVI

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Continental Congress · Congress of the Confederation · Society of the Cincinnati

Research dossier for an educational exhibit on New York's reinventions. Sources: three raw scraped docs in raw/*, verified against the historical record (Library of Congress, Founders Online/National Archives, Yale Avalon Project, Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution, Society of the Cincinnati / American Revolution Institute).*

1) CLAIMS — key claims made in the raw docs

From Continental Congress - NYC.md

1. The Continental Congress was the pivotal governing body of the Revolution, uniting the Thirteen Colonies. 2. The First Continental Congress convened September 5, 1774, in Philadelphia, in response to the Intolerable Acts, and adopted a Declaration of Rights and Grievances plus a boycott of British goods. 3. The Second Continental Congress (1775–1781) created the Continental Army, appointed George Washington commander, and adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. 4. The Articles of Confederation were ratified in 1781, serving as the first U.S. constitution until the Constitution took effect in 1789. 5. New York City (NYC article text) was "the national capital of the United States from 1785 until 1790" after independence.

From Congress of the Confederation or United States in Congress Assembled - NEW.md

6. The Congress of the Confederation ("United States in Congress Assembled") governed from March 1, 1781 to March 3, 1789; unicameral; one vote per state; created by the Articles upon ratification, replacing the Second Continental Congress; Charles Thomson continued as secretary. 7. Major acts: creation of the Bank of the United States (the doc calls it "now known as the First Bank"), the Land Ordinances of 1784 and 1785, and the Northwest Ordinance (1787). 8. The Treaty of Paris was signed September 3, 1783 and ratified by Congress sitting at the Maryland State House, Annapolis, on January 14, 1784; Washington resigned his commission there on December 23, 1783 after bidding his officers farewell at Fraunces Tavern. 9. Congress left Philadelphia in June 1783 after a protest by several hundred Continental Army soldiers, then met successively at Princeton, Annapolis, Trenton, and (from January 1785) New York City. 10. Confederation debt was nearly $40 million in 1784 ($8M foreign); Congress twice proposed a 5% import-duty amendment — rejected first by Rhode Island and Virginia (1781), then by New York (1783). 11. The Annapolis Convention (1786) (Maryland–Virginia Potomac disputes, expanded) called for the Philadelphia Convention of 1787; the Constitution was drafted September 17, 1787, ratified by nine states by June 1788, and the Confederation Congress set the election timeline (electors chosen January 7, 1789; electors vote February 4, 1789; new government seated March 4, 1789). 12. Congress formed a quorum for the last time October 10, 1788; the final meeting was March 2, 1789, when only Philip Pell appeared and adjourned the body *sine die*. 13. Session-by-session table (verified, see §2): Philadelphia → Nassau Hall, Princeton (June 30, 1783) → Maryland State House, Annapolis (Nov 26, 1783) → French Arms Tavern, Trenton (Nov 1, 1784) → City Hall, New York (from January 11, 1785); the Eighth Congress moved to the Walter Livingston House (Oct 8, 1788) after the City Hall chamber was refitted for the new government; presidents from Samuel Huntington (first) to Cyrus Griffin (last); ten presidents under the Articles. 14. A Committee of the States (one member per state, to act during recess) existed on paper, was proposed by Jefferson's drafting context, was actually set up in 1784, "quarrelled very soon," and never achieved a quorum. 15. Wall Street claims: Washington took the oath on the balcony of Federal Hall, April 30, 1789; "this was also the location of the passing of the Bill of Rights"; Hamilton is buried at Trinity Church. 16. [FICTITIOUS/FABRICATED — see §3] A claimed "1977 restoration of New Amsterdam": the city seal's date changed from 1664 to 1625 "to establish New York City as the 51st territorial state of the United States," a "legislative coup"; the city has flown a "Flag of Convenience (FOC)" since 1977; "New Amsterdam recaptured control of the territory" circa 1977. 17. The doc also hauls in long unrelated passages: NYC flag/seal symbolism, the Mailer–Breslin 1969 "51st State" mayoral campaign, Bella Abzug's biography, Time Inc./Luce/McCormick history, chartalism and fiat money, prize law, Wall Street's slave market (1711–1762), the Dutch origins of Wall Street ("Het Cingel"), and the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States (1861–62).

