

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of John Roberts¹ R17483

f11VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

7/5/12

[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.]

Pension Office January 31, 1850

I certify that I have examined the claim of the administrator of the late John Roberts, who was a Lieutenant in the Regiment of Virginia State Regiment called the Illinois Regiment; that he [indecipherable word]² until the 31 December 1781, when the Regiment was disbanded; and that the administrator is therefore entitled to half pay under the Act of July 5, 1832. I accordingly give it as my opinion that half pay at the rate of \$160 per annum shall be allowed from the 31st of December 1781 to the 1st of June 1819, in which month or in the month of July 1819 he died; and that the amount is payable to Stephen F. J. Trabue, attorney of Willis Roberts, administrator of John Roberts, deceased.

Commissioner of Pensions

Approved
Secretary of the Interior

Entered on ½ Pay Book

Auditors Office Virginia
31 March 1835

Sir

In reply to your letter of the 25th instant, I transmit to you herewith a copy of Commissioner Smith's First Report upon the claim of John Roberts for land bounty and I also send you a copy of a second report made by that officer, from which it appears that Roberts was only one year and 4 months in service and was not entitled to Land bounty.

I am very respectfully your obedient servant
S/ Jas. E. Heath

The Hon. Secy. of the Treasury

Upon the Petition of the heirs of Lieutenant John Roberts of the State line, for bounty land

The evidence in support of this claim has been presented by the Petitioners

John Roberts was Commissioned, December 31st 1778, Lieutenant in a Company of Infantry in the Illinois Regiment, which company was commanded by Captain Robert Todd. The only Payroll, which has been preserved, of Captain Todd's Company, notices Lieutenant Ro. Roberts thus – "Roberts John Lieutenant – commissioned 31st December 1778 – went recruiting

¹ Va. Half Pay See N. A. Acct. No. 874 050 144 Half Pay John Roberts

² *ind*

August 17th 1779, and never returned – charged with Paper-money which exceeds the amount of pay" (see Payroll of Captain Ro. Todd's Company – Vol. 1st Illinois Papers) this Payroll comes down to June 1780 at that time Lieutenant Roberts had not returned to his Company.

It appears, that on the 13th of August 1779, General Clarke [George Rogers Clark] issued his general orders, at Fort Patrick Henry in which is the following order, to wit, – "Officers for the recruiting service – Captains – Quirk, Evans, Taylor, Woothington, Kellan, Lieutenants – Roberts, Crockett, Ramsay, Calvet, Ensign – Montgomery" – (see Illinois Papers – Vol. 1st Division No. 2. D.)

Lieutenant John Roberts received, himself, December 10th 1785 a certificate for £129.19.8, the balance of his full pay, for services rendered in the Illinois Regiment, prior to January 1st 1782 – (See Army Register of the State line.)

In the printed list of officers &c of the Illinois Regiment &c No. 4, page 11 – I have reported Lieutenant John Roberts, entitled to bounty land for the war. My reasons for making this Report, I now presume, were the following – that Lieutenant Roberts was commissioned in 1778 – (December 31) – that he received a large sum of money & the balance of his full pay for services rendered before January 1st 1782 – that this proved, that the account given of his services, in Captain Ro. Todd's Payroll above referred to be showed that he was always engaged in the recruiting service – that I had not been able to find any [paper torn and one or more words of text are missing] of his resignation – that there was no proof of his desertion, or of his having been cashiered or suspended. – That Captain Ro. Todd's Company was in service until the end of the war – and that Lieutenant Roberts ought to be presumed to have served to the end of the war, notwithstanding the contents of the payroll above mentioned.

The above stated facts are all, whether supporting or invalidating the claim of Lieutenant Roberts' heirs for bounty land, which I am able to report to the Governor. They are, without further comment, respectfully submitted

S/ John W Smith, Commissioner

November 4th, 1834

To his Excellency Governor Tazewell

Office of Commissioners of Revolutionary claims of the State of Virginia
I hereby certify, that the foregoing is a copy of a Report which was made by me to the Governor of Virginia, upon the Petition of the heirs of Lieutenant John Roberts for bounty land – I further certify, that, on the 23rd of January 1835, I made a supplemental report upon the said Petition, in which the governor was referred to the Journal of the House of Delegates, of November 15, 1785, page 38, for further information respecting this claim.

