

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Joseph Nourse VAS434

vsl 51VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

1/23/13

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Where the meaning is not compromised by adhering to the spelling, punctuation or grammar, no change has been made. Corrections or additional notes have been inserted within brackets or footnotes. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. A bracketed question mark indicates that the word or words preceding it represent(s) a guess by me. Only materials pertinent to the military service of the veteran and to contemporary events have been transcribed. Affidavits that provide additional information on these events are included and genealogical information is abstracted, while standard, 'boilerplate' affidavits and attestations related solely to the application, and later nineteenth and twentieth century research requests for information have been omitted. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading fails to catch all misinterpretations. Also, dates or numbers which the software treats as numerals rather than words are not corrected: for example, the software transcribes "the eighth of June one thousand eighty six" as "the 8th of June 1786." Please call errors or omissions to my attention.]

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

City of Washington 10 June 1820

Sir.

I beg leave to avail myself of your obliging intimation that you would transmit my Papers to the Governor & Council of the State of Virginia, having for their object, the obtaining of the Land bounty from the State as a Major having drawn Pay and Rations as such, as Secretary during the revolutionary War that Major General Charles Lee acted in a separate Department as a commanding general.

I have the honor, to be Sir!

Your most obed.

& most hum, Sen

S/ Joseph Nourse



William Wort esq

Attorney general

Documents No. 1 a 6

- No. 1 The Memorial of Jos: Nourse
2. Certificate of Genl. J. Morris
3. Letter of Genl. J. Morris
4. Copy o f Jos Nourse his Letter to Judge Peters
5. Judge Peters his Letter in reply
6. Judge Peters his Certificate
7. Papers in relation to the Grant of the State of Virginia to the Heirs of Robt. H. Harrison

[p 3]

Having been at first Secretary, & thereafter one of the Commissioners of the Board of War and in 1776, 1777; -- from the original establishment of that board: during all the active years of the revolution war, I had a particular knowledge of every person employed in the department. Joseph Nourse Esquire, now Register of the Treasury of the United States, was, at first, introduced into the department, under a resolve of Congress of the 30th of December 1776,

having been [indecipherable word] Secretary to Major General Charles Lee, then commanding in the Southern military department; with the pay & rations of a Major, Secretaries to Generals on such separate Commands, were allowed, by the military managements authorized by Congress. The Board of War in its commencement, consisted of Members of Congress; but in 1777, & thereafter, it was conducted by Commissioners, not Members of that body. The most of the Commissioners, from time to time, myself excepted, were transitory; & changes were frequently made. For a great portion of the time, I was alone engaged in the duties of the office; &, of course, had a peculiar acquaintance with the officers & transactions of the Board. Soon after the establishment of the second board, Mr. Nourse, recommended by his industry & fidelity in his former appointment, became Secretary & Paymaster to the Board. I had uninterrupted intercourse with him; & can, with truth & intimate personal knowledge of his whole conduct, certify, that he was exceeded by none, in fidelity, accuracy & intelligence, in the duties of his appointment. All the monies, (or by far the greater proportion destined for the pay, clothing & [word too faint to discern] of the Army, passed, under the direction of the board, through his hand; during his stay in the department. No instances of negligence or inaccuracy in accounts, or other operations occurred: on the contrary, his whole conduct was faithful & meritorious.

Sharing, in his sphere, the difficulties those in the direction of the department had, incessantly, to encounter: he performed his portion of the arduous task, so much to the approbation, & to that of all who witnessed his merit; that he has entitled himself to my grateful recollection & personal esteem.

