

# Nathanael Greene Papers

## A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

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Revised and expanded by Patrick Kerwin



Manuscript Division, Library of  
Congress

Washington, D.C.

2004

Contact information: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/mss/address.html>

Finding aid encoded by Glenn R.  
Gardner, 2009

Finding aid URL: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms009092>

# Collection Summary

Title: Nathanael Greene Papers

Span Dates: 1775-1785

ID No.: MSS24026

Creator: Greene, Nathanael, 1742-1786

Extent: 400 items; 5 containers; 1 linear foot; 2 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: Army officer. Correspondence, letterbook, militia lists, documents relating to the Cherokee and Chickasaw tribes, and military reports documenting Greene's military career with emphasis on his involvement in the Continental Army campaign in the Southern Department.

## 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.

### Personal Names

Burke, Thomas, ca. 1747-1783--Correspondence.

Butler, John, 1728-1796--Correspondence.

Campbell, Arthur, 1742-1811--Correspondence.

Caswell, Richard, 1729-1789--Correspondence.

Cornwallis, Charles Cornwallis, Marquis, 1738-1805--Correspondence.

Greene, Nathanael, 1742-1786.

Gunby, John, 1745-1807--Correspondence.

Hanson, John, 1715-1783--Correspondence.

Harrison, Benjamin, ca. 1726-1791--Correspondence.

Huger, Isaac, 1742 or 3-1797--Correspondence.

Huntington, Samuel, 1731-1796--Correspondence.

Jefferson, Thomas, 1743-1826--Correspondence.

Kościuszko, Tadeusz, 1746-1817--Correspondence.

Laurens, John, 1754-1782--Correspondence.

Lee, Thomas Sim, 1745-1819--Correspondence.

Leslie, Alexander, ca. 1740-1794--Correspondence.

Lillington, John A.--Correspondence.

Marion, Francis, 1732-1795--Correspondence.

Martin, Alexander, 1740-1807--Correspondence.

Mathews, John, 1744-1802--Correspondence.

Morgan, Daniel, 1736-1802--Correspondence.

Morris, Robert, 1734-1806--Correspondence.

Moultrie, William, 1730-1805--Correspondence.

Nash, Abner, ca. 1740-1786--Correspondence.

Putnam, Israel, 1718-1790--Correspondence.

Rochambeau, Jean-Baptiste-Donatien de Vimeur, comte de, 1725-1807--Correspondence.

Rutledge, John, 1739-1800--Correspondence.

Sevier, John, 1745-1815--Correspondence.

Smallwood, William, 1732-1792--Correspondence.

St. Clair, Arthur, 1734-1818--Correspondence.

Steuben, Friedrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin, Baron von, 1730-1794--Correspondence.

Sumner, Jethro, 1733?-1785--Correspondence.

Sumter, Thomas, 1734-1832--Correspondence.

Washington, George, 1732-1799--Correspondence.

Wayne, Anthony, 1745-1796--Correspondence.

#### Organizations

United States. Continental Army. Southern Dept.

#### Subjects

Cherokee Indians.

Chickasaw Indians.

#### Locations

Southern States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783.

United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783.

#### Occupations

Army officers.

## Administrative Information

#### Provenance:

The papers of Nathanael Greene, army officer, were acquired by the Library of Congress by gift and purchase from various sources between 1908 and 1979. In 1920 the Library of Congress purchased a number of Nathanael Greene items from Peyton Skipwith, Jr., which apparently had first belonged to his grandmother, Cornelia Peyton Skipwith, Greene's second daughter. These documents, which make up the bulk of the Library's collection, had suffered water damage as the result of a shipwreck shortly before the Civil War. The Library has also acquired a number of smaller accessions including three Greene letterbooks, two of which are part of the Peter Force Collection, received in 1867, and various reproductions of Greene material from private and institutional collections.

#### Processing History:

The Greene Papers were organized and microfilmed in part in 1966. In 1976 the collection was organized for further microfilming and a new guide prepared. The finding aid was revised and an item that had previously been cataloged separately was added to the collection in 2003.

