

Guide to the Samuel Benjamin Papers

MS 75



compiled by Staff of Manuscripts and Archives

August 1982

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 75

CREATOR: Benjamin, Samuel, 1753-1824

TITLE: Samuel Benjamin papers

DATES: 1775-1845

BULK DATES: 1775-1782

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.25 linear feet

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers consist of correspondence, diaries, poems, orders and receipts concerning Samuel Benjamin's service in the Massachusetts infantry during the Revolutionary War. Included also is a printed version of Benjamin's diaries (1778-1780) describing maneuvers around West Point, New York and the Yorktown campaign.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0075>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0075>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Mrs. A.D. Lindsay, 1939.

Conditions Governing Access

The entire collection is available on microfilm. Patrons must use HM 147 instead of the originals

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

Samuel Benjamin Papers (MS 75). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Existence and Location of Copies

Entire collection available on microfilm (355 frames on 1 reel, 35mm.) from Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, at cost. Order no. HM147.

Biographical / Historical

Samuel Benjamin fought at the Battle of Lexington in 1775. He enlisted in Captain Daniel Whiting's company and served as a sergeant at the Battle of Bunker Hill. After the British evacuated Boston, Benjamin was in the garrison at Fort Ticonderoga. He was commissioned as an ensign in the Massachusetts Continental Line, and commissioned as lieutenant in the same company. Benjamin served at Valley Forge, Saratoga, Monmouth, and Yorktown.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains approximately 100 items in one box and one item relating to Lieutenant Samuel Benjamin of Waltham, Massachusetts, and Livermore, Maine, covering the years 1775-1845, but primarily the period 1775-1782. Samuel Benjamin, 1753-1824, fought at the battle of Lexington on April 19, 1775. Enlisting in Captain Daniel Whiting's Company, he served as a sergeant at Bunker Hill and after the British evacuated Boston was in the garrison of Fort Ticonderoga in New York. On January 1, 1777, Congress commissioned him an Ensign in Captain Ebenezer Cleaveland's Company of Colonel Michael Jackson's Regiment of the Massachusetts Continental Line. On October 7, 1777, he was commissioned a Lieutenant of the same Company and for a while in 1778 served as adjutant for Colonel Scammel's Massachusetts regiment. He was at Valley Forge, Saratoga, Monmouth, West Point, Stony Point, Paulus' Hook, and Yorktown. He married Tabitha Livermore of Waltham and had ten children. After his separation from the Continental Army on August 6, 1782, Benjamin bought land in Cumberland County, Massachusetts, now Maine. Mrs. Benjamin died in 1837, and these papers from the Revolutionary War became the property of Mrs. Benjamin Lindsay of Milwaukee, whose son donated the collection to Yale.

Of interest in this collection are four small paper booklets. One is a diary of Lt. Benjamin from January 20, 1781, to December 17, 1781. The early pages describe maneuvers around West Point, New York. Then comes a description of the march and voyage to Yorktown, and Benjamin's trip home to Waltham for a well-earned furlough. The few remaining pages of this book contain lists of Bible passage by chapter and verse, and financial accounts.

The second booklet contains a variety of notes and accounts, 1776-1780. There is also a prayer, a reply to a challenge to duel, the roll of Captain Whiting's Company in 1776, brief accounts, and a sketch of a camp. The book also contains four rhymed poems, one a pastoral, and three addressed to "Kate, the captains's lady".

A third booklet is an order book, October 4, 1781, to November 1, 1781, at Yorktown. Some of the pages are devoted to financial accounts, 1782-1788, and a few pages define the game of "Rickett," a close copy of cricket.

The fourth booklet is a printed version of Benjamin's brief diary, 1778-1780, with the longer account of the Yorktown campaign. A brief introduction supplied the biographical data on Benjamin.

The rest of the collection is in manuscript sheets arranged chronologically in ten folders with a map of a township, undated (in CF5).

Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1reel 1U	An account of an assault on Benjamin by men of Colonel Whitcomb's regiment at Ticonderoga	1776 December 25
b. 1, f. 1reel 1U	Three printed sheets: a receipt for the Continental Lottery, enlistment oath of the Continental Army, and the bounty passed by the Massachusetts General Court	1776, 1777
b. 1, f. 1reel 1U	A certificate at Watertown by Marshall Spring stating that Benjamin is too ill to continue in his present military duties	1777 July 22
b. 1, f. 1reel 1U	ALS, Lt. Col. Dudley Colman to Benjamin, Cambridge, appointing Benjamin as a recruiting officer for General Health until Benjamin returns to good health.	1777 July 26
b. 1, f. 2reel 1U	Miscellaneous receipts	1778 January-March
b. 1, f. 3reel 1U	Miscellaneous receipts dated at Valley Forge, and a list of Major Generals in the Continental Army	1778 April-July
b. 1, f. 4reel 1U	Miscellaneous receipts	1778 August-December
b. 1, f. 5reel 1U	Miscellaneous receipts, West Point, and a printed bounty resolution from the Massachusetts General court	1779 January-August
b. 1, f. 6reel 1U	Miscellaneous receipts, West Point	1779 September-December
b. 1, f. 7reel 1U	Receipts and 2 sketches of battle formation	1780
b. 1, f. 8reel 1U	Receipts and specifications for the uniform of the Massachusetts line	1781
b. 1, f. 9reel 1U	Discharge certificates and indenture	1782-1845
b. 1, f. 10reel 1U	Receipts of "cloathing" and a small account book	Undated
b. 1, f. 11reel 1U	Diary Diary of Lt. Benjamin. The early pages describe maneuvers around West Point, New York. Then comes a description of the march and voyage to Yorktown, and Benjamin's trip home to Waltham for a well-earned furlough. The few remaining pages of this book contain lists of Bible passage by chapter and verse, and financial accounts.	1781 January 20 - December 17
b. 1, f. 12reel 1U	Book of notes and accounts There is also a prayer, a reply to a challenge to duel, the roll of Captain Whiting's Company in 1776, brief accounts, and a sketch of a camp. The book also contains four rhymed poems, one a pastoral, and three addressed to "Kate, the captains's lady".	1776-1780
b. 1, f. 13reel 1U	Order book Some of the pages are devoted to financial accounts, 1782-1788, and a few pages define the game of "Rickett," a close copy of cricket. A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives. Contact Manuscripts and Archives at beinecke.library@yale.edu to request access to the digital copy.	1781 October 4 - November 1

b. 1, f. 14reel 1U "Brief Notice of Lieutenant Samuel Benjamin, An Officer of the Revolutionary War, Undated with Extracts from a Diary Kept by Him During the War"
A printed version of Benjamin's brief diary, 1778-1780, with the longer account of the Yorktown campaign. A brief introduction supplied the biographical data on Benjamin.

b. 2, f. 5 Map of a township (Butterfield upper town?) Undated

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Geographic Names

Massachusetts -- History -- Revolution,
1775-1783

United States -- History -- Revolution,
1775-1783 -- Personal narratives

Genres / Formats

Diaries

Orders

Poems

Occupations

Soldiers

Names

Benjamin, Samuel, 1753-1824

Corporate Bodies

Massachusetts Infantry. Jackson's Regiment
(1778-1782)

Massachusetts Infantry. Scammel's Regiment
(1777)

United States. Continental Army