

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of James Purvis¹ R17246

f57VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

12/10/12

[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.]

[f p. 2: copy of the last will and testament of James Purvis of Frederick County Virginia dated October 16, 1811 in which he names his wife Cassandra to whom he leaves a life estate in all of his estate real and personal after satisfaction of all of his bequests; James Purvis Riely son of James & Cassandra Riely to whom he leaves \$500; his brother William Purvis; Susan Purvis "sister of said William"; John Purvis son of John Purvis deceased. He names his wife and his friend James Riely as his executors. The will was probated in Frederick County Virginia December 2, 1811.]

[f p. 5]

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled, the petition of James Rielly executor of James Purvis deceased respectfully representing & sheweth

That your petitioner is the Executor and legal representative of said James Purvis deceased as will appear by a copy of his will and certificate of qualification here with annexed and duly certified under the seal of the clerk of the County Court of Frederick (marked A).

That your petitioner's testator James Purvis was an officer in the Virginia State line, during the War of the Revolution and as such became entitled to the benefit of an act passed by the General Assembly of Virginia at its May session 1779 allowing to the officers of the State line half pay for life – and also entitled this his representative to the benefit of the act of Congress of the 5th of July 1832, providing for the payment of said claims for half pay.

Your petitioner will briefly state the services of the said James Purvis – [indecipherable word or words], to the testimony by which these services are sustained and also to the doubt [?] expressed by the Secretary of the Treasury to the allowance of the claim under the act of the 5th of July 1832, referring your petitioner to your Honorable body for relief.

It is deemed [?] unnecessary to refer to the services of the said Purvis in the first Virginia Regiment from the 5th day of September 1775 until 1779 – for however meritorious those services were, and however well sustained by the testimony of Colonel John Green they constitute no claim to the compensation provided for by the act of the General Assembly of Virginia of May 1779, and the act of Congress of 5th July 1832.

Not so, however, his services subsequent to that period as will be seen by reference to those two laws. In 1779, Purvis was commissioned a Lieutenant in the Virginia State Regiment commanded by Colonel Joseph Crockett, which Regiment was then stationed at Albemarle barracks in the State of Virginia guarding the prisoners taken at the surrender of General

¹ Va. Half Pay

Burgoyne. on [sic] the 8th of October 1779.[sic, possibly intended to be a comma] Purvis was promoted to the rank of a Captain and served in said Regiment in that capacity until said Regiment was discharged upon the expiration of hostilities between the Confederate States and Great Britain.

The evidence in support of the facts above stated is in the opinion of the petitioner inclusive and here with the companies this petition. It is

1^{stly} A certificate of Colonel Taylor dated on the 28th of October 1784 and certified from the office of the Clerk of the House of Delegates Virginia. This certificate was the testimony upon which Purvis in 1784 was considered by the Government of Virginia as entitled to a Captain's Land Bounty for services in the Virginia line. The admission of his right at that early period to rank as a Captain in the Virginia line, your petitioner would respectfully suggest all to be conclusive of the question (See Document marked B)

2^{ndly} The deposition of Captain Thomas Young, Captain Young now resides in Mason County Kentucky, is the only surviving officer of Colonel Crockett's Regiment and is known to the representative from that district as a man of high character & unquestionable veracity. He testifies to the fact that Captain Purvis was an officer in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Joseph Crockett, and served as such until the Regiment was discharged (See Document marked C).

3^{rdly} the deposition of Major Henry Bedinger. Major Bedinger now resides in the County of Berkeley State of Virginia, is a gentleman of the highest character & respectability and was himself an officer in the War of the Revolution. His testimony to the service of Purvis his full hand in some detail. (See Document marked D)

If it were desirable to sustain the claim of said Purvis additional testimony, such additional evidence could be found in the regimental diaries & order books of that period But your petitioner respectfully supposes the case to be sufficiently made out.

Notwithstanding the above testimony strong & satisfactory as it ought to have been deemed – the right of Captain Purvis to be considered as an officer in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Crockett and to receive his pay & emoluments as such has been rejected by the Secretary of the Treasury he calls he was unwilling upon his own responsibility to set the precedent of allowing the claim of an officer whose name did not appear upon a list of the Officers of that Regiment which had been furnished to him by the Auditor of Virginia.

