United States Continental Congress Records

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

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Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

2012

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Collection Summary

Title: United States Continental Congress Records
Span Dates: 1765-1825
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1774-1790)
ID No.: MSS82974
Creator: United States. Continental Congress
Extent: 700 items; 3 containers plus 1 oversize; 1.2 linear feet; 3 microfilm reels
Language: Collection material in English
Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Abstract: Original and reproduced records of the United States Continental Congress including letters and extracts from letters, circular letters, orders, resolutions, contracts, oaths of allegiance to the United States, financial documents, extracts from journals and minutes of the congress and its committees, committee reports, lists, and requisitions.

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.

People
Adams, John, 1735-1826.
Beaumarchais, Pierre Augustin Caron de, 1732-1799.
Bingham, William, 1752-1804.
Dickinson, John, 1732-1808.
Gates, Horatio, 1728-1806.
Hancock, John, 1737-1793.
Jay, John, 1745-1829.
Jones, John Paul, 1747-1792.
Laurens, Henry, 1724-1792.
Lee, Richard Henry, 1732-1794.
Madison, James, 1751-1836.
Morris, Robert, 1734-1806.
Thomson, Charles, 1729-1824.

Organizations
United States. Continental Congress.
United States. Continental Congress. Secret Committee.

Subjects
Allegiance--United States.
Finance, Public--United States.
Indians of North America--Government relations.
Oaths--United States.

Places
United States--Appropriations and expenditures.
United States--History--19th century.
United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Equipment and supplies.
United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Secret service.
United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783.
United States--Military policy.
United States--Politics and government--18th century.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The records of the United States Continental Congress were acquired by the Library of Congress from various sources during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Processing History

The records of the United States Continental Congress were arranged and described in 1984. The collection and finding aid were revised in 2012.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of the United States Continental Congress is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The records of United States Continental Congress 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 three reels. Consult reference staff 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, United States Continental Congress Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The records of the United States Continental Congress span the years 1765-1825, with the bulk of the material from 1774 to 1790. The collection consists of original and reproduction documents of the United States Continental Congress acquired by the Library from many sources.

Included are letters and extracts from letters, circular letters, orders, resolutions, contracts, oaths of allegiance to the United States, financial documents, extracts from journals and minutes of the Congress and its committees, committee reports, lists, and requisitions. Among the topics are finance, supplies, intelligence, personnel, political affairs, legislation, military matters, and Indian affairs. Charles Thomson, as secretary of the Continental Congress, is the signer of many of these documents. Other names represented include John Adams, John Dickinson, Horatio Gates, John Hancock, John Jay, John Paul Jones, Henry Laurens, Richard Henry Lee, James Madison, Robert Morris.

Of note in the collection is a bundle of forty-six bills of exchange payable to Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais (1732-1799), supplier of arms and military stores to the United States, June 15, 1779; a group of fifteen letters, January 17, 1777-November 17, 1781, to the Secret Committee of Congress and Robert Morris from William Bingham (1752-1804), merchant and agent for Congress in St. Pierre, Martinique, and after his return to the United States; and an incomplete set of monthly attendance reports for delegates to the Congress, September, 1785-May, 1788.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is organized chronologically within three groups: original material; facsimiles, transcriptions, and photocopies; and microfilm.

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REEL 2	Undated
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REEL 3	Vol. 118, from papers of the Continetnal Congress *Reproduced from originals in the collection, negative copy, microfilm shelf no. 4,521*