S/ Richard Peters
May 2nd, 182? [last digit unclear]

[p 9]

The undersigned, one of the aides de camp during the Revolutionary war to Major General Charles Lee do certify, that Joseph Nourse Esquire Register of the Treasury of the United States did received the appointment of private Secretary to General Lee as commanding in a separate Department. That Joseph Nourse joined us in Philadelphia about the 16th day of March in the year of our Lord 1776. That he proceeded with us to the Southward, and on the memorable 28th of June of that year crossed over with the General and his aides in the midst of the British cannonade from Haddrell's point to Fort Moultrie the General for some time continued with his suite. After the defeat of the British Army in the Autumn of that year, the Undersigned is of opinion that the General's private Secretary did accompany the General to Westchester County in this State on his return from Ogegie [Ogeechee] River when the express with orders from Head Quarters to return to the Northern Army reached Major General Lee. Given at Butternuts County of Otsego and State of New York this 16th day of April 1820.

S/ Jacob Morris¹

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jacob Morris". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

[p. 12]

To his Excellency the Governor & Members of the Council of the State of Virginia –
The Representation of Joseph Nourse (son of James Nourse of Berkeley County Virginia, late

¹ 1755-1844, aide-de-camp to Genl. Charles Lee

Secretary to General Charles Lee of Berkeley County Virginia, and at present (and for nearly 40 years past) Register of the Treasury of the United States.

Most respectfully sheweth:

That James Nourse formerly one of the delegates from Berkeley County Virginia in your General Assembly actuated by the Principles of liberal feeling and love of Liberty emigrated from England with his family & property and arrived in Virginia on the 10th of May in the year of our Lord 1769.

That your Memorialist the eldest son of the above named on his becoming freed from those obligations which a Mercantile Education imposed in the City of Philadelphia, after attaching himself to a Military Corps, and entering as a volunteer of Captain Bradford's then about to march for the city of New York, about this time Major General Charles Lee was ordered by Congress to repair to the Southern Department and your Memorialist, through his Father's Interest and also of Major General Gates, was appointed by Major General Charles Lee, his Secretary with the Pay and Rations of an aide de camp which he drew of the Paymasters & Commissary as a Major on the Continental establishment, from the time of his appointment until General Charles Lee joined the Army of General Washington in the fall of the year 1776, when your Memorialists returned to his Father's in Berkeley County Virginia, where he continued until his appointment was made in the War Department, under a Resolution of Congress of the 30th December 1776, Journals of Congress volume 2 page 512 of R. Aitkins edition.

"Resolved, that the Board of War, be empowered to agree with and employ as an Assistant Clerk Mr. Nourse late General Lee's Secretary."

Your Memorialist begs leave to refer to sundry Documents which accompanies this Memorial – from Judge Peters, who was Secretary of the Board of War, having also a special reference to services rendered in the War Department – from General Jacob Morris, who was one of the aides to Major General Charles Lee – from General John Smith of Frederick
[there appears to be tax cut off at the bottom of this page]
[next page p14]

Your Memorialist in praying for a grant of Military bounty Land, as a Major, begs leave to bring before your Excellency and Council the following considerations –

1. His arrival a youth in Virginia & his residence therein with his Father (before & subsequently to his being in the Army with General Lee.
2. His Marriage in Virginia
3. His freehold in Virginia, having had one since his Father's decease, in possession.
4. His designation in the Commission under which he now acts as Register from the first President of the United States "to Joseph Nourse of Virginia"
5. Is Chief General Charles Lee of Virginia
6. His services first in the War Department: and secondly in the Treasury – 44 years.
7. During a small cessation between the 2 appointments, he actually arranged for his permanent residence in Virginia.

Your Memorialist in referring to the liberality of the State of Virginia to the Heirs of the Honorable Robert H Harrison as per accompanying documents with great deference bring it into view as applicable so far only as that his appointment was in the first instance as Secretary to his Excellency the Commander in Chief. – And that your Memorialist was appointed secretary under the same Resolution of Congress to a Major General commanding in a separate Department, that Robert H Harrison was appointed Secretary to the Commander in Chief.

Your Memorialist therefore prays that his analogous situation on the Continental establishment may receive a favorable decision and that the proper officer be directed to issue a Bland Warrant and that of a Major, and as in duty bound,

Your Memorialist shall forever pray

S/ Joseph Nourse