That it be here remarked that no possible evil could result from such a precedent, this being the only case of the kind which could come with in its operation. For the rank & names of all the officers of the Virginia regiments has been settled by a board of discrimination [?] – The result of a [indecipherable word] proceedings are now in the possession of the Secretary except those of Colonel Crockett's Regiment – and although there was a board of discrimination in the case of Crockett's Regiment & a list made out, which list it will be shown is lost, yet there is a perfect correspondence between the unauthenticated list in possession of Mr. McLane & the depositions in the cause—save alone in the case of Capt. Purvis.

But to [indecipherable word] to the Secretary's doubt. It is true, that shortly after the close of the war, the State of Virginia with a view of ascertaining what officers were entitled to half pay, & who were not instituted what was called boards of discrimination and it will be very cheerfully conceded by your petitioner, that of the last now in possession of the Treasury department, exhibiting the names of Colonel Crockett's Regiment, can be shown to have been made out under the authority and sanction of one of those Boards, it would require strong testimony to overthrow the weight attached to its conclusions – although there are instances as

will be seen by reference to the Auditor's letter & exhibit where the board has omitted the names of officers who were subsequently admitted to be entitled to their compensation. See the cases of Major Dick and Doctor Brodie.

But the fact is the list of Crockett's Regiment now in possession of the Secretary as far from purporting to have been made out under the authority of any Board of discrimination, is [indecipherable word] without date – without proof of its genuineness and is not authenticated in any manner whatsoever (see Copy here with annexed marked ___).

That there was a board of discrimination which designated the officers of Colonel Crockett's Regiment who were entitled to half pay will appear from the accompanying papers – that the proceedings of that Board have been lost since 1784 will appear from papers and that the list in possession of the Secretary cannot be an accurate list of those officers is manifest. That in Crockett's Regiment there were six captains see Document (___) but the list makes but three.

The proceedings of the Board which sat upon the claims of Crockett's Regiment was lost in 1784 – It is possible the present is a list which was subsequently made out by some person upon his own authority to supply the omission: but whether this be so or not it is impossible to say.

The present list was found by the Clerk of the House of Delegates in 1831, carelessly thrown among the papers of his office and by him handed over to the Auditor.

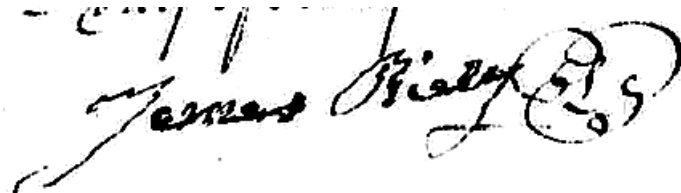
The Letter of the Auditor of the 25th of August 1832 exhibits his opinion of the extent to which reliance can be placed upon that document. See his letter accompanying this petition marked ___.

The Secretary of the Treasurer considering the case not free from doubt, has declined adjusting the claim of Purvis in pursuance to the act of Congress of the 5th of July last.

However hard & unjust this determination of the Honorable Secretary may be, considering the force and conclusiveness of the present testimony, your petitioner hopes that speedy justice can be done by your Honorable body.

To this in he praised the passage of a special act of Congress authorizing & requiring the Secretary of the Treasury to adjust, settle & pay to your petitioner as executor of James Purvis deceased his half pay as a Captain from the first day of January 1782 to the 7th of November 1811 – and your petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray.

S/ James Rielly Executor of
James Purvis

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James Rielly" followed by a large, stylized flourish or initial.

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[f p 20]

A Board of officers order to set by General George Rogers Clark to examine into the claims of the Officers of Colonel Crockett's Regiment respecting their ranks.

Colonel John Montgomery President

Major Thomas Quirk – Captain Rt. George, Capt. Brashears—Capt J. Girault } Members

After examining the claims of all the Officers of said Regiment, and their certificates

² Signature taken from another document appearing on p 15 in this file

from Colonel Crockett, and being informed that the Regiment never consisted of more than six companies, mustered and doing duty.

The board are of opinion that the said Regiment should be continued for to that number by promotion of the Officers now commissioned, and upon examination find that the Officers are entitled to the following promotions.

