

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

Virginia petition of William Wedderburn VAS1769

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 6 May 2015.

[From [Library of Virginia Legislative Petitions Digital Collection](#)/ Alexandria City]

To the Honorable the Senate & House of Delegates of Virginia, in General Assembly met:

The petition of William Wedderburn, of Alexandria D.C. (a native of Virginia) respectfully shows:

That he was drafted from King & Queen County, Va about the first of May 1781, to served for two months under Capt. John Baytop in a company of Col. [Charles] Harrison's U.S. artillery, commanded by Capt. Samuel Eddons [sic: Samuel Eddins BLWt683-300] & stationed at Gloucesterton [Gloucester Town]; which he accordingly did in two days after he was called upon. His duty, while on this service, was very arduous: – the number of men being small, & the stations to be guarded numerous, every man had to mount guard eight hours in every 24. After Lord Cornwallis got to Williamsburg with his army from the south, it was expected that a part of his force would be sent from Williamsburg, across the York river, to surprise us; and we were consequently kept most vigilantly on duty. On Sunday, the 4th day of July 1781, about 10 o'clock A.M., Lord Cornwallis came down with a company of horse & one of infantry from Williamsburg [sic: see endnote]. The horse dismounted under a shady cover near Windmill Point, waiting, it was supposed, the coming up of the rear-guard. Before this, however, Capt. Eddens ordered a fire from our fort from three long 24 # [24-pound] cannon, which caused them to remount immediately & make for to York, which not being defended by any armed force, they entered without opposition. Their rear having heard our firing, also entered York by a more southern route. About 4 o'clock P.M. their horse were seen proceeding southwardly, it was supposed to Hampton. Capt. Eddens immediately ordered a long barge to be manned, armed, & equipped, & to proceed as quick as possible to York. At the same time your petitioner was ordered to mount guard at the extreme end of Gloucester Point, & to keep a vigilant look out. Soon after he took his station, he saw several men come from the town, disguised by turned coats with trailed arms, & secrete themselves behind some long wooden buildings; & shortly after, several squads of from 20 to 50 men, proceeded in the same manner to the same spot. At this time, (our barge being opposite the lower part of York,) several women on the hill opposite the barge, waved their white handkerchiefs as a signal for the barge to return, which signal they continued as the barge rowed off & on. Lieut. [William] Camp now put the barge about, & stood up the river; and, when he got opposite the wooden buildings before mentioned, began to put in for the shore. When he had arrived within about 50 yards of it, the petitioner fired an alarm gun for him to return, upon which the men who were secreted behind the buildings ran out & fired upon the barge, the crew of which returned their fire, altho' the balls flew hotly around them. A part of the crew, however, continued rowing, & carried her out of the reach of the fire to the place from whence she set out. As she approached the shore, your petitioner advanced to meet her. Lieut. Camp sprung ashore, seized my hand, & declared that I had saved him & his crew from death or capture. The crew were much rejoiced at their narrow escape – not one of them having been wounded.

After serving out this tour, we were dismissed with the thanks of our Captain for our conduct, while under his command, and returned to our homes. After your petitioner had been at his father's [Alexander Wedderburn's] some 8 or 10 days, Lord Cornwallis came with his fleet & army up York river, & took and fortified York & Gloucesterton [1 Aug 1781]. Your petitioner was then warned to join Capt. Richard Anderson's company, which he did the same day. After being under his command about two weeks, he was dismissed, as he had just served out his turn in Gloucesterton.

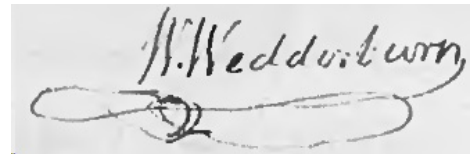
Soon after this a hospital was established near the residence of your petitioner's father, who was appointed Assistant Surgeon thereof under Dr. Anthony Gardner, its Surgeon. To this hospital your petitioner repaired, & assisted in preparing & distributing the medicines to be administered to the sick, of

whom the house was generally as full as it could hold. He remained in this service several weeks.

Your petitioner has used every exertion to find out some person who served with him, but without success. Lieut. Camp died about eighteen years after the war, & his widow remembers nothing of the occurrences above detailed. Capt. Eddens has been dead more than 30 years.

All the compensation your petitioner ever received for his services was a certificate worth about \$2.50 or \$3, in the year 1783. He is now 71 years old, in feeble health, and straitened circumstances, & with two persons (a wife & child) to support besides himself.

Your petitioner prays your Honorable Body to grant him such assistance as may seem just; & he, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "W. Wedderburn", with a decorative flourish underneath.

