

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

Virginia documents pertaining to John Crew VAS3183
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

[The following are from [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia.](#)]

City of Norfolk to Wit. [26 Oct 1850]

Before me N. C. Whitehead a Justice of the peace in and for the City aforesaid, personally appeared Col. Stephen Wright [R11907] an aged and respectable Citizen of said City, and being duly sworn deposed and saith, that he performed military service at various periods during the war of the Revolution in the towns of Norfolk and Portsmouth, and was regularly enrolled in a Company of Militia Commanded by Capt Charles Connor. The post of Ensign being vacant, deponent was duly appointed to fill the vacancy and in the fall of 1781 was dispatched to Yorktown with a detachment of men, which he commanded in his Capacity of Ensign, and crossed over in one of the small cruisers Commanded by Capt. John Archer [W5348] of the Virginia Navy, and reached York just as the British under Lord Cornwallis surrendered to the American troops [19 Oct 1781]. Deponent with his Command afterwards returned to Portsmouth, and continued in service, until the troops raised for the defence of the Commonwealth were generally discharged. Subsequently, deponent was invited by his near relative and Guardian Capt W. Westcott [Wright Westcott R106] one of the retained officers of the Virginia state navy to join his Vessel [the *Scorpion*], one of the small cruisers retained in that branch of the Public service, then about to sail for the West Indies which invitation [several words illegible in the online image] aid to Capt Westcott. They sailed from Hampton Roads direct for the Island of Martinique and in the prosecution of the cruise, they fell in with the British frigate Cerberus Commanded by Sir, Jacob Wheat, and after being chased from sunrise to sunset were captured and taken to Bermuda, where the officers and men were thrown into the Hulks (prison ships) and confined as prisoners of war, until the close of said war. The officers taken prisoners and thus confined were the Commander Captain Westcott, Lieut. John Crew, Sailing Master Joseph Marshall [R69] and deponent, all of whom were retained as prisoners of war, and not discharged until after peace in april 1783. The said Marshall died early in the last war with Great Britain [War of 1812], and the said Crew some where about or during the year 1810.

And further deponent saith not.

Stephen Wright

State of Virginia } to Wit.
Elizabeth City County }

The affidavit of Ann Payne taken before me Thomas C Peek a notary public within and for the County & state aforesaid this 19th day of July AD 1851.

Ann Payne an aged and respectable lady of the Town of Hampton, in the County aforesaid being duly sworn according to law deposed and saith: That she knew and was well acquainted with Dr. William Johnston [VAS1262] who was a Surgeon in the Virginia state navy during the revolutionary War; that he was attached to one of the Cruisers belonging to this station in the early part of the War, and was cruising off and on for more than two years. The name of the officer who commanded said Cruiser she does not recollect, but that the name of the first Lieut. of said Cruiser was John Crew, who at a late period of the war was taken prisoner by the British. In the year 1780 (she fixes this date in her memory by the unusual severity of the winter of that year which has ever been memorable) the said Dr. William Johnston was attached to the Schooner "Nicholson" commanded by Lieut. Jennings, and that he the said Dr Johnston continued so attached in the capacity of a Surgeon until the said Schooner was captured by a British Frigate late in the year 1781. At the time said Schooner Nicholson was captured, Alexander Massenburg [R16060] was the Master, and he together with the rest of her officers continued prisoners of war for some months, and until immediately after the peace in 1783, when they were released.

At a Ball which was held in this place in commemoration of the restoration of peace just after that

event, which was called the "Liberty Ball," and at which many officers both French & American, were present she remembers distinctly to have seen the before mentioned officers Alexander Massenburg and Dr. Johnston dressed in their respective uniforms. In testimony whereof affiant has hereunto caused her name to be written and has made her mark to the same Ann herXmark Payne

Wednesday, 11th November 1776,

Present Mr [undeciphered], Mr Hutchings, Mr Davis & Mr [undeciphered]

John Crews is recommended to his Excellency the governor and the honble the Council as a proper person to be appointed first Lieut of the Sloop Defiance

Ordered that a warrant issue to John Crew for Land Bounty when [undeciphered word]

I do hereby certify that the above are true extracts from a book in this Office called "Navy board Journal July 1776 to March 1779 Given under my hand at the Aditor's Office
\\Richmond December 10th 1851 Ro Johnston/ 2nd Auditor

To the Executive of Virginia./ Gentl'n,

I beg leave respectfully to present to your Honb'l body, the claim of the Heirs of Lieut. John Crew, of the Virginia State Navy, in the War of the Revolution for Land Bounty for a service to the end of the War.

By a Certificate of the 1st Auditor it will be seen that John Crew was appointed a first Lieutenant of the Sloop Defiance by the Navy Board in 1776.

By the Deposition of Colo. Stephen Wright of Norfolk, it will appear that, in the latter of the year 17[??] he (Wright) sailed on a Cruise with "Capt. W. Westcott, who was one of the retained officers of the Virginia State Navy." That after having prosecuted their Cruise for some time [undeciphered word] "they were taken by the British frigate Cerberus command by Sir Jacob Wheat," and taken to Bermuda, where the officers & men were thrown into the Hulks (prison ships) and confined as prisoners of war until the close of the War."

That, "The officers taken prisoners, and there confined, were the Commander Capt. Westcott, Lieut John Crew, Sailing Master Joseph Marshall, and Deponent, all of whom were detained as prisoners of War, and not discharged [part missing at bottom of page] Crew died somewhere about or during the year 1810 &c.

I have been thus particular in quoting from Colo. Wright's Deposition, not only because of its circumstantiality in shewing John Crew was in service in 1781, and a prisoner of war until the end of the War, but also because of the very high character of the Deponent, vouched for by the most reliable & respectable persons of Norfolk & elsewhere, and which will be seen by accompanying Certificates to that end [not transcribed].

I beg leave also to refer to the Deposition of Ann Payne, & which will be found fully in confirmation of Colo. Wrights, in respect to John Crews services, and also to refer to the proofs of the high character of Ann Payne.

I beg leave most respectfully, in conclusion to say that, as the Land Bounty claims of Surgeon Wm Johnston, and Sailing Master Joseph Marshall, have been allowed by your Honb'l. Body on the same proofs now exhibitted in Lieut Johns crews case, there can be no doubt of the success of this application. I say "the same proof." It will be seen that the evidences in Crews case are authenticated copies, from those, filed in Johnstons & Marshalls cases. The Record testimony in Crews case, from the navy Journal, is over [part missing at bottom of page] As the 1st of January next will close the time (as I understand) within which, applications for Land Bounty can be made, may respectfully ask a consideration of this case as early as may be convenient. With great respect/ Your Hble Serv't/ Jno. G. Mosby
Dec'r 12th 1851.