

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Virginia documents pertaining to John Stephenson VAS4488
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

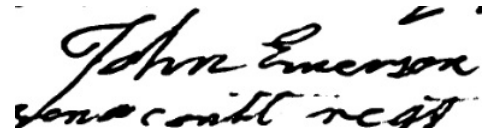
[From [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia](#) indexed as Stevenson, John.]

I John Emerson [W8694] of Green County in the State of Kentucky, a Lieutenant in the 13th Virginia Continental Regiment in the Revolutionary War do certify, that I was well acquainted with John Stephenson; he was a Captain in Dunmores Campaign in 1774 [Lord Dunmore's War], and some time in October 1775 he was appointed a Captain in Colonel Muhlenburg's [sic: Peter Muhlenberg BLWt1495-850] Virginia Continental Regiment, and raised his Company in & about Fort Pitt [at Pittsburgh], – for a while was stationed a Fort Pitt, & was Commander of the Fort. After the said Captain Stephenson had remained a while at the said Fort, he was ordered on with his Company to the Southward, where he was promoted to a Major in the said Regiment; after he had continued some time at the Southward, he returned back to Virginia and continued in service, as a Major, until some time in the commencement of the year 1779 when he left the Continental Line & was appointed a Colonel in the Virginia State service, and went out on the frontier against the Indians. The said John Stephenson was a half Brother of Col Crawford [William Crawford BLWt921-500] & a full Brother of Col. Hugh Stephenson [VAS4479]; was a brave, faithful & good officer and was never cashiered, superceeded or disgraced; and he served as an officer as aforesaid in the Virginia Continental Line for more than three years.

Given under my hand this 11th day of Oct'r 1820.

John Emerson

last[?] lieutenat 13 virginia cont'l regt

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Emerson" followed by "done with recd" on a second line.

I John Harrison [VAS1417] of Louisville in the County of Jefferson & State of Kentucky, a Lieutenant in the 7th Virginia Regiment on Continental establishment in the Revolutionary War, do certify, that I was acquainted with John Stephenson from before the commencement of the Revolutionary War until his death, which took place about twenty years since; the said John Stephenson was a Captain in Dunmore's Campaign in 1774, and in the fall of 1775 he was appointed a Captain in the Virginia Continental Line, in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Mughlenburg. I enlisted as a private soldier in his company in October 1775 and marched to the Southward with him He was for a while, the Commander of Fort Pitt, and was then ordered on to the Southward, and marched on through the lower parts of Virginia & North Carolina to Charleston, where he was promoted to a Major in the said Regiment, and was at the Siege of Sullivan's Island [battle of Sullivans Island, 28 Jun 1776]; he then marched on to Savannah in Georgia, where he was continued some time, and until he was taken sick, and the Northern Troops likewise became very sickly; as soon as he got able to travel, he went back to the State of Virginia and continued in the Continental Line until some time in the commencement of the year 1779 when he was made a Colonel in the Virginia State Militia and went out against the Indians on the frontier – that the said John Stephenson was a faithful and brave and good Officer, and served his Country faithfully, and was never cashiered superceeded or disgraced.

Given under my hand this 16th day of October 1820

Jno Harrison Leut. in the 7th Va Re't

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Harrison" followed by "in H. R." on a second line.

I John Knight [W12051] of the county of Shelby & State of Kentucky, a Surgeon's mate in the 7th Virginia continental Regiment, do certify, that I was acquainted with John Stephenson, who was a half brother of Col. Crawford of the 13th Virginia Regiment that the said Stephenson some time before the siege of Sullivans Island, in South Carolina, was appointed a Captain in the 9th Virginia continental Regiment raised his company & marched on to Charleston just before the siege of said Island and was there raised to a Major, & served in that quarter of the United States untill he was taken sick & went home to his family; but as I was in service in a different part of the united States, I cannot tell when he left the service, nor do I know that he ever resigned his commission, but I know that he was a brave man & a good officer and served his country faithfully. The said Stephenson was a captain under Lord Dunmore in 1774. He died in this State about nineteen or twenty years ago. Given under my hand this 13th day of March 1821.

John Knight Late Surgeon's Mate 7th Virg'a Regiment



[first part missing] work to get his Land warrant and like many other old soldiers was negligent in looking after his rights but I do hope that our native State virginia will not deny me a poor widow and my family our just rights because my Husband was negligant and did not apply for it in his Life time and when he should have done it I want to ask you Dear Sir to see if you can Do any thing for me in geting the land warrant of Virginia if I cold get it it would be a great help to me in Supporting me in my old age by doing this you will do a grate favor to a poor widow and your sincere praise.

[signed] Mary Stephenson

Richmond 28th Ap'l 1821

Mr Thomas Green/ Dear Sir

Enclosed I send you a letter forwarded to me by the widow of an old revolutionary soldier. I have made some little enquiry as to her claim and am informed that it has been presented and rejected. The grounds for the rejection appears to be, that he was engaged in the Illinois expedition and by possibility received remuneration for his services there. Suppose this to be the fact – is there any law whereby an officer or soldier by increasing his services, diminishes his claim for compensation. I cannot speak with certainty as to the law relating to military sevice's compensation &c but as far as my examinations have gone I cannot discern that the claim of an officer for services rendered in the state line is weakened from the circumstance of his having subsequently served in the Illinois regiment – nor can I imagine how the idea originated that all previous claims merged in the compensations received for services rendered there. Suppose for instance an officer in that regiment had served in no other would he not have received his quota of land. If then he would, does it detract from his claim that he had been previously engaged in the service of his country and received his merited reward. But sir I have every reason to believe from the ignorance of the parties here interested that they have rec'd no communication in the one instance or the other – and unfortunat it is that such obstacles exist to the attainment of justice by old soldiers or their representatives that the door may be considered as stuck against them. It is really a troublesome matter sir to prove that a man has never rec'd remuneration, or never could have received it, for military services rendered in Illinois – nothing less would be required than a history of the whole course of proceedings, of grants, of applications, [undeciphered] made & unavoidable failures – in fact to prove a negative which is almost in its nature impracticable. But when proved what does it avail – that a man has rendered his country services & obtained remuneration in one instance only – but is from every thing I can learn Col. Stephenson is without remuneration from his country in either instance. There is a consideration which ought to be here taken into view. Two years only now remain for the satisfaction of Virginia Military land claims. Virginia may throw such obstacles in the way of claimants as to keep them out of their due for that space of time and such must be the fate of many – for instead of leaning with a liberal [undeciphered word] toward them – they seem to be all looked upon as impertinent, and unwelcome applicants. But although they lose the land does Virginia gain it – no it goes to the Union whence not an acre will ever be

obtained for a Virginia Officer or soldier – and is not Virginia as much interested in giving her own officers their due as in handing down to the US the little amount of her great western territory; But sir although it appears Col. Stephenson was engaged against indians in the west is there any certainty of his having ever been in Clarks [George Rogers Clark's] [several undeciphered words]. I cannot discover it from the documents belonging to his claim. I wish you would make some exertion to obtain justice for the poor widow I am compelled to leave town & cannot attend to it. In haste/ Yr Ob't Serv't/ R Triplett