S/ John H Smith, Commissioner &c

Richmond 28th of March 1835

[Second Report]

To Governor Tazewell

Sir:

Since my [words too faint to discern] report upon the claim of the heirs of Lieutenant John Roberts of the Eleanor Regiment for Bounty Land, on the 4th of November last, I have seen an entry in the Journals of the House of Delegates, by which it is my duty to refer your Excellency. (See Journal of the House of delegates of November 13th 1785 page 38)

It appears that Lieutenant John Roberts petitioned the Legislature for bounty land in 1785

and stated in his petition that he had served only about one year and 4 months. He knew his own services and it is to be presumed made the best statement which he could in support of his claim.

The Journals of the House of Delegates have not been indexed which is the reason why the above entry in the Journal of the House of Delegates escaped my notice before my Report was made upon this claim.

You will please received this as a part of the said Report

Respectfully &c

S/ John H Smith, Commissioner &c

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Addendum to John Roberts R17483

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. 22 Feb 2021

[From [rejected claims in the Library of Virginia](#) indexed as Robert, John. It appears likely that the John Roberts referred to in this memorial was not the same John Roberts who was a lieutenant in the Illinois Regiment. This file also contains reports by John H. Smith, copies of which are in the federal pension file transcribed above. This file also contains an unrelated petition by Major John Roberts (W2347).]

To his Excellency the Governor of Virginia

The memorial of Lorenzo Roberts, William Dameron, & Sukey Ashburn the wife of Luke Ashburn, humbly represent that they are all residents of the County Of Lancaster, Virginia and are the only heirs at law, & devisees under the will of John Roberts of said County. they respectfully represent that from the best information they can obtain, the said John entered the service at an early period of the Revolutionary war & continued in Service untill the Close thereof & was honorably discharged. It is impossible for your memorialist, at this late day to find out under whom the said John entered the service, or to what Regiment he belonged, but they have every reason to believe he was a Lieutenant, & belonged to the Illinois Regiment & continued in Service till the Close of the war. He was a resident of Lancaster County & died there many years ago. They hope there is sufficient documentary evidence to sustain their claim & that it may be speedily allowed. Given under their hands this 18 day of Octr 1834
Teste And Robertson. [signed] Lorenzo Roberts

[From [rejected claims in the Library of Virginia](#). Papers in these files are intermingled with those of Major John Roberts W2347.]

Commonwealth of Kentucky }
Shelby County Sct. }

Be it remembered that on this 25th day of January 1835 Benjamin Roberts [S31343] a citizen of the County of Shelby about Eighty four years of age; and being sworn deposeth under oath that he was a Captain and commanded a company in the Reg't. commanded by Colo Crockett [Joseph Crockett S46377] and was sent on to the falls of the Ohio [at Louisville KY] and served under General George Rogers Clark [VAS269] Illinois Reg't during the Revolutionary war. He states that his Brother John Roberts was Lieutenant in Capt. James Shelys [James Shelby R17781] Company in the same Reg't commanded by Clark of the Virginia State line. That said Lieutenant John Roberts enlisted his quota of his company in the year 177[?] and his brother served until said Reg't was discharged – he further states that the claim now pending at the War Department made by the heirs of John Roberts for compensation under the Laws of Congress for Military services of their said [undeciphered] is for the identical Lieutenant John Roberts aforesaid – he further states that the said John Roberts [illegible] Shelby County about the year 1819 and he [undeciphered] Children and Heirs Viz: Augustin Roberts, Willis Roberts, John Roberts, Elizabeth now Elizabeth Gregory, and Sally, now Sally McMeekin late Sally [undeciphered], in all five. And all of whom are now living and the only heirs of said John Roberts

