

Guide to the John Stark Papers, 1743-1816

Title and Dates:

John Stark Papers, 1743-1816

Repository:

New Hampshire Historical Society

30 Park Street

Concord, NH 03301

603-228-6688

<http://www.nhhistory.org/>

Collection Number:

1918.005, 1935.004, 1975.034

Author of Finding Aid:

Unidentified; updated by Susan Kelly

Creator:

Stark, John, 1728-1822

Language:

The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:

3 boxes ; 0.84 linear feet

Abstract:

The John Stark Papers, 1743-1816, consist of correspondence, military commissions, returns of strength, personal and military accounts, personal and military receipts, account books, and other miscellaneous papers of John Stark. John Stark served with Roger's Rangers during the Seven Years' War. During the American Revolution, he served as a Colonel at Bunker Hill and with George Washington in New Jersey during the winter of 1776-1777. Later in 1777, as a Brigadier General of the New Hampshire militia at the Battle of Bennington, his forces defeated British General John Burgoyne's army. He was rewarded with a commission to Brigadier General in the Continental Army, and in 1783 he received a promotion to Major General. Stark retired in 1783 and returned to live in New Hampshire until his death in 1822.

Access and Use

Acquisition Information and Provenance:

The John Stark Papers were a gift of Arthur Winslow, Cameron M. Winslow, and Sarah Stark Winslow in October 1918. Accession 1935.004 was a gift of Arthur Winslow and Sarah Stark Winslow in November 1935. Accession 1975.034, an account book, was transferred to this collection in August 1975.

Processing Information:

This collection was processed by an unknown person at an unknown date. The finding aid was written by an unknown person at an unknown date and updated by Susan Kelly in December 2017. This finding aid follows the standards set forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Access Restrictions:

Available for research. This collection has been digitized and is available on the New Hampshire Historical Society's online catalog.

Location:

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

The materials in this collection are paper based and have no special technical requirements for use.

Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:

For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Users are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

Preferred Citation:

Item title, John Stark Papers, 1918.005. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date accessed.

Collection Overview

Biographical Information:

John Stark was born on August 28, 1728, in Londonderry, New Hampshire, to Archibald and Eleanor Nichols Stark. His father, who emigrated from Scotland in 1720, moved his family to Derryfield (now Manchester), New Hampshire, in 1736. In 1752 Stark, his brother, and two neighbors were captured by Native Americans while on a hunting trip. Stark was transported to Canada and later ransomed. Shortly before the French and Indian War, he began his military career in Roger's Rangers, serving as a First Lieutenant during the fighting at Fort William and Mary, and at Fort Ticonderoga. After the war, Stark returned to his home and married Elizabeth "Molly" Page, with whom he fathered eleven children.

With the outbreak of the American Revolution, Stark was commissioned a Colonel in the New Hampshire militia and ordered to the Siege of Boston, taking part in the Battle of Bunker Hill. Stark spent the fall and early winter of 1776 in Pennsylvania and New Jersey where he saw action at Princeton under George Washington, and at Trenton under John Sullivan. After this, he returned to New Hampshire to recruit troops and supplies, and learned he had been passed over for promotion in the Continental Army. He resigned his commission and returned home.

Receiving a commission as Brigadier General in the New Hampshire militia in 1777, he headed to Vermont. Ordered by General Philip Schuyler to join the Continental forces at Albany, Stark refused and instead, at the Battle of Bennington on August 16, 1777, checked British General John Burgoyne's advance and prevented Burgoyne from retreating to Fort Ticonderoga and safety. As a result, Burgoyne was forced to surrender.

Appointed a Brigadier General in the Continental Army, Stark prepared for a winter expedition to Canada. In November 1778 he aided General Horatio Gates in the Siege of Newport, and then joined General George Washington in New Jersey, where he took part in the Battle of Springfield. In 1780 he assumed command of the Northern Department at Saratoga. After the threat of British General Cornwallis' invasion from Canada was removed in 1781, he was ordered back to New Hampshire to recruit troops. He remained there due to illness until 1783, at which time he rejoined Washington and stayed until the British left New York in November 1783, ending the War. He retired to his Manchester, NH, home until his death at age 94. He died on May 8, 1822, the last surviving Revolutionary War general.

Collection Scope and Content Note:

The General John Stark Papers, 1743-1816, largely consist of Stark's correspondence for the period 1775-1781. The majority of the correspondence deals with his tenure as commander of the Northern Department in 1778 and 1781. The general subject matter is military: planning, troop movements, orders, reports of enemy activity, and logistics. The correspondence during his command of the Northern Department deals with the defense of Albany, British and Indian movements, and Stark's constant requests for supplies and troops. Several brief accounts of the Battle of Bennington by Stark and others appear in the collection.

