Guide to the Samuel Benjamin Papers

MS 75

compiled by Staff of Manuscripts and Archives

August 1982

Yale University Library
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# Table of Contents

Collection Overview .................................................................................................................. 3
Requesting Instructions ............................................................................................................... 3
Administrative Information ........................................................................................................ 3
  Immediate Source of Acquisition .......................................................................................... 3
  Conditions Governing Access .............................................................................................. 4
  Conditions Governing Use .................................................................................................... 4
  Preferred Citation .................................................................................................................. 4
  Existence and Location of Copies ......................................................................................... 4
Biographical / Historical ............................................................................................................ 4
Scope and Contents ................................................................................................................... 4
Collection Contents .................................................................................................................. 6
Selected Search Terms .............................................................................................................. 8
Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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P.O. Box 208240
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http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/

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: http://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 http://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 Cleavelands’ 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 1 reel 1U</td>
<td>An account of an assault on Benjamin by men of Colonel Whitcomb’s regiment at Ticonderoga</td>
<td>1776 December 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 1 reel 1U</td>
<td>Three printed sheets: a receipt for the Continental Lottery, enlistment oath of the Continental Army, and the bounty passed by the Massachusetts General Court</td>
<td>1776, 1777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 1 reel 1U</td>
<td>A certificate at Watertown by Marshall Spring stating that Benjamin is too ill to continue in his present military duties</td>
<td>1777 July 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 1 reel 1U</td>
<td>ALS, Lt. Col. Dudley Colman to Benjamin, Cambridge, appointing Benjamin as a recruiting officer for General Health until Benjamin returns to good health.</td>
<td>1777 July 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 2 reel 1U</td>
<td>Miscellaneous receipts</td>
<td>1778 January–March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 3 reel 1U</td>
<td>Miscellaneous receipts dated at Valley Forge, and a list of Major Generals in the Continental Army</td>
<td>1778 April–July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 4 reel 1U</td>
<td>Miscellaneous receipts</td>
<td>1778 August–December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 5 reel 1U</td>
<td>Miscellaneous receipts, West Point, and a printed bounty resolution from the Massachusetts General court</td>
<td>1779 January–August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 6 reel 1U</td>
<td>Miscellaneous receipts, West Point</td>
<td>1779 September–December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 7 reel 1U</td>
<td>Receipts and 2 sketches of battle formation</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 8 reel 1U</td>
<td>Receipts and specifications for the uniform of the Massachusetts line</td>
<td>1781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 9 reel 1U</td>
<td>Discharge certificates and indenture</td>
<td>1782–1845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 10 reel 1U</td>
<td>Receipts of “cloathing” and a small account book</td>
<td>Undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 11 reel 1U</td>
<td>Diary</td>
<td>1781 January 20 – December 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 12 reel 1U</td>
<td>Book of notes and accounts</td>
<td>1776–1780</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 13</td>
<td>Order book</td>
<td>1781 October 4 – November 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reel 1U</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 14</td>
<td>“Brief Notice of Lieutenant Samuel Benjamin, An Officer of the Revolutionary War, with Extracts from a Diary Kept by Him During the War”</td>
<td>Undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reel 1U</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 2, f. 5</td>
<td>Map of a township (Butterfield upper town?)</td>
<td>Undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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