District of Columbia } ss.
Alexandria County } William Wedderburn, the within named petitioner, personally
appeared before me, a Justice of the Peace for the County aforesaid, & made oath in due form of law, that
the matters & things in his annexed petition contained are truly set forth. Given under my hand this
[blank] day of November 1835. [not signed]

Dec'r 12th 1835 ref'd to [undeciphered abbreviation]

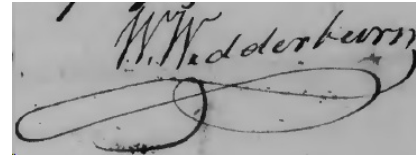
Dec'r 30th Rejected

[From [Library of Virginia Legislative Petitions Digital Collection](#)/ King and Queen County]

To the Honorable the Senate & House of Delegates of Virginia in General Assembly metg

The petition of William Wedderburn respectfully shews: That in April 1781, He was drafted from King & Queen County Virginia to serve under Capt Philip Taliaferro & marched to join a part of Colo Harrison's Artillery, at Gloucester Town, commanded by Samuel Eddens That he joined them under Capt John Baytop, who had taken the place of Capt Taliaferro in the force at that place, on the 4 July 1781 Lord Cornwallis, who had marched his army from Charles Ton South Carrolina [sic: Charleston SC] to Williamsburg in Virginia, came down from there on the York side of the River on the above day with his such a company of Horse and one of Intfantry. when they got down to Windmill point they dismounted under shade, to wait the comming up of the Intfantry to enter York Town, in this situation, Capt Eddens fired 3 Long 22^{lb} at them which made them, which raised the dust about them, and pushed for York, and the Intfantry came in more to the south. He remained in York, untill about five OClock in the evening, and then marched to the south of york, the Commandant, Capt Eddens ordered his long barge to be man'd and equiped, with dispact, which was executed, the command was given Lieutennant William Camp of the artilyery, your petioner being near the Barge, Capt Eddens, asked him where was his musket his reply was at Teagels Tow. he desired him to get it as quick as he could which he did and returned for orders to the Capt. he ordered him to gow to the end of Gloucester point about ¼ of a mile distant with orders Vizt, If you see, on York side, an over propotion of men to oppose the Boat; fire, an alarm for the barge; soon after geting to my station I saw several squads of 15 or 20 men come down from Town not in uniform with trailed armes, and secret them selves behind some low wooden, buldins near the water edge, at this time the barge was rowing up and down to see what they could discover, a parcel of women were on the Hill and frequently waving their handkerchiefs as a signal for them to return after some short time the boat made for the shoar, more men came down as the others did with trailed arms, and went where the others was, my seeing the boat standnging for the shoar, I fired the alarm gun for them to return, and as soon as the Barge turned about the men from behind the buldings fired on them she was struck with many balls, the men in the barge fired with great sperit, whilst the oarsmen got

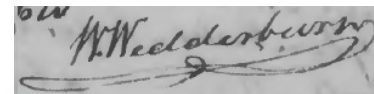
her beyond the reach of their shot the barge shaping her course from the place of her departure. I left my stand and went to beat them at their Landing as soon as she struck the shore. A boat jumped a shore met me, and shook me by the hand and, [said?] I had saved him from being taken prisoner or killed and all those who were with him, if I had not fired at the time I did the barge was then within 25 or 30 yards of the shore. In about two or three weeks we were discharged by Capt Eddens, said we had served our time out much to his satisfaction and to our credit, on which we returned to our respective homes – soon after being there early in August Lord Cornwallis, with all his Fleet and army came up York River and took possession of York and Gloucester Town there was then a general call for every man who bore arms, and I was summoned to join Capt Richard Anderson's company which, I did on the same day, and did the duty of a soldier after our Army came from the upper Country, and the Regulars from the North & South they having a sufficient force I was discharged as I had lately served my time in Gloucester Town as stated above soon after being dismissed – There was a Hospital fixed up at Cary's old Brick House, Dr Anthony Gardner appointed surgeon & my Father Alexander Wedderburn surgeon's mate, afterwards your petitioner joined the Hospital. It was filled up at Cary's old brick House after our army got near the Enemy's I was near Sewells [sic: Seawell's near Gloucester], then the above was not continued, your Petitioner has not received any compensation for all his services except 4 Certificates paid to him by Capt Philip Taliaferro, which amounted to about \$3.33 paid in the year 1783. You petitioner prays the General Assembly to extend to him such compensation as they in their wisdom may deem just. And the petitioner as in duty bound will, ever pray &c.



District of Columbia } tow
 County of Alexandria }

This day William Wedderburn personally appeared before me, a Justice of the Peace for said County, and made oath in due form of Law, that the several matters & things stated in the foregoing Petition are True Given under my hand this 2^d day of December 1836 Adam Lynn

PS I have made every inquiry for near 12 Months and I can not find a man living in the army now, that was with me now I have inquired for Lieutenant Camp. he had got to be a Colo. in Gloucester, before he died and his second wife after his Death, married a Capt. Kervan upwards of 22 years ago. It is not in my power at this or will be here after to hear any person now living. I am well known to you many years ago, Robert B Randolph now in Richmond, Edmond W Booth who was acquainted 39 years. I have been acquainted with Hiram Opie Esq'r near 20 years in this place, he is from Berkley Court Virginia – and I have been acquainted with Col Jones of Gloucester of Gloucester from 45 to 48 years – there a great quantity I can prove what is my conduct through Live, in King George [sic: King George County] I can get many to testify this, and of my uniformed department yours &c I am now upw



Dec'r. 8th 1834 ref'd to C'lms [Claims]/ 1834 Decemb 31 Rejected/ 1835 Jany Report

NOTE: July 4, 1781 fell on a Wednesday and not a Sunday. On 4 July 1781 Cornwallis was at Jamestown.