Other materials in this collection are numerous returns of troop strength, several detailed expense records, Stark's military commissions, and a number of pay receipts from Stark's men. Personal papers are limited to Stark's finances after 1781. In addition, there is a box of photocopies of Stark's correspondence for 1776-1786 from the Library of Congress. Much of the correspondence is printed in Caleb Stark's *Memoir and Official Correspondence of General John Stark* (1877), p. 107-319, and all printed items are labeled with the pagination to the 1877 edition.

Arrangement:

The papers are divided into eight series:

Series 1. Correspondence, 1755-1811

Series 2. Military commissions, 1758-1786

Series 3. Returns of strength, 1775-1781

Series 4. Personal and military accounts, 1775-1816

- Series 5. Personal and military receipts, 1760-1814
- Series 6. Miscellaneous papers, 1743-1814
- Series 7. Account books, 1775-1784
- Series 8. Photostats, 1779-1781

Contents List

Series 1. Correspondence, 1755-1811

Extent: 26 folders

Scope and Content: Series one, 1775-1811, contains the correspondence of John Stark. The general subject matter is military planning, troop movements, orders, reports of enemy activity, and logistics. The majority of the correspondence deals with John Stark's tenure as commander of the Northern Department in 1778 and 1781. Subjects included in the correspondence from Stark's time as commander in the Northern Department are the defense of Albany, NY; British and Indian movements; and Stark's requests for supplies and troop reinforcement. Other correspondence contains Stark's brief accounts of the Battle of Bennington in August 1777 and congratulatory responses from military and political leaders of the time. The series also consists of correspondence from Stark's life after the American Revolution with William Bentley and the committee organizing memorials at the site of the Battle of Bennington.

Box 1

- Folder 1 Correspondence, 1775 May-1777 August
- Folder 2 Correspondence, 1777 September-December, undated 1778
- Folder 3 Correspondence, 1778 January-April
- Folder 4 Correspondence, 1778 May 1-21
- Folder 5 Correspondence, 1778 May 22-31
- Folder 6 Correspondence, 1778 June 1-16
- Folder 7 Correspondence, 1778 June 17-30
- Folder 8 Correspondence, 1778 July 1-14
- Folder 9 Correspondence, 1778 July 15-31
- Folder 10 Correspondence, 1778 August
- Folder 11 Correspondence, 1778 September-1779
- Folder 12 Correspondence, 1780 January-October
- Folder 13 Correspondence, 1780 November
- Folder 14 Correspondence, 1780 December
- Folder 15 Correspondence, 1781 January-June
- Folder 16 Correspondence, 1781 August 1-23
- Folder 17 Correspondence, 1781 August 24-31
- Folder 18 Correspondence, 1781 September 1-8
- Folder 19 Correspondence, 1781 September 9-16
- Folder 20 Correspondence, 1781 September 17-30
- Folder 21 Correspondence, 1781 October 1-11
- Folder 22 Correspondence, 1781 October 12-16
- Folder 23 Correspondence, 1781 October 17-31
- Folder 24 Correspondence, 1781 November

Box 2

Folder 1 Correspondence, 1781 December, undated 1781

Folder 2 Correspondence, 1786-1811

Series 2. Military commissions, 1758-1786

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: Series two includes four military commissions, 1758-1786. Three of the military commissions were granted to John Stark. The fourth military commission was granted to Archibald Stark, John Stark's brother.

Box 2

Folder 3 Military commissions of Archibald Stark and John Stark, 1758-1786

Series 3. Returns of strength, 1775-1781

Extent: 2 folders

Scope and Content: Series three includes returns of strength, mainly from officers within John Stark's regiment. The majority of the returns are from captains who served under John Stark when he was colonel of the First New Hampshire Regiment. Other returns date from Stark's time as commanding officer of the Northern Department in Saratoga, NY, and Albany, NY.

Box 2

Folder 4 Returns of strength, 1775-1776

Folder 5 Returns of strength, 1777-1781

Series 4. Personal and military accounts, 1775-1816

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: Series four contains the personal and military accounts of John Stark from 1775 to 1816. Many of the accounts deal with Stark's time as commander of the 1st New Hampshire Regiment. There are also personal accounts of John Stark including one with details of his salary.

Box 2

Folder 6 Personal and military accounts, 1775-1816

Series 5. Personal and military receipts, 1760-1814

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: Series five contains mostly military and personal receipts belonging to John Stark from 1760 to 1814. This series also consists of money orders and bills. The majority of receipts date from 1775 to 1781 and include military pay receipts of Stark's troops.