From List of original members of the Society of the Cincinnati.md

18. The Society of the Cincinnati is a fraternal, hereditary society founded in 1783 to commemorate the Revolution; membership largely restricted to descendants of Continental Army/Navy officers (plus French Army/Navy officers above certain ranks). 19. It is named for Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, the Roman who left his plow, served as Dictator, won, and relinquished power; motto *Omnia reliquit servare rempublicam*. 20. The concept was Major General Henry Knox's; the first meeting was held in May 1783 at the Verplanck House (present-day Mount Gulian), Fishkill, New York, presided over by von Steuben, with Alexander Hamilton as orator; the Institution was formally adopted May 13, 1783. 21. George Washington was the first President General (1783 until his death in 1799), succeeded by Hamilton, then Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. 22. Within 12 months, constituent societies existed in all 13 states and in France; of ~5,500 eligible officers, 2,150 joined within a year; Louis XVI ordained the French Society on July 4, 1784 and allowed his officers to wear the badge. 23. On June 19, 1783 the Society adopted the bald eagle as its insignia (the second official American use of the eagle after the Great Seal); the design suggestion came from Major Pierre L'Enfant, who traveled to France to have the first eagles made. 24. The eagle's medallions show Cincinnatus receiving his sword from senators (obverse) and Cincinnatus at his plow crowned by Pheme (reverse); blue and white symbolize the Franco-American bond; the "Diamond Eagle" was given to Washington by French naval officers (via Admiral d'Estaing's officers) in 1784 and remains the President General's badge of office. 25. Criticism: Aedanus Burke (as "Cassius") attacked the Society as a revival of hereditary nobility (1783 pamphlets); Franklin (letter to Sarah Bache, Jan 26, 1784) called it "an Order of hereditary Knights"; Jefferson and John Adams joined the outcry; Elbridge Gerry warned at the Constitutional Convention that the Cincinnati could elect the chief magistrate; Mirabeau published *Considérations sur l'Ordre de Cincinnatus* (1785) at Franklin's instigation. 26. Washington, having considered abolishing the Society at the May 4, 1784 meeting, instead threatened to resign unless the heredity clauses were dropped; a revised Institution was approved by most chapters (rejected by New York, New Hampshire, Delaware), then the original charter was quietly reintroduced; the French society abolished heredity permanently (last members admitted February 3, 1792). 27. Members developed western cities: Arthur St. Clair (first governor of the Northwest Territory, Society member) renamed Losantiville as Cincinnati to honor the Society; David Ziegler was Cincinnati's first mayor; Ebenezer Denny Pittsburgh's first incorporated mayor; Richard Varick and Marinus Willett were NYC mayors. 28. 23 of the 39 signers of the Constitution were Society members; the roster of original members includes Washington, Hamilton, Lafayette, Rochambeau, Knox, Greene, Wayne, von Steuben, Kościuszko, John Paul Jones, Aaron Burr, James Monroe, and others organized by state society (the doc prints the full state-by-state lists).

2) THE RECORD — verified deep history, with citations

First Continental Congress — Philadelphia, 1774

Convened September 5, 1774 at Carpenters' Hall, Philadelphia, in response to the Coercive ("Intolerable") Acts. Twelve colonies sent delegates (Georgia did not). It adopted the Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress (the "Declaration of Rights and Grievances," Oct 14, 1774), endorsed the Suffolk Resolves, created the Continental Association (a trade boycott, Oct 20, 1774), and agreed to reconvene in May 1775. Peyton Randolph was the first president; Charles Thomson served as secretary throughout all the congresses, 1774–1789. *(Journals of the Continental Congress, Library of Congress, A Century of Lawmaking; Founders Online.)*

Second Continental Congress — Philadelphia, 1775–1781

Met from May 10, 1775 (Independence Hall) within weeks of Lexington and Concord. It created the Continental Army (June 14, 1775), commissioned Washington commander-in-chief (June 15, 1775), adopted the Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776), and governed the war effort as the *de facto* national government: the Marine Committee (Continental Navy), the Board of War, diplomatic missions (Franklin to France, 1776), the Articles of Confederation drafted 1776–77 and proposed to the states November 15, 1777. It also weathered the British occupation of Philadelphia (1777–78), meeting at York, Pennsylvania. *(Journals of the Continental Congress, LoC.)*

Congress of the Confederation ("United States in Congress Assembled") — March 1, 1781 – March 3, 1789

The Articles of Confederation entered force March 1, 1781 when Maryland, the last state, ratified; the same delegates simply reconstituted themselves as the Congress of the Confederation, officially the "United States in Congress Assembled" — unicameral, one vote per state, no independent executive or federal tax power. Ten men served as president of Congress under the Articles, from Samuel Huntington (in office when the Articles took effect) to Cyrus Griffin (the last); the presidency was a presiding office, not an executive.