Viz. – Ensign Moore to a Lieutenancy the first July 1780 by the promotion of Lieutenant Kearney to Captain

Ensign McGarrock to a Lieutenancy the 15th August 1780 by the Resignation of Lieutenant McGill.

Lieutenant Glenn to Captain the 13 October 1780 by the death of Captain Kenley

Ensign Walls to a Lieutenant the 13 October 1780 by the promotion [sic, promotion] of Lieutenant Glenn

Ensign Bullock to a Lieutenant the 11 January 1781 by Lieutenant Daniel Anderson's dismissal.

Lieutenant Browning to a Captain the 2 September 1781 by the death of Captain Chapman.

Lieutenant More to a Captain to September 1781 by the death of Captain Tipton.

Ensign Dearing to a Lieutenant the 2 September 1781 by the promotion of Lieutenant Browning.

Ensign Green to a Lieutenant the 2 September 1781 by the promotion of Lieutenant Moore

G R Clark, B. G. Jno Montgomery Pr.

In counsel April 4th, 1782, referred to the Commissioner of War

S/ Benj. Harrison

[f p. 23]

Henry Bedinger³ of the County of Berkeley in State of Virginia now in his 80th year states and declares that he was personally well acquainted with James Purvis, an while in that in the War of the Revolution, both during and after the War, he first became acquainted with said James Purvis at Albemarle barracks in the County of Albemarle State of Virginia, the said James Purvis being then a Captain in the Virginia State Regiment under the command of Colonel Joseph Crockett, which Regiment was then temporarily stationed for the purpose of guarding the prisoners taken at the capture of Burgoyne's Army. He became more intimately acquainted with said Purvis during the winter, Crockett's Regiment was encamped & stationed at Shepherdstown, in Virginia, on its March to the Western Frontiers. This affiant's mother lived near Shepherdstown and being then upon a visit there, from the southern Army, he spent much of his time with the officers, he recollects Purvis well and particularly, he was an uneducated man, but of sterling worth, was during all the time the Regiment existed a Captain in it, he marched with the Regiment from Shepherdstown to the Falls of Ohio, and remained there until it was discharged – Captain Purvis soon after came to this County rented a plantation and married, he afterwards removed to the adjoining County of Frederick where he purchased a farm and lived there on until his death, which took place about 1811 – This Affiant declares that all the time he knew Purvis, he bore the character of a faithful & correct officer, while in that Regiment, and of a worthy Citizen thereafter, until the period of his death, – And this affiant is further requested to state, that he was himself an officer in the Virginia Line on Continental establishment in the Revolutionary War.

S/ Henry Bedinger

³ [Henry Bedinger S8059](#)

This 22nd day of November 1832 personally appeared the above Henry Bedinger before me and made oath to the above statement according to law and that he signed the same which is all in his hand writing in my presence.

Sworn to before me – S/ Tillotson Fryatt

[f p. 25]

Rank of the Officers of Lt. Colo. Joseph Crockett's Regiment with the date of their appointments and Commissions, what number of men, when joined, and the number when reduced

Names	Rank	When appointed	Date of Commission	Remarks
Joseph Crockett Supernumerary Major in the Virginia Line	Lt. Col.	1779 July 23	1779 Novr. 8	Entitled to half pay
George Walls called from the line	Majr	July 23	ditto 6	Entitled to half pay
William Cheny a supernumerary Captain from the Virginia Line	Capt.	July 23	Ditto 8	Entitled to half pay
Thomas Young	Capt.		Ditto 8	Entitled to half pay
John Kenney	Capt.		1780 July 1	For his former services Entitled to half pay
Peter Moore	Lt.	July 23	Nov. 8	Do Do Do
Thomas Walls	Lt.	July 23	Do 6	Do Do Do
Hugh McGanock	Ensign		Do 8	Entitled to half pay
Rico Bullock	Lt.		Augt. 14	Entitled to half pay for his former services
Charles Green	Surgn.	1780 Feby 1		Do Do Do
Bernard Glen	Lt.		1779 Nov 8	Do Do Do
Isaac Browning	Lt		Nov. 8	Do Do Do
Samuel Ball Green	Ens		Nov 8	Do Do Do
Henry Daring	Ens		Nov 8	Do Do Do

It appears by returns of Colonel Crockett's Regiment that there was raised 225 men, and the numbers were reduced 137 men.