Box 2

Folder 7 Personal and military receipts, 1760-1814

Series 6. Miscellaneous papers, 1743-1814

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: Series six consists of miscellaneous papers related to John Stark and date from 1743 to 1814. Types of materials include a recollection of a Loyalist family, lists, land settlements, a deed, and paper fragments.

Box 2

Folder 8 Miscellaneous papers, 1743-1814

Series 7. Account books, 1775-1784**Extent:** 1 folder**Scope and Content:** Series seven contains the account book of John Stark for the years 1775 to 1776, which includes information on the pay of Stark's troops during that time. The book also contains a petition for reimbursement of wartime expenses sent to Congress, authored by Caleb Stark on behalf of John Stark.**Box 2**

Folder 9 Account book, 1775-1776, 1784

Series 8. Photostats, 1776-1786**Extent:** 5 folders**Scope and Content:** Series eight contains photostats of correspondence from 1776 to 1786, the originals of which are at the Library of Congress.**Box 3**

Folder 1 Library of Congress photostats: correspondence, 1776-1777
Folder 2 Library of Congress photostats: correspondence, 1778
Folder 3 Library of Congress photostats: correspondence, 1779-1780
Folder 4 Library of Congress photostats: correspondence, 1781
Folder 5 Library of Congress photostats: correspondence, 1782-1786

Subject Terms**People:**

Alexander, William, 1726-1783
Allen, Ethan, 1738-1789
Barclay, John, -1779
Bass, Joseph, 1744-1822
Bayley, Jacob, 1726-1815
Bentley, William
Butler, William, 1789
Chittenden, Thomas, 1730-1797
Clinton, George, 1739-1812
Conway, Thomas, 1735-approximately 1800
Deane, James, 1748-1823
Dunham, Holtum, 1749-1824
Enos, Roger, 1729-1808
Fay, Joseph, 1738-1777
Fellows, John, 1745-1808
Gildersleeve, Finch, 1751-1812
Gist, Mordecai, 1743-1792
Haldimand, Frederick, Sir, 1718-1791
Hancock, John, 1737-1793
Heath, William, 1737-1814
Herrick, Samuel, 1732-1797
Klock, Jacob, 1738-1798

Langdon, John, 1741-1819
Laurens, Henry, 1724-1792
Lincoln, Benjamin, 1733-1810
Logan, Samuel
Lovelace, Thomas
Osborn, Shadrach, 1747-1838
Pickering, Timothy, 1745-1829
Powell, Jeremiah
Reid, George, 1733-1815
Safford, Samuel, 1737-1813
Schuyler, Philip, 1733-1804
Stark, Caleb, 1759-1838
Stark, John, 1728-1822
Sullivan, John, 1740-1795
Ten Broeck, Abraham, 1734-1810
Warner, Seth, 1743-1784
Washington, George, 1732-1799
Weare, Meshach, 1713-1786
Whitcomb, Benjamin, 1737-1828
Willett, Marinus, 1740-1830
Yates, Peter W. (Peter Waldron), 1747-1826

Organizations:

New Hampshire. Council
New Hampshire. Provincial Congress
United States. Continental Army. New Hampshire Regiment, 1st
United States. Continental Congress
Vermont. General Assembly

Subjects:

Account books
American loyalists
Bennington, Battle of, N.Y., 1777
Correspondence
Military
Military appointments
Military orders
United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783

Locations:

Albany, NY
Bennington, VT
Saratoga, NY

Occupations:

Armed Forces--Officers
Soldiers

Related Materials

The New Hampshire Historical Society has a number of collections related to John Stark and the Stark family. A sample of these collections is listed below. See the online catalog for a full listing.

Archives

John Stark Account Book, 1759-1806, 1975.033
Lester M. Mack Papers, 1966.004 (m)
Morris and Stark Papers, 1916.001
Orderly Book, 1776 April-September, 1962.007
Orderly Book, 1780 August-September, 1923.004
Orderly Book, 1780 March-July; Accounts, 1806-1807, 1927.002
Orderly Book, 1780 September-November; Accounts, 1809-1814, 1920.003
Stark Family Papers, 1988.037 (m)
Stark Family Papers, 2008.062
Timothy Bedel Papers, 1880.001

Library

Adams, Sherman. *General John Stark: An Address at Bennington, Vt., 15 August 1948*. 1948.
Call number: 920 S795a

Boynton, Henry. *John Stark: His Place in American History*. Woodstock, Vt.: n.d. Call number:
920 S795bo

Moore, Ellen. *Collection of Newspaper Clippings about General Stark, from the Library of Ellen Moore, Manchester, N.H.* n.d. Call number: 920 S795c

Museum

Box, Cartridge, 1974.501
Desk, 1974.012
Engraving, Maj. Gen. John Stark, 2010.501.0992
Sword, 1994.524