

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

Pension Application of William Lewis BLWt1300-400

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

[The file folder is labeled for Major William Lewis, but any original documents in the folder were destroyed by fire in 1800. The file contains correspondence regarding a Colonel William Lewis. I am grateful to Dr. A. Gayle Hudgens for the following communication confirming that Maj. William Lewis and Col. William Lewis were two different soldiers:]

“Major William Lewis was not the same person as Col. Wm. Lewis of Augusta Co., VA. By DNA testing, Maj. Wm. Lewis is not related to the Lewis clan of Staunton, Augusta County, VA, whose patriarch is known as Pioneer John. In the more complete NARA file there is additional material from descendants of the Major which contradict the material supplied by the militia Colonel's descendants.

“According to the early War Department managers, this William Lewis was from the Loudoun Co., VA, area when he enlisted in the service in 1775. Both Gwathmey [John H. Gwathmey, *Historical Register of Virginians in the Revolution*] and Heitman [Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army During the War of the Revolution*] show that he was an officer in the Virginia Continental Line and a captive of the British in Charleston SC for almost 3 years (until the end of the war). In contrast, the Col. Wm. Lewis of Augusta was a militia colonel, too old to be involved for 7-8 years in the Continental Line during the Revolution, and otherwise occupied with activities in old Augusta during the time that the real Maj. Wm. Lewis was in prison in SC.

“In the Major's War Department folder is a copy of a letter written in the early 20th Century by the War Dept in response to a Congressman regarding a constituent's query. The letter indicates that the War Dept. had no information on his brother, Thomas, but they did have a small amount on this Wm. Lewis -- he was a Major whose 400 acre warrant mentioned in this particular record was issued 10 Aug 1789 to Richard Platt, assignee, for services rendered by Major Wm. Lewis. In addition, NARA documents help re-build his military career and indicate that Major William Lewis was due much land for his services in the Revolution.

“Gwathmey states his military service basically the same as Heitman does (CL stands for Continental Line): Lewis, William, 1st Lieut. 1 CL Oct. 2, 1775; Captain Sept. 4, 1776; Brigade Inspector of Muhlenberg's Brigade Apr. 7, 1778; Major 10 CL May 12, 1779; taken prisoner at Charleston May 12, 1780; trans. to 3 CL Feb. 12, 1781; prisoner to close of war; died 1811; awarded 7,110 acres.

“DNA testing of several descendants of this Wm. Lewis strongly suggest he was a close relative of a Thomas Lewis of KY, whose family tree goes back to a Wm. Lewis Sr. who died in Washington Co. VA, in 1784. Among his sons were a Wm. Lewis Jr., a Thomas Lewis, a John Lewis, and a Griffith Lewis. Their father, Wm. Lewis, Sr., was probably the same Wm. Lewis Sr. who arrived near Leesburg, VA, in about 1763 from the Great Valley in PA, from whence many emigrants to early Loudoun County arrived. He disappears from the Loudoun County VA tithes lists about the time a Wm. Lewis Sr. appears in Washington Co., VA, records.

“DAR accepts the Wm. Lewis who died in White County, TN, in 1812 as this Major Wm. Lewis of the Virginia Line. DAR accepts the Augusta County, VA, Wm. Lewis as a militia colonel, who also died in 1812, but in Sweet Spring, VA.”