S/ Geo. Walls Major W. B.

[f p. 32]

The deposition of Captain Thomas Young⁴ of Mason County Kentucky now in his seventy ninth year taken to be read as evidence in the matter of appeal pending in the Superior Court of law in the city of Richmond in which the officers of Colonel Joseph Crockett's Regiment & the 7th

⁴ [Thomas Young S11921](#)

Virginia State Regiment suing for their half pay and appellants and the altar of Public accounts is appellee.

Thomas Young being first duly sworn

Question 1st State if you were an officer in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Joseph Crockett and how long you continued to serve therein.

Answer I was commissioned a Captain in the Virginia State Regiment under the command of Joseph Crockett in November 1779 and continued to serve therein until the time for which the men were enlisted had expired which was the last of December 1781 at which time myself with all the officers returned home as supernumeraries, holding ourselves in readiness to return to the service when called on.

Question 2nd Who were the officers of that Regiment at the expiration of the term of the men's enlistment and the return home of the Officers as supernumeraries as aforesaid?

Answer There was Joseph Crockett Colonel – George Walls major – William Cherry, James Purvis, John Kerney, , Peter Moore, Isaac Browning and myself captains – Rice Bullock, Samuel Greene, Henry Daring, Thomas Walls, Hugh McGarrock, Bernard Glenn Lieutenants and Charles Green Surgeon –

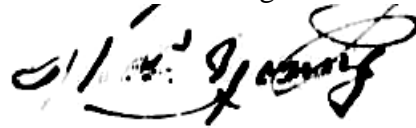
Question 3rd Were any of the Officers called into service after the expiration of the term of the men's enlistment and the return home of the officers as supernumeraries?

Answer Major George Walls was called into the service after that period at the falls of Ohio.

Question 4th State how long Major George Walls continued in service after the expiration of the term of the men's enlistment and the return home of the officers as supernumeraries

Answer Major George Walls was continued in service at the falls of the Ohio after the expiration of the term of the men's enlistment and the return home of the officers as supernumeraries and remained at the head of the military stationed there I believe until the spring of 1784.

S/ Thos. Young



Personally appeared before us the undersigned 2 of the justices of the peace for the County aforesaid the above named Captain Thomas Young of Mason County and made oath to the above statement in reference to the Regiment commanded by Colonel Joseph Crockett. As witness our hands and seals this 10th day of November 1820

S/ J. Brown

S/ James Blair

[f p. 44]

Rec'd 18 Jany 1813

To the Honorable the Speaker and House of Delegates

The Petition of James Purvis humbly sheweth

That he enlisted in the first Virginia Regiment on the 5th day of September 1775 and on the 7th day of March 1777 was appointed an Ensign in which capacity he acted until the 18th of February 1778 when he resigned. That in the month of January 1779 he was appointed a Lieutenant to serve in the Regiment to guard the Convention Prisoners and was promoted to the rank of captain the 8th day of October following in which rank he served until the Regiment was disbanded in June 1781. That the resignation of your Petitioner in the year 1778 was occasioned altogether from the consideration of his want of learning sufficient to discharge the duties incident to his

appointment to obtain which, he applied himself until his appointment in the Regiment of Guards: Your Petitioner therefore prays this Honorable House to allow him the same bounty of lands as is given by law to a Captain.

This is to certify that in some James Purvis enlisted in the first Virginia Regiment the 5th day of September 1775 and was appointed an Ensign the 7th day of March 1777 and resigned his commission the 18th of February 1778. Given under my hand the 24th of October 1784

S/ John Green Late Colonel 6th Virginia Regiment

I certify that James Purvis was appointed a Lieutenant in the County of Culpeper to serve in the Regiment to Guard the Convention Prisoners in the 7th of January 1779 that he was promoted to the rank of captain the 8th of October in the same year & served in that rank until the Regiment was disbanded in June 1781

Orange County

28 October 1784

S/ F. Taylor Colonel Late Regiment Guards