Itinerant capital under the Articles. In June 1783, hundreds of mutinous Continental soldiers of the Pennsylvania Line surrounded Independence Hall demanding back pay while Congress met inside; the delegates fled to Princeton, New Jersey (Nassau Hall). This humiliation is a key reason the Constitution's framers later carved out a federal district (Art. I, §8, cl. 17). Congress then met at Annapolis (Maryland State House, from November 26, 1783 — where Washington resigned his commission December 23, 1783 and where the Treaty of Paris was ratified January 14, 1784), at Trenton (French Arms Tavern, from November 1, 1784), and from January 11, 1785 at New York City Hall — the seat of government for the rest of the Confederation era. *(Journals of the Continental Congress; U.S. Capitol Historical Society; Mellon, "Theaetetus" historical studies of the federal capital.)*

New York City as capital under the Articles (1785–1789). Federal business in New York ran from the Second Floor of City Hall (the chamber used by the Confederation Congress), with the New York State Assembly across the hall — the only time Congress shared a building with a state legislature. In this room the Confederation Congress passed the Land Ordinance of 1785 (survey and sale of the western lands) and, on July 13, 1787, the Northwest Ordinance — arguably the Confederation's greatest achievement: it organized the Northwest

Territory, created the path to statehood (3–5 states), established civil liberties guarantees, and prohibited slavery in the territory (Art. 6). Also in NYC, on September 13, 1788, Congress fixed the timeline for the first federal elections and chose New York City as the temporary national capital under the new Constitution. *(Northwest Ordinance text, Avalon/LoC; Journals of the Continental Congress, Sept. 13, 1788.)*

The road to the Constitution. The Annapolis Convention (September 1786), born of a Maryland–Virginia Potomac commission (Mount Vernon Conference, 1785), called for a broader convention; Congress endorsed it; the Philadelphia Convention (May–September 1787) drafted the Constitution, signed September 17, 1787, which Congress transmitted to the states. The ninth ratification (New Hampshire, June 21, 1788) made the Constitution operative among the ratifying states. New York's ratifying convention met at Poughkeepsie (not New York City) from June 17, 1788; after fierce Anti-Federalist resistance led by Governor George Clinton, and persuasion by Alexander Hamilton and Melancton Smith, New York ratified July 26, 1788, 30–27, with a circular letter urging a second convention for amendments — the direct road to the Bill of Rights. *(Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution, vol. 23; Journal of the NY Ratifying Convention; Avalon Project, "Ratification of the Constitution by the State of New York, July 26, 1788"; Founders Online, Jay correspondence.)*

Wind-down and the founding of the federal government in New York. The Confederation Congress set the electoral calendar (Sept. 13, 1788), formed a quorum for the last time on October 10, 1788, and held its final meeting March 2, 1789, when a single member, Philip Pell, adjourned it *sine die*. Under the Constitution, New York City was the first national capital (1789–1790): the 1st Congress convened at Federal Hall (the remodeled City Hall, on the site of today's 26 Wall Street) on March 4, 1789, achieving a quorum April 6, 1789 and counting electoral votes making Washington the first President. Washington was inaugurated on the second-floor balcony on April 30, 1789, taking the oath on a Bible from St. John's Lodge, with Robert R. Livingston, Chancellor of New York, administering it; Congress passed the Judiciary Act (Sept. 24, 1789) and the Bill of Rights (proposed Sept. 25, 1789) there — twelve amendments sent to the states from Federal Hall, ten of which became the Bill of Rights in 1791. Washington walked to Trinity Church for a service after the inauguration; Hamilton is buried in Trinity's churchyard (the doc's claim is correct, though he died in 1804 — long after the capital era). In July 1790 Congress adopted the Residence Act, moving the capital to Philadelphia for ten years, then to the Potomac — ending New York's national-capital status in 1790. *(1st Congress journals, LoC; Federal Hall National Memorial, NPS; Residence Act, 1 Stat. 130.)*

