



New York State Archives

**New York State Governor George Clinton Papers Found on
British Spy Major Andre ("Andre Papers") A4681**

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	Most of the documents in this series were created by Major General Benedict Arnold during the Revolutionary War to supply information to the British Army concerning the conditions, personnel, and ordnance of the American fortifications at West Point, New York. Types of information include disposition of troops and artillery pieces in case of alarm; ordnance reports in different forts, redoubts, and batteries; report of the fortification conditions; and estimates and actual numbers of men necessary to fortify the works.
Creator:	New York (State). Governor (1777-1795 : Clinton)
Title:	Papers found on British spy Major Andre ("Andre Papers")
Quantity:	0.1 cubic feet
Quantity:	12 leaves
Date:	1780
Series:	A4681

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Administrative History

During the American Revolution, British Army Major John Andre (alias John Anderson) acted as a secret emissary and contact to American Major General Benedict Arnold, commander of the American fort at West Point, which guarded the Hudson Valley from British advance from the south. Arnold's secret agreement to surrender West Point to the British was discovered when Andre was captured on September 23, 1780 by the American Army, with the documents of this series on his person. Although Arnold escaped to the British, Andre was subsequently found guilty of acting as a spy by a military court convened by General George Washington. Andre was hanged at Tappan, New York on October 2, 1780.

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Scope and Content Note

Most of the documents in this series were created by Major General Benedict Arnold to supply information to the British Army concerning the conditions, personnel, and ordnance of the American fortifications at West Point, New York. Types of information include disposition of troops and artillery pieces in case of alarm; reports of ordnance in the different forts, redoubts, and batteries; report of the condition of the various fortifications; and estimates of the number of men necessary to fortify the works and numbers actually present.

The series also includes passes signed by Arnold to permit Joshua H. Smith (the intermediary between Arnold and Major John Andre) and/or John Anderson (Andre) to pass through American lines at various points between West Point and New York City; a small document also taken from Andre, which appears to be a memorandum of addresses; and a note from Joshua H. Smith to his brother at Haverstraw written after Andre's capture.

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Related Information

Related Material

A0142 Governor George Clinton Gubernatorial and Personal Records ("Clinton Papers") is the series in which these records were originally filed.

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Other Finding Aids

Available at Repository

Photocopies, reproductions, and copies of printed transcriptions of the original documents are available.

Item list is available.

Documents are described in entries 114 through 124 in Stefan Bielinski, ed., *A Guide to the Revolutionary War Manuscripts in the New York State Library* (Albany: 1976).

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

Access to original documents is restricted: digitized and published versions are first-use copies.

Alternate Formats AvailableAlternate Formats Available

High resolution images of all original documents in this series are available in State Archives Digital Collections.

[Papers found on British spy Major Andre \("Andre Papers"\), 1780](#)

Administrative Information

Custodial History

These documents were originally part of the "Clinton Papers" purchased by the State Legislature in 1853. They were later removed by the New York State Library and mounted and framed as a separate collection. They were then unframed and stored separately, ca. 1907.

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Access Terms

- Reporting fortifications
- Westchester County (N.Y.)
- New York (State)
- New York (State)--History--Revolution, 1775-1783
- Providing military facilities plans (reports)
- Informing traitors
- Military passes
- Traitors--United States
- Orange County (N.Y.)

- Reports
- Fortification--New York (State)
- Hudson River Valley (N.Y. and N.J.)
- Espionage
- West Point (N.Y.)
- Smith, Joshua Hett, 1736-1818.
- Arnold, Benedict, 1741-1801.
- Andre, John, 1751-1780.
- Clinton, George, 1739-1812