#### Related Material:

Other Nathanael Greene items in the Manuscript Division are located in the papers of James Abeel, William Bond, the Campbell-Preston-Floyd Family, the Marquis de Lafayette, James McHenry, the McLane Family (within the Alexander Hamilton Papers), the Comte de Rochambeau, and the Polk Family. There is also Greene material in the Peter Force Collection, both as a separate listing and as part of the John Davis Papers (Series VIIID) and the papers or records (Series VII: Transcripts) of William Alexander, Joseph V. Bevan, Silas Deane, Mordecai Gist, Samuel Gray, Peter Horry, New Jersey, Arthur St. Clair, South Carolina, John Sullivan, and Jonathan Trumbull. Additional Greene items in the Library are identified in *Manuscript Sources in the Library of Congress for Research on the American Revolution* (Washington, Library of Congress, 1975. 372 pp.), compiled by John R. Sellers *et al.*

#### Copyright Status:

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Nathanael Greene is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

#### Access and Restrictions:

The papers of Nathanael Greene are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Microfilm:

A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on two reels. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan.

Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, Nathanael Greene Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1742, Aug. 7	Born, Warwick, R.I.
1770-1772	Served in the Rhode Island General Assembly
1774	Married Catharine Littlefield Organized and served as a private in a militia company known as the Kentish Guards
1775	Served in the Rhode Island General Assembly Appointed brigadier general, Rhode Island militia Appointed brigadier general, Continental Army
1776	Commanded the army of occupation in Boston, Mass. Promoted to major general, Continental Army
1778	Appointed quartermaster general, Continental Army
1780	Resigned as quartermaster general Appointed commander of the Southern Department succeeding Horatio Gates
1785	Moved to Mulberry Grove, near Savannah, Ga.
1786, June 19	Died, Savannah, Ga.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Nathanael Greene (1742-1786) span the years 1775-1785 and consist of originals and reproductions of correspondence, a letterbook, reports, orders and resolutions, proclamations, petitions, certificates, instructions, a commission, a will, and miscellaneous items.

The papers document Greene's military career, especially his involvement in the Continental Army's Southern Campaign. There are reconnaissance reports, accounts of battles and skirmishes, reports and instructions from Congress, lists of militia, and returns on casualties, supplies, and reinforcements. Included is Marquis Charles Cornwallis's plan for creating a loyalist militia in South Carolina, dated June 4, 1780; Daniel Morgan's report, January 19, 1781, on the victory at Cowpens, South Carolina, two days earlier; reports of the casualties at Guilford Court House near Greensboro, North Carolina, on March 15, 1781; and correspondence with British officers in Charleston on the treatment of prisoners, 1780-1783.

Letters from George Washington describe the status and progression of the war, and letters of 1779 from William Smallwood, Arthur St. Clair, Anthony Wayne, and other Continental officers respond to Greene's inquiry into the propriety of holding more than one commission at the same time. There is also material on negotiations with the Indians, particularly the Cherokee and Chickasaw, including a contemporary copy of the 1781 Cherokee treaty; captured enemy dispatches; and messages of gratitude and congratulations to Greene delivered during his trip north in 1783. Additional correspondents include Marquis Charles Cornwallis Cornwallis, Thaddeus Kosciusko, John Laurens, Alexander Leslie, Francis Marion, Daniel Morgan, William Moultrie, Israel Putnam, John Rutledge, and John Sevier.

The letterbooks, October 1780-April 1782, contain copies of official correspondence from Greene as commander in chief of the Southern Department. Addressed chiefly to officers under Greene's command, the letters relate principally to military strategy, supplies, and administrative matters. Recipients include Thomas Burke, John Butler, Arthur Campbell, Richard Caswell, John Gunby, John Hanson, Benjamin Harrison, Isaac Huger, Samuel Huntington, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Sim Lee, John A. Lillington, Francis Marion, Alexander Martin, John Mathews, Daniel Morgan, Robert Morris, Abner Nash, Jean-Baptiste-Donatien de Vimeur comte de Rochambeau, Baron Friedrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin von Steuben, Jethro Sumner, Thomas Sumter, George Washington, and Anthony Wayne.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged by type of material.

# Container List

Microfilm shelf no. 13,421. Includes 1976 version of finding aid.

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1 REEL 1	Letterbook, 1780, Oct.-Dec.  Includes letterbooks for 1781, Jan.-Feb. and 1782, Jan.-Apr., designated as vols. 2-3, which make up the papers of Nathanael Greene in Series VIID of the Peter Force Collection.
BOX 2 REEL 1	Bound material
BOX 2 REEL 1	1775-1781, Apr.
BOX 3 REEL 1	1781, May 2-1782, July 26
BOX 4 REEL 2	1782, July 31-1785, Oct. 11
BOX 5 REEL 2	Cherokee Treaty, 1781, July-Aug.
BOX 6 not filmed	Addition, 1776-1785  (2 folders)