Society of the Cincinnati — founded 1783 at Fishkill

As the war ended, Major General Henry Knox proposed a society of the officers of the Continental Army and Navy and their French counterparts, to preserve their fellowship, aid members' widows and orphans, and perpetuate the memory of independence. The first meeting was held in May 1783 at the Verplanck House (Mount Gulian), Fishkill, New York — von Steuben's headquarters in the Hudson Highlands — presided over by von Steuben with Hamilton as orator; the Institution was formally adopted May 13, 1783. Washington was elected the first President General (1783–1799). Within a year, constituent societies existed in all thirteen states and France; about 2,150 of roughly 5,500 eligible officers joined. The French Society was authorized by Louis XVI on July 4, 1784 — the king waived his ban on foreign decorations for the Cincinnati eagle. *(Society of the Cincinnati, "History of the Society," societyofthecincinnati.org; Mount Gulian Historic Site.)*

Name and insignia. The Society took its name from Cincinnatus (c. 519–430 BC), the Roman who left his plow for dictatorial command, defeated the enemy, and resigned his power — the emblem of the citizen-soldier. Its motto: *Omnia reliquit servare rempublicam* — "He gave up everything to serve the Republic." The insignia, designed by Major Pierre-Charles L'Enfant (who later planned Washington, D.C.), was adopted June 19, 1783: a gold bald eagle bearing medallions of Cincinnatus receiving his sword from the senators and, on the reverse, being crowned by Fame at his plow, suspended from blue-and-white ribbon (the colors symbolizing the Franco-American alliance). L'Enfant sailed to Paris in late 1783 and contracted the Parisian jewelers Francastel and Duval to strike the first 225 eagles in early 1784. The Diamond Eagle, presented to Washington by French naval officers in 1784, is still passed to each incoming President General. *(Society of the Cincinnati, "The Society of the Cincinnati Eagle"; American Revolution Institute, "Society of the Cincinnati Eagle Insignias.")*

The hereditary controversy. The Institution limited membership to officers' eldest sons — primogeniture — and thereby, critics said, created a hereditary order in a republic that had just abolished primogeniture and nobility. Aedanus Burke (as "Cassius") published the first attacks in 1783; Benjamin Franklin, in his famous letter to his daughter Sarah Bache (January 26, 1784) — the same letter praising the turkey over the eagle — wrote of "a Number of private persons... form[ing] an Order of hereditary Knights, in direct Opposition to the solemnly declared Sense of their Country"; Jefferson, John Adams, John Jay, and others joined the criticism, and Franklin engineered Mirabeau's *Considérations sur l'Ordre de Cincinnatus* (1785) in Paris. At the Society's first general meeting (May 4, 1784, Philadelphia), Washington — alarmed — pressed to drop heredity and reportedly considered abolition; the heredity clause survived, though the Society agreed not to wear the eagles publicly and to bar succession of honorary members. Elbridge Gerry warned at the 1787 Convention that the Cincinnati might swing a popular presidential election. The French society abolished heredity permanently (its last members admitted in 1792). The Society endures as the oldest patriotic hereditary society in the United States, headquartered at Anderson House, Washington, D.C., with its museum and the American Revolution Institute (est. 2012). *(Society of the Cincinnati archives; Franklin to Sarah Bache, Jan. 26, 1784, Founders Online; Madison's Notes, July 26, 1787.)*

Original members — context for the list. The state-by-state rosters reproduced in the raw doc are the standard printed lists (Metcalf and Saffell lineages) of the 2,150 "original members" — officers who joined by right of

service, plus those killed in service whose eldest sons succeeded. Notables include Washington, Knox (Secretary General), Hamilton, von Steuben, Greene, Wayne, Lafayette, Rochambeau, Kościuszko, Putnam, St. Clair, Light-Horse Harry Lee, James Monroe, Aaron Burr, John Paul Jones, and Rufus King; the French list includes L'Enfant. The list is a roll of the Continental officer corps that later seeded the early republic's leadership: its members included 23 of the 39 signers of the Constitution, several early presidents of Congress, the first governors of the Northwest Territory, and mayors of Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and New York. *(List of original members of the Society of the Cincinnati; Saffell, Records of the Revolutionary War; Metcalf, Original Members and Other Officers.)*

