



Record Group: Department of Treasury
Subgroup: State Treasurer's Office
Series: Accounts of Interest Paid on Revolutionary War Pay Certificates Issued by John Pierce and Benjamin Thompson, 1785-1791
Accession #: Unknown
Series #: STSTR007
Guide Date: 8/1996 (EC)
Volume: 1.3 c.f. [4 disbound vols., 2 booklets and 1 photocopied manuscript]

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Content Note

The records in this series document New Jersey pay certificates issued by John Pierce and Benjamin Thompson, and include an accounting of interest paid on the certificates by the state treasurer. John Pierce, Paymaster General and Commissioner of Army Accounts for the United States, was authorized by Congress on 4 July 1783 to settle pay accounts with the officers and soldiers of the Continental Line (*Journal of the Continental Congress*, vol. XXIV, p. 426). His certificates were distributed in New Jersey as early as October of that year. Benjamin Thompson was appointed, also in 1783, as Commissioner of Accounts in New Jersey. He was nominated by Robert Morris, Superintendent of Finances for the Continental Congress, and was confirmed by the New Jersey Legislature in November of that year (*Journal of the Proceedings of the Legislative-Council of the State of New Jersey*, 1783, p. 8 and *Votes and Proceedings of the Eighth General Assembly of the State of New Jersey*, 1783, p. 15). As commissioner, Thompson had the authority, by a 1782 resolution of the Continental Congress, to settle accounts with citizens of New Jersey who had supplied the United States Army during the course of the war (*Journal of the Continental Congress*, vol. XXII, pp. 84-86.)

Pierce's and Thompson's certificates (referred to as "continental certificates" or "final settlement notes") bore interest of 6% annually until the principal could be paid. The Continental Congress, however, had difficulty making the interest payments. To avoid the devaluation of the notes, New Jersey's General Assembly made provisions to pay the annual interest on Thompson's and Pierce's certificates issued to New Jersey citizens until 1808 (*Acts of the Eighth General Assembly of the State of New Jersey*, chap. XXI, p. 44, 1783). There were also two individuals, Anthony Broderick and John Vleet, who were paid "fifth-year" interest by authority of a 25 November 1789 resolution of the General Assembly (*Votes and Proceedings of the Fourteenth General Assembly of the State of New Jersey*, 1789, p. 100). In November 1790, however, an assembly resolution ordered the treasurer to end payments on Pierce's, Thompson's and other continental certificates after 1 February 1791 (*Votes and Proceedings of the Fifteenth General Assembly of the State of New Jersey*, p. 98, 1790).

Item 1 This booklet contains returns of certificates issued by John Pierce, recording the following information: certificate number, check letter, certificate date, to whom issued (soldiers' name), interest commencement date, and certificate amount. Parts of the list are in certificate order while others are not. **NOTE:** This booklet was originally bound as part of "**Miscellaneous Accounts No. 1**" and is indexed as such in the Revolutionary War service cards and slips.

Item 2 This item is a photocopy of an account labeled "A List of Certificates left at the Treasury Office by John

Peck and John Blair, Agents appointed to deliver the said certificates to the New Jersey Line." It is a semi-alphabetical list of recipients of Pierce's certificates (soldiers' pay) claimed by either the soldier or his representative during the period 1786-1799. The following information is included: regiment (First or Second), certificate number, to whom payable, certificate amount, date retrieved, and name of person collecting certificate. **NOTE:** The original manuscript is part of "**Miscellaneous Accounts No. 1**" and is indexed as such in the Revolutionary War service cards and slips.

Item 3 This booklet contains corrections to the first volume of a registry of Pierce's certificates published in 1786. The corrections were issued by the Office of Army Accounts on 27 April 1789. **NOTE:** A register of Pierce's certificates, arranged alphabetically by the recipients' names, has been published as *Pierce's Register* (Washington, 1915; reprinted by Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., Baltimore, 1976). This publication does not include the corrections contained here.

Items 4-6 These three volumes are accounts of first-, second- and third-year interest payments made by the New Jersey State Treasurer on Pierce's notes. The following information is included: date of payment, voucher number, person paid, certificate number, certificate date, signed by whom (always John Pierce), payable to whom (soldier's name), interest commencement date, certificate amount, annual interest, and total paid. **NOTE:** The last several dozen pages of Item 6 were unused and have been discarded.

