



The New York Public Library  
Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

**Richard Penn and Arthur Lee letters regarding the Olive Branch Petition**  
1775  
MssCol 22996

## Summary

**Creator:** Penn, Richard, approximately 1736-1811

**Title:** Richard Penn and Arthur Lee letters regarding the Olive Branch Petition

**Date:** 1775

**Size:** .21 linear feet (1 volume)

**Abstract:** Collection of three letters signed collectively or individually by Richard Penn (approximately 1736-1811) and Arthur Lee (1740-1792) while representing American interests in England. In July 1775, Richard Penn was entrusted by the Second Continental Congress with the delivery of the "Olive Branch Petition" to King George III after contacting colonial agents there, including Arthur Lee. Two letters are addressed to "Hon[ora]ble Sir" (presumably John Hancock, President of Congress) and concern the delivery of the petition to the British government. An autograph letter (4 p.) signed by Arthur Lee at Middle Temple, London, 1775 August 28, describes the delay due to the absence from town of Lord Dartmouth (Secretary of State for the Colonies). Lee shares his views on foreign reaction to American affairs and condemns the character of Thomas Hutchinson and Andrew Oliver, Massachusetts loyalists. A letter (1 p.) signed by Penn and Lee dated London, 1775 September 2, reports on the delivery of the original petition to Lord Dartmouth the previous day. Dartmouth promised to deliver it to the King, but told them "as his Majesty did not receive it on the throne, no answer would be given." Also present is an undated autograph letter (1 p. with integral address leaf) signed by Richard Penn at London to a Mr. Chambers, in which he states "I had rather convince one Honest Man of the Justice of the American Cause than ten Thousand Macaronies," for which purpose he encloses a pamphlet

**Physical Location:** MssCol 22996

**Preferred citation:** Richard Penn and Arthur Lee letters regarding the Olive Branch Petition, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

### Related Materials:

Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

American loyalists -- Massachusetts

Colonial agents -- Great Britain

### **Geographic Names**

Great Britain -- Colonies -- America -- Administration

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

United States -- Politics and government -- 1775-1783

### **Occupations**

Politicians

Statesmen

### **Names**

Dartmouth, William Legge, Earl of, 1731-1801

Hancock, John, 1737-1793

Hancock, John, 1737-1793

Hutchinson, Thomas, 1711-1780

Lee, Arthur, 1740-1792

Oliver, Andrew, 1706-1774

Penn, Richard, approximately 1736-1811

United States. Continental Congress