3) CORRECTIONS — errors and fabrications in the raw docs

1. [MAJOR — fabricated history] *"A reversal occurred circa 1977 when New Amsterdam recaptured control of the territory with the planting of its 1625 Flag of Convenience"* and *"the date on the seal changed from 1664 to 1625... to establish New York City as the 51st Territorial state of the United States"* / *"a legislative coup."* False. The 1977 seal change to 1625 (from 1664) was a symbolic acknowledgment of the city's Dutch founding, championed by Dutch-descended community groups — a genuine but purely symbolic design change adopted under Mayor Abraham Beame. It established nothing legal. There is no "51st territorial state," no "legislative coup," and "Flag of Convenience" (a shipping-registry term) is misapplied to the city flag. The *Mailer–Breslin 1969 "51st State" campaign* — also summarized in the doc — is real history, but it was a defeated mayoral primary platform, not a change in the city's status. 2. [MAJOR — factual error] The NYC-flag section says the tricolor "honors the city's Dutch colonial roots, even though New York spent more time under English rule." The claim the colors come from the Dutch *Prince's Flag* is the standard account (the *Prinsenvlag* — orange-white-blue, later red-white-blue), but note the city flag was not adopted until 1915; the doc leaves that ambiguous elsewhere. 3. [ERROR — naming/credit] The research brief expected the eagle medal to be by "Du Simitière" — that is wrong, and the raw docs (to their credit) do not repeat it. The Cincinnati eagle was designed by Pierre-Charles L'Enfant (1783) and first manufactured in Paris (1784) by Francastel and Duval. Pierre Eugène Du Simitière is a different, frequently confused figure: a Swiss-born naturalist-artist who in 1776 proposed the design *elements* (eagle, shield with 13 stripes) later used in the Great Seal of the United States (adopted 1782, drawn by William Barton/Charles Thomson) and who assembled early Revolutionary collections. No Du Simitière connection to the Cincinnati insignia exists in any standard source. 4. [ERROR — date/attribution] "The Second Continental Congress... convened... in April 1775" — it convened May 10, 1775 (after the April 19 fighting at Lexington and Concord). 5. [ERROR — first Congress, "in 1781"] "In 1781, the Congress ratified the Articles of Confederation" — the Articles were drafted 1777 and ratified March 1, 1781 (Maryland last). Also, the docs' blanket phrase "the U.S. Constitution in 1789" elides that the Constitution was drafted in 1787, ratified June 1788, and took effect March 4, 1789. 6. [IMPRECISION] "The Congress... forming the Bank of the United States (now known as the First Bank)" under the Confederation Congress is misleading: the Bank of North America (chartered by the Confederation Congress December 31, 1781, at Philadelphia; the proposal is credited to Robert Morris, with Hamilton's early advocacy) is the institution meant. The First Bank of the United States is a different, later institution (1791, under the Constitution, Hamilton's scheme). The Confederation-era bank was the Bank of North America. 7. [IMPRECISION] "The passing of the Bill of Rights" at Federal Hall: Congress proposed the Bill of Rights there on September 25, 1789 (12 amendments); ratification by the states (10 surviving amendments) came in 1791, after the capital had moved. "Passed" needs that qualification. 8. [IMPRECISION — capital dates] The NYC article's "national capital from 1785 until 1790" is right in round terms but conflates two eras: under the Articles, from January 11, 1785 (Congress met at City Hall) — technically until late 1788; and under the Constitution, 1789–1790 (Federal Hall, 1st Congress, Washington's inauguration) until the Residence Act (July 1790) moved the capital to Philadelphia in December 1790. New York was thus the capital under *both* governments — a distinction the docs never draw and the exhibit should. 9. [MINOR — misleading] "New York City... designated as the capital of the province of New York in 1625" (Confederation doc, ¶9) — the town did

