

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters](#)

Claim for Service of Simon Harris VAS12

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

[From records in the Library of Virginia:](#)

To his Excellency David Campbell Governor of the State of Virginia

The memorial of Charles Capps, Thomas Grimes, James Grimes, Josiah Taylor in behalf of himself and his wife Mary humbly represents,

That the ancestor of your petitioners Doctor Simon Harris of the County of Norfolk, was early in the war of the Revolution appointed a Surgeon in the State Navy of Virginia, and was first attached in that capacity, to one of the vessels of war, commanded by Captain John Calvert of Norfolk, as they have always understood and verily believe.

That subsequently and during the said war of the Revolution, one of the vessels [the *Dolphin*] belonging to the said State Navy of Virginia, commanded by Captain John Cowper of the County of Nansemond, duly equipped with a regular compliment of officers and men, and to which vessel the said Simon Harris was then attached as the Surgeon, sailed from Hampton Roads, and when at sea, was attacked by a superior force of the enemy (British) and sunk [in spring 1779], and all on board as was supposed were lost, among whom was the said Doctor Harris.

Your petitioners represent that at the death of the said Harris in the manner herein set forth, he had two nieces surviving him Nancy Harris and Mary Harris being his only relatives then living, and his only heirs at law, and both of whom were then minors of under [blank] years. The first named Nancy Harris died intestate and unmarried in the said County many years since and Mary subsequently intermarried with Lewis Grimes of the said County, and died many years since leaving your petitioners Charles, Thomas, James and Mary surviving her, which last named Mary intermarried many years since with your petitioner Josiah Taylor.

Your Petitioners further represent, that neither the said Doctor S. Harris, Nancy or Mary Harris, have ever yet received the Land Bounty to which he was entitled for his services in the war of the Revolution, promised by the State of Virginia and the same being yet unsatisfied, they are advised that being his next of kin, and surviving heirs at Law they are entitled to all the immunities [sic] then promised, if, as they humbly conceive that the evidence accompanying this their memorial marked Nos. 1 - 2 - 3 shall be deemed by your Excellency and Council satisfactory.

And, as in duty bound, your memorialists will ever pray &c

[signed] Charles Capps/ Thos. Grimes/ James Grimes/ Josiah Taylor

[Certified 24 Dec 1839.]

Saturday 22 November 1776

Ordered that a Warrant issue to Captain William Deane for the use of Doctor Simon Harris for five pounds nineteen shillings for his wages on Board the Schooner *Revenge* [*Norfolk Revenge*] from the seventh to the eighteenth of October on s'd. account./ From page 115.

[Certified 16 Jan 1840 as copied from the Naval Journal.]

Nansemond County to wit

Before the undersigned John B Benton a justice of the peace for the county aforesaid personally came John C. Cohoon of the town of Suffolk in the County aforesaid who is well known to me and to whose statements full faith and credit are due, and being duly sworn on the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God deposeth and saith that he is the grand nephew of John Cowper who was the commander of an

armed vessel, as the deponent understood, during the War of the Revolution The Deponent has no knowledge of the services of his grand uncle John Cowper, further than what has been handed down as a matter of family tradition, and from this source he has always heard from his earliest infancy that the said John Cowper commanded a vessel of War, and that during the War of the Revolution whilst at Sea the said vessel was sunk by the British and all hands on board perished. That this deponent understood he went to sea with his colours nailed to the mast head, with a determination not to strike the same to the enemy and all that was ever heard of him afterward was that a vessel answering the description of one under his command attacked a vessel of the enemy of Superior force, and was sunk with the colours flying at the mast and all hands perished

Given under my hand and seal this 12th day of June 1839

Jno. C. Cohoon

Jno. B. Benton

I hereby Certify that I was well and personally acquainted with Capt John Cowper of Nansemond County Virginia. He perished at Sea some time during the Revolutionary War as well as I recollect in the year 1779, and the following officers belonging to the State Navy of Virginia, together with the entire Crew of his vessel perished with him viz. Lieutenants Frank Lennis [Francis Lennis], Philip Chamberlayne, James Cunningham, and a Doct'r. Harris. With Lieutenants Lennis and Cunningham I was particularly acquainted as they were distant connections of mine.

Given under my hand and seal in the City of Washington this 8th of January 1839.

James Barron [pension application W12264]

[The file also contains a statement by Armistead Culley (pension application S8270) that is difficult to read but appears to substantiate the claims by the heirs.]