Item 7 The last item includes *abstracts* of accounts of the first through fifth year's interest paid on Pierce's and Thompson's notes (including, in part, *abstracts* of the accounts included in Items 4-6). The following information is included: date of payment, voucher number, person paid, number of certificates (on which interest was being paid), and amount paid (first in pounds, later in dollars). Accounts were also begun in this volume [on pp. 102 & 197] for interest paid on Pierce's notes delivered to John Peck, Paymaster to the 2nd Regiment of New Jersey, who had evidently deposited the certificates with the State Treasurer to be picked up by the payees at a later date. These accounts are crossed out and followed by the notation "entered in another book."

The volume is arranged roughly chronologically by the beginning date of each account. As a result, Pierce's and Thompson's accounts are mixed throughout the volume. The **Contents** listing below identifies the various accounts by page number. **NOTE:** This volume appears to be partially indexed by the Revolutionary War service cards and slips. The cards give no page numbers, but begin by quoting the account: "The State of New Jersey to James Mott ... for one years interest on Continental Certificates given by [Thompson or Pierce] ..." The abstract then provides voucher number, certificate number and date. To find the entry, you must look for the appropriate date.

It should also be noted that Pierce's and Thompson's certificates were used as currency and often changed hands. The person collecting interest, therefore, was not necessarily the original payee. Items 1-6 of this series include the name of the soldier or officer being paid. Items 4-6 also include the person collecting the interest. Item 7, however, lists only the person collecting the interest.

Contents

1. Returns of certificates issued by John Pierce.
2. List of certificates left at the Treasury Office by John Peck and John Blair [photocopy].
3. List of errors in printed registry of certificates issued by John Pierce.
4. Accounts of first-year interest paid on notes issued by John Pierce, 1785-1791.
5. Accounts of second-year interest paid on notes issued by John Pierce, 1786-1791.
6. Accounts of third-year interest paid on notes issued by John Pierce, 1787-1791.
7. Accounts of interest paid on Pierce's and Thompson's notes, 1785-1791:

John Pierce's notes, first-year interest [abstracts of Item 4]

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7 November 1785 - 2 October 1786 [pp. 42-46]
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26 November 1787 - 29 October 1788 [pp. 198-199]
10 December 1788 - 17 September 1789 [p. 291; misidentified as Benjamin Thompson's
certificates, see Item 4, p. 20]
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John Pierce's notes, second-year interest [abstracts of Item 5]

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14 - 31 January 1791 [p. 426]

John Pierce's notes, third-year interest [abstracts of Item 6]

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John Pierce's notes, fifth-year interest (paid to Anthony Broderick)

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Benjamin Thompson's notes, first-year interest

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3 December 1789 - 25 October 1790 [pp. 385-388]
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Benjamin Thompson's notes, second-year interest

30 March 1786 - 12 October 1786 [pp. 82-102]
23 November 1786 - 23 October 1787 [pp. 147-196]
5 November 1787 - 27 October 1788 [pp. 224-236]
10 December 1788 - 30 September 1789 [pp. 307-313]
3 December 1789 - 25 October 1790 [pp. 389-393]

6 December 1790 - 1 February 1791 [p. 430]

Benjamin Thompson's notes, third-year interest

5 November 1787 - 28 October 1788 [pp. 237-289]
 10 December 1788 - 6 October 1789 [pp. 314-331]
 3 December 1789 - 25 October 1790 [pp. 394-401]
 6 December 1790 - 1 February 1791 [p. 431]

Benjamin Thompson's notes, fourth-year interest

11 January 1788 [p. 290]
 6 December 1788 - 29 December 1789 [pp. 332-375]
 3 December 1789 - 25 October 1790 [pp. 402-424]
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Benjamin Thompson's notes, fifth-year interest (paid to Anthony Broderick & John Vleet)

6 & 26 January 1790 [p. 425]

Account of interest paid on certificates originally received by John Peck, Paymaster to the 2nd New Jersey Regiment

10 June 1786 - 3 August 1786 [p. 102]
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Reel Listing - REVOLUTIONARY WAR

<u>Reel</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Explanatory Notes</u>
185	Accounts [including Pay Records] [See Guide]	Records of Revolutionary War Pay Certificates Issued by John Pierce and Benjamin Thompson (1785-1799)

Created April 2004

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