not exist in 1625; New Amsterdam's municipal charter came in 1653 (which the same doc states correctly elsewhere). The 1625 date in the seal commemorates the founding of the province (the 1624/1625 settling of Manhattan by the Dutch West India Company), not a "capital." 10. [MINOR] "First Anglo-Dutch War ended in 1654 without hostilities in New Amsterdam… 'werken'… reinforced… The original wall was constructed under orders from Peter Stuyvesant at the start of the first Anglo-Dutch war soon after New Amsterdam was incorporated in 1653" — the wall postdates the incorporation (Sept. 1653), during the lead-up to the *Second* Anglo-Dutch War; the doc's chronology compresses confusingly, and the fort was begun in 1625–26, well before Stuyvesant (Director-General from 1647). 11. [MINOR] The claim (in the brief for this task, not the docs) that New York's ratifying convention sat in New York City in 1788 is wrong: it met at Poughkeepsie (Dutchess County courthouse), June 17 – July 26, 1788. See §2. 12. [SCOPE NOTE — not errors] The long Mailer–Breslin, Bella Abzug, Time Inc./McCormick, chartalism, prize-law, Confederate States Congress, and NY State Senate District 20 passages are unrelated scraped material (topic drift from a bad crawl), not history of the founding-era cluster. The Confederate Congress material is 1861–62 and must not be presented alongside 1781–89 content; the Wall Street slave market (1711–1762) and Dutch "Het Cingel" material is genuine New York history but belongs to a different exhibit thread. 13. [MINOR — Cincinnati doc] "On June 19, 1783… adopted the bald eagle… It is the second official American emblem to use the bald eagle, following the Great Seal" — the Great Seal was adopted June 20, 1782; strictly, the eagle's use in Great Seal *designs* (1776–1782) preceded the Cincinnati's adoption, so "second" holds only for adopted official emblems, and even that ordering depends on which drafts count. Fine for an exhibit, if worded carefully. Also the doc's roster of "original members" lists Richard Taylor (Lt. Col.) — the president Zachary Taylor's father — correctly, but the "honorary members" list wrongly includes "Postmaster General Benjamin Franklin": Franklin was never an *honorary* member in that sense; he was an early *critic* (see §2) and, per the Society's own records, was later elected an honorary member of the Pennsylvania Society in 1785 — a nuance worth getting right in any exhibit text. 14. [MINOR — Cincinnati doc, "founder" infobox] The infobox credits "Henry Knox" as founder and "Founded at Fishkill, New York" — correct as far as it goes, but note the Society was organized *by* Knox's proposal *at* the Verplanck House/Mount Gulian with von Steuben presiding; Knox chaired the earlier planning circle at the([sic]) New Windsor cantonment area. For the exhibit, "conceived by Henry Knox, instituted May 13, 1783, at Fishkill (Mount Gulian), with von Steuben presiding and Hamilton as orator" is the safest phrasing.

4) WHAT THE DOCS MISSED — richest true details worth adding

1. **New York was the national capital under* both *founding governments. Under the Articles from January 11, 1785 (City Hall's second floor, which the Confederation Congress shared — literally across the corridor — with the New York State Legislature), and under the Constitution from March 4, 1789 (Federal Hall) until the Residence Act moved the capital to Philadelphia in December 1790. No other city held that double role. This is the exhibit's reinvention hook: the same building, the same chamber, hosted the* deathbed *of the Articles (Philip Pell adjourning a dead congress, March 2, 1789, alone) and the* birth *of the Constitution's government (Washington's oath, April 30, 1789, on the balcony above it) seven weeks later. 2. The 1783 Pennsylvania Mutiny made the capital a federal district. When ~400 armed Continental soldiers surrounded Independence Hall on June 21, 1783 demanding back pay, Congress fled to Princeton — and the memory of that helplessness is a direct reason the Constitution gave Congress an "exclusive Legislation" district (Art. I, §8, cl. 17). The mutiny also pushed Congress to move to Annapolis and Trenton before New York. The raw docs mention the move but never the mutiny's constitutional consequence. 3. The Northwest Ordinance was written in the same New York chamber where Washington later took the oath. Passed July 13, 1787, while the Constitutional Convention sat 100 miles away in Philadelphia — the Confederation Congress's twin legacy of westward expansion and the anti-slavery Art. 6 ban in the Northwest Territory (the first federal-slave-law prohibition) is the single most exhibit-worthy fact in the cluster. The Ordinance also promised "the utmost good faith" toward Indians — always breached, rarely quoted. 4. New York's ratification was the hinge of the Constitution's legitimacy — and it happened at Poughkeepsie, not New York City. Virginia (June 25, 1788) ratified* after *New Hampshire's ninth vote; New York (30–27, July 26, 1788) was the eleventh and decisive* commercial *state; Anti-Federalist Governor George Clinton's faction warned of secession; Hamilton, Jay, and Melancton Smith flipped enough delegates with a promise of amendments — the very promise Federal Hall's first Congress kept with the Bill of Rights in September 1789. 5. Washington's inauguration details: the oath was administered by Chancellor Robert R. Livingston on a St. John's Lodge Bible (grabbed when none was found in the Hall), after a lunch in the Senate chamber and a church service at St. Paul's Chapel; the inaugural protocol of a joint House-Senate committee nearly foundered on whether the President should be styled "His Highness the President of the United States of America and Protector of their Liberties" (the Senate's title fight, which the House refused) before settling on plain "Mr. President" — the same chamber where the Confederation Congress had sat. The city's staged triumphal arch at the Nassau Street end of Wall Street (with Hamilton among the planners) is another lost-image opportunity. 6. Cincinnatus's naming was a two-way street between Cincinnati and the Society. The Ohio city (renamed from Losantiville in 1790 by Gov. Arthur St. Clair, a Cincinnati original member, to flatter the Society and attract its officers) and the Society (named for the Roman) form a closed loop of homage: Roman farmer-dictator → Continental officers' fraternity → western town named after the fraternity. The 15-foot Cincinnatus statue at Cincinnati's Sawyer Point and the diamond Eagle's chain of custody (Washington → Hamilton → Pinckney → ...) are the material-culture threads. 7. The Society's eagle imagery nearly wasn't an eagle. L'Enfant's eagle design beat the Institution's original prescription of a simple medal of Cincinnatus; the first 225 eagles were made in Paris by Francastel & Duval in 1784 because L'Enfant judged no American craftsman equal to gold-and-enamel champlevé work. And Franklin's turkey-vs-eagle letter — usually misquoted as an official-design rant — was* specifically aimed at the Cincinnati eagle*, whose bearer Franklin said was "a Bird of bad moral Character" that "does not get his living honestly." 8. The anti-Cincinnati*

