

Liberty, Cuff pay voucher

Cuff Liberty pay voucher

1782-1789

Title Statement

Liberty, Cuff pay voucherGuide to the Cuff Liberty pay voucher MSS 16821

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

MSS 16821

Unit ID

[Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

/repositories/3/resources/1621

Unit Date

1782-1789

Mixed Materials

Currency, Stamps, and Miscellany Box (box)

Container

001 (folder)

Language

English

Creator

Connecticut. Treasury Department

Extent

.03 Cubic Feet 1 folder (letter)

Condition Description

Good. The voucher is partially split along two vertical folds, mended with three small pieces of clear tape on the verso.

Repository

Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

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Preferred Citation

MSS 16821, Cuff Liberty pay voucher, Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia.

Content Description

This collection contains one Revolutionary War pay voucher to Cuff Liberty, an African American soldier from Middletown, Connecticut, who was one of approximately 300 enslaved or freemen from Connecticut who fought for the Continental Army. The government-issued vouchers promised full payment by a certain date and paid interest until the full amount was collected. The voucher, measuring 8" X 4", is printed on laid paper with a black decorative border, numbered in ink "3958" for £13,6,7 1/2." Cuff Liberty's name is written in ink, and a circular cancellation hole is beneath it. It is signed by Treasurer John Lawrence, as "J. Lawrence." Written on the back, in ink, are notations of the interest payments from June 1783 through 1789. The principal was probably paid soon after 1789, evidenced by the interest payments and the circular punch-out cancellation, that the debt was cleared and the voucher was no longer valid for payment. According to research sponsored by the Daughters of the American Revolution, Cuff Liberty had been enslaved by William Ward of Middletown and manumitted in 1776 after purchasing his freedom. He enlisted in 1778 and served in the 6th, the 4th, and 2nd Regiments of the Connecticut Continental Line. This pattern, particularly the placement in Captain Humphrey's segregated company of the 4th, was common among African Americans serving on the Continental Line. Discharged in 1783, he later applied for and received bounty land. He is listed by William Cooper Nell in "Coloured Patriots of the American Revolution (1855); Thomas Moebs "Black soldiers, Black sailors, Black ink," and Bryna O'Sullivan, "Who was Private Cuff Liberty?" (Charter Oak Genealogy, July 2, 2021)

Keywords

African American soldiers

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

Liberty, Cuff