

Papers of John Tucker, paymaster to His Majesty's marine forces

This document describes a collection of records held by NatWest Group Archives, including details of their background; publications (if any) relating to them; summary of the contents of the collection; and information (where known) about related records held in other archives.

collection reference DR/546/

background history

A regiment of land soldiers, known as 'the Admiral's Regiment', was first raised in 1664 'to be distributed in His Majesty's fleets prepared for sea service', but it was not until 1694 that two marine regiments were formed of soldiers recruited exclusively for sea service. Until 1755 the size, number and extent of the regiments depended on the exigencies of war, and in fact the force was disbanded entirely in 1713-39 and 1745-55.

A new marine force was authorised in 1755, under the sole control of the navy board. The marines were designated Royal Marines by royal order in 1802.

The office of Paymaster of Marines was created in 1755 with a salary of £800 and additional £200 allowance in time of war. At the same time the marines were formed into three divisions, based at Plymouth, Portsmouth and Chatham, each consisting of several infantry companies. From 1756 each division had an Agent of Marines, appointed by Admiralty warrant and paid a salary of £300 by the Paymaster of Marines.

John Tucker (1701-79) of Weymouth, Dorset, was the third Paymaster of Marines, serving from 19 April 1757 to 4 June 1778. Tucker was MP for Weymouth and Melcombe Regis, 1735-47 and 1754-78, and six times Mayor of Weymouth between 1726 and 1772. He was also Cashier to the Treasurer of the Navy (1744-9) and Keeper of the King's Private Roads (1770-8). In 1778 he vacated his Parliamentary seat in favour of his nephew Gabriel Steward.

After Tucker's death the following year a dispute arose between his executors, Francis and Gabriel Steward, and the Admiralty regarding monies outstanding.

John Tucker, Francis Steward and Gabriel Steward all held accounts at the London bank [Messrs Drummond](#).

our archive holdings

- Admiralty orders and letterbooks 1755-78
- powers of attorney re pay 1756-65
- paymaster's accounts books 1757-65
- paymaster's cash books 1757-83
- paymaster's letterbooks 1757-88
- copies of paymaster's accounts sent to the Navy Board 1757-75
- marine forces half pay book 1764-70
- clearing imprest bill books 1769-70
- account book re subsistence and necessaries for men embarking 1771-8

archives held elsewhere

- [The National Archives](#): Records of the Royal Marines pay office, effective and subsistence lists 1688-1837 (Ref: ADM96).
- [Bodleian Library](#): Will of John Tucker 1777 (Ref: MS.Don.c.127); papers of Gabriel and Francis Steward, and of Francis's widow, Martha, as executors of the wills of John and Richard Tucker, 1777-99 (Ref: MS.Don.b.24, c.129).