

Watson Family
Revolutionary and Civil War Collection, 1777-1904 (bulk 1777-82, 1862-65)
MSA 774

Introduction

This collection consists of letters and papers relating to Vermont's involvement in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, as well as documents relating to a settlement from 1904 between the United States Federal Government and the State of Vermont regarding ordnance and supplies from the Civil War.

Bruce and Barbara Watson gave the collection as a gift to the Vermont Historical Society in 2013. The collection is shelved in one archival flip top box and occupies .25 linear feet.

Biographical Notes

The Revolutionary War papers in this collection center in large part on continental Colonel Seth Warner. Col. Warner (May 17, 1743-December 26, 1784) was born in Connecticut, and then moved to Bennington (then chartered by Governor Benning Wentworth of New Hampshire, now a part of Vermont) with his father. He was a Captain in the Green Mountain Boys before becoming an officer in the Continental Army, serving during the Revolutionary War. He is best-known for his role in the capture of Crown Point and his leadership in the Battle of Bennington. However, papers related to him in this collection date mainly from 1778-80, at which time he was serving along the Upper Hudson River and at Fort George on Lake George.

The Revolutionary War papers also reference Ebenezer Allen (1743-1806), a soldier, Vermont General Assembly member, and cousin to Ethan Allen; Ira Allen (1751-1814), well-known Green Mountain Boy instrumental to the founding of Vermont; Thomas Chittenden (1730-1797), the first governor of Vermont; and George Washington (1732-1799), the first president of the United States.

The Civil War papers are mainly secondary sources (field reports published in newspapers), but a large number of them were written by Brigadier General Lewis Addison Grant (1828-1918) of Winhall. Grant was a leading officer from Vermont during the Civil War.

Papers from the settlement regarding ordnance granted by the U.S. Federal Government to the State of Vermont during the Civil War reference William H. Gilmore (1839-1910), a Vermont state representative, state senator, and Adjutant General of the Vermont Militia; and Governor Ebenezer Ormsbee (1834-1924), who served as Vermont's Governor October 1886-October 1888.

Scope and Content

The Revolutionary War papers are divided into two categories: those relating to Seth Warner and those relating to Ebenezer Allen.

The Seth Warner papers consist of two letters to General George Washington, one including a roster and the other a list of prisoners of war and deaths from among his non-commissioned officers and privates, as well as a draft/copy of the list of prisoners of war and deaths, and a number of scraps of paper listing payments made and received under his command. The first letter is from March 1780. In it, Warner requests additional clothing for his men, and

reports that his regiment is short on clothing and supplies and will not be able to continue without fresh supplies. The letter includes a roster of the soldiers and commanding officers for the 9 companies under his command. The second letter from December 1780 references the same lack of clothing (Warner's first request evidently having not been granted), and includes a list of soldiers dead and missing. The scraps of paper listing payments made and received (both to soldiers and in exchange for goods) date from 1777-1782. None are signed by Warner, but all were grouped as part of the original gift and described as having originated from his regiment.

The Ebenezer Allen papers consist of an undated "List of Pay Rolls," listing soldiers and amounts of money, as well as a letter requesting funds to pay soldiers and cover rations. A portion of the letter signed by Thomas Chittenden directs payment to be remitted to Captain Ebenezer Allen.

The Civil War papers consist of a number of secondary sources, mainly field accounts published in the *Vermont Standard* and as standalone pieces, from 1862-1864. There are also several slips requesting pay for soldier Thomas Craig in 1865.

The settlement papers consist of two letters from lawyer Frederick H. Button directed to William H. Gilmore, former Adjutant General of the Vermont State Militia, outlining the nature of the claims between Vermont and the United States Government, and requesting additional records. These letters are dated 1904. There are also three documents sent accompanying one of the letters. They consist of lists of stores (dated 1888) granted to the Vermont State Militia by the U.S. Government and stores returned by Vermont to the U.S. Government from 1861-1865. Also included in this folder is a letter from A. H. Russell, U.S. Acting Chief of Ordnance, outlining the final terms of the settlement.

The final folder contains miscellaneous items which fit into none of the above categories, specifically: a five-dollar bill from 1852, two documents outlining military honors received by individual soldiers, and an unsigned letter listing photographs of Vermont officers sent to the War Department Library in Washington, D.C., as well as a list of Vermonters who fought in the Civil War, by regiment.

Organization of Papers

This collection is organized in four folders, each with content originating from the relevant war (or time period, in the case of the settlement), with a final folder containing additional, miscellaneous documents related to the wars but not originating from them.

Inventory

- MSA 774:01 Revolutionary War Papers
- MSA 774:02 Civil War Papers
- MSA 774:03 Treasury Settlement 26817
- MSA 774:04 Miscellaneous Additional Papers

Emma Morros
September 2016
WatsonWarGift.docx