

# Introduction

Theodorus Bailey Myers (1821–1888) was a lawyer and autograph collector. He was born in New York City, the son of Charlotte (Bailey) Myers and Mordecai Myers. He was educated at Columbia University and married Catalina Juliana Mason in 1842. The couple had two children. During the United States Civil War (1861–1865), Myers served with the Twelfth New York Militia. He also served in the position of quartermaster for the General Staff, notably for General Wool. It was Myers's enthusiasm for American history and historical events that inspired him to collect historical autographs. Myers was ably assisted by another autograph collector, Dr. Thomas Addis Emmet. After Myers died in 1888, his wife donated the entire collection to the New York Public Library.

The collection (16th-19th centuries), is a historical American and European autograph collection of letters, documents (military and political orders, wills, indentures, petitions, land sales, accounts and returns, paper money, power of attorney, bills), and prints. The collection principally represents the autographs of Americans from the colonial period through the 19th century. Europeans are represented to a smaller extent. Individuals are represented from the military, political, business, social, and literary fields. The collection contains the autographs of the signers of the Declaration of Independence (complete set), members of the Continental Congress, generals of the American Revolution, governors of New York State, generals who served under Napoleon Bonaparte, British, French and Hessian officers, and European nobility.

English is the dominant language; however, letters and documents are also written in Dutch, French, German, and Latin. The earliest manuscript is a letter dated 1542 and signed by de Biron (Marechal de France). The most contemporary manuscript is a letter dated 5 January 1876, signed by Benjamin Tallmadge.

Both the United States and European military are well represented. For example, there are approximately 250 letters and documents addressed to General Daniel Morgan, an American general and militarist, who was instrumental in the defeat of John Burgoyne at Stillwell in 1777. These letters include information on troop movements, supplies, soldiers, living conditions, and military orders. Daniel Morgan wrote to George

Washington from Saratoga near Winchester on 28 December 1781 regarding problems with prisoners. Morgan stated that Colonel Wool had received instructions from the secretary of war to take charge of the prisoners but that the task was difficult. The inhabitants purchased their [prisoners'] clothes which afforded them the opportunity for escaping in disguise. "I have already issued orders forbidding it no purchase." (Myers no. 949).

Other revolutionary figures' autographs represented include Ethan Allen, Benedict Arnold, Horatio Gates, Nathanael Greene, Jedidiah Huntington, Samuel Huntington, Henry Knox, Timothy Pickering, Richard Peters, Phillip John Schuyler, Tench Tilghman, and Anthony Wayne. Individuals from abroad who helped win America's independence are represented by Marquis de Lafayette, Thaddeus Kosciusko, and Frederick Wilhelm Steuben. Steuben was a Prussian general who reorganized the American troops into a standard unit. Other militarists are represented by Britain's John Amherst, Sir Guy Carleton, and Thomas Gage.

European royalty, ruling leaders, and prominent individuals, notably from England and France, include Charles II of England, George III of England, Sir Joseph Banks, Field Marshall Blucher, Earl of Hillsborough, Henry IV of France, Marie Antoinette, Louis XVI of France, Napoleon Bonaparte, Count Henri Gratien Bertrand, Michel Ney, Louis Bourbon.

To a lesser extent, social and literary figures are represented, including John Jacob Astor, George Bancroft, Elias Boudinot, William Cullen Bryant, Cadwallader Colden, James Fenimore Cooper, Henry Dearborn, Charles Dickens, Millard Fillmore, Hamilton Fish, Robert Fulton, Albert Gallatin, Leonard Gansevoort, Peter Gansevoort, Benjamin Harrison, Arthur Lee, Henry Brockholdt Livingston, Robert Livingston, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Frederick Law Olmstead, Rubens Peale, and Samuel Jones Tilden. Other subjects include African Americans, women, and Native Americans.

The first roll of film contains a detailed item list. The index included in this guide refers to that list.