pamphlet war was the young republic's first free-speech test of hereditary privilege: Burke's Considerations *(Oct. 1783), Franklin's letter (Jan. 1784), the Society's near-dissolution (May 4, 1784), and Mirabeau's Paris edition (1785, engineered by Franklin) are a compact, dramatic arc of republican ideology policing itself. It ends with a twist: the heredity clauses survived in America, but the* French *society (the king's own officers) abolished them — and with the Revolution of 1792, the French Cincinnati died with the monarchy (last admissions Feb. 3, 1792). 9. New York's own founding-era institutions surface in the member lists: the New York Society's originals include Hamilton, Burr, George Clinton, Philip Schuyler, Richard Varick, Marinus Willett, Nicholas Fish, Peter Gansevoort, Morgan Lewis, John Lamb, John Morin Scott, and von Steuben — the same men who ran New York's post-war government (Varick and Willett as mayors; Lewis as governor; Clinton as the Anti-Federalist governor who resisted the Constitution). The list* is *the story of one state's ruling generation. 10. The last days of the Confederation Congress are exhibit-gold as a parable of reinvention: quorum failures after October 10, 1788; the body stripped of its City Hall chamber (given over to fitting out the new federal Senate and House); the rump reconvening at the Walter Livingston House on Cortland Street; and finally one man — Anti-Federalist Philip Pell — presiding over the adjournment* sine die* of the only national government the United States had ever had, two days before the Constitution took effect.

5) IMAGES — public-domain assets for the exhibit

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4	images/cincinnati-eagle-badge-c1783.jpg	Original Society of the Cincinnati eagle insignia, c. 1783, gold and enamel — Cincinnati Art Museum	commons.wikimedia.org — File:Badge of the Society of the Cincinnati, c. 1783... DSC04560.JPG	CC0 (photo: Daderot)
5	images/northwest-territory-ordinance-1787-map.jpg	Map of the Old Northwest Territory before/after the Ordinance of 1787	commons.wikimedia.org — File:The Old Northwest Territory preceding and following the Ordinance of 1787.jpg	Public domain
6	images/constitution-signing-christy-1940.jpg	*Scene at the Signing of the Constitution* — Howard Chandler Christy, 1940 (U.S. Capitol); bridges the Confederation and Constitution eras (23 of the 39 signers became Cincinnati members)	commons.wikimedia.org — File:Scene at the Signing of the Constitution of the United States.jpg	Public domain (work for U.S. government)

Suggested alternates for future expansion: Henry Knox portrait (Charles Willson Peale, c. 1784) — File:Henry Knox by Peale.jpg (PD); Northwest Territory locator map — File:Northwest Territory locator map (1787).svg (CC BY-SA 4.0 — note attribution/share-alike requirements).

Compiled October 13, 2026. Verification status: dates, venues, and elections cross-checked against LoC Journals of the Continental Congress, Avalon Project (NY ratification), Founders Online (Jay, Franklin, Madison's Notes), Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution, and Society of the Cincinnati / American Revolution Institute publications. The "1977 New Amsterdam" narrative in the Confederation doc is fiction and must not appear in any exhibit text.