State of Kentucky } Be it Remembered that on this the 9th day of December 1842 Personally appeared
Shelby County } before me Gideon Mitchell, an acting Justice of the Peace in and for said county
of shelby State of Kentucky Major Bland W. Ballard [W20655], who after being duly sworn on the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God, deposeth and saith that he is now upwards of eighty three years of age and was born and raised in Spottsylvania [sic: Spotsylvania] County Virginia and came out to what is now called Kentucky in March 1779 and that in he joined the Illinois Regiment as a Private in the year of 1780, and that he was under Genl Clark He farther saith that he became acquainted with and knew well in the

state of virginia before he came to Ky in 1779 Lieutenant John Roberts Lieutenant William Roberts [R17484] Capt Benjamin Roberts and Joseph Roberts [W8561]. And that said Capt Benjamin Roberts during the war of the Revolution belonged to the Regiment of Col Crockett and that said Joseph Roberts was a Private or soldier with the Illinois Regiment and that said William Roberts and said Lieutenant John Roberts were both Brothers and were both Lieutenants in the Illinois Regiment under the command of General George Rogers Clark and that He deponent knew in the spring of 1780 the said Lieutenant John Roberts and William Roberts when they arrived from Virginia to Kentucky and that he deponent served a tour in the summer of 1780 under the said Lieutenant William Roberts and that said campaign was called the Picway [Piqua] Campaign, and that said Lieutenant William Roberts and John Roberts both continued in actual service without neglect of duty until the troops of the Illinois Regiment were regularly disbanded. The deponent [undeciphered] saith that said John Roberts was a [part missing at bottom of page] at the same time that said William was and the balance of the troops of the Illinois Regiment and in which regiment was Capt Edwd Worthington [Edward Worthington R19205] [illegible] John Montgomery [R16522] Capt Baily [John Baley R19354] Capt Taylor [Isaac Taylor W601] Major Quirk [Thomas Quirk W5958] & Lt Chaplain [Abraham Chapline R13134]. And that he further saith that the said Lieutenant John Roberts and William Roberts were as much entitled to receive any all sorts of pay for their services as was any of the afsd officers and that shortly after the close of the war said John Roberts settled in Montgomy[?] near County and afterward removed to Shelby County Kentucky where he resided until his death and left several children and Mrs. Gregory and Mrs. McMeekin are two of daughters and now living in Shelby County Kentucky and near Shelbyville. Further deponent saith not and herto sets his hand and seal
Bland W hisXmark Ballard

To the Executive of the State of Virginia

The memorial of Mrs Elizabeth Gregory of Shelby County Kentucky a daughter of John Roberts deceased late of the said County, and a Lieutenant in the Illinois Regiment of the state Line of virginia in the army of the Revolution – by Mrs Sally McMeekin another of said Officers & likewise a resident of Shelby County Kentucky & of John Roberts a son of said Officer & resident of said County of Shelby.

Your memorialists respectfully represent: That while they are too young to have personal knowledge of the services of their Father John Roberst in the army of the Revolution, they are advised and believe that he was a Lieutenant in the Illinois Regiment of the state Line of Virginia in the army of the Revolution, and served in Actual Service until the final close of the war. That he set out from the state of Virginia as a volunteer to come to what is now called the State of Kentucky in the year seventeen Hundred and seventy eight and here remained under the Command of Colonel Clark until the spring of the year Seventeen Hundred and seventy nine, when he went as Lieutenant with the troops to Kaskaskia Illinois. And in the fall thereafter, in the month of October, he was together with several other officers ordered int[page torn] State of Virginia on the recruiting service. After his arrival in Virginia he performed duties incumbent upon him and returned in the Spring of the year 1780 with his [page torn] Company with other officers of whom were his two Brothers Captain Benjamin Roberts [page torn] Ensign William Roberts. That their said Father after his arrival at the falls of Ohio in the Spring of the year 1780 Continued as said Lieutenant in the said Illinois Regiment, in actual service – protecting and defending the western frontier until the final disbanding of the Troops of said Regiment. That after the close of the war he returned back to his native Commonwealth and remained some few years and then removed to the County of Montgomery [part missing at bottom of page] Continued to live until he removed to the County of Shelby State [part missing at bottom of page] a Brother of the Father of your memorialist has since their s'd Fathers death and previous to his own, been granted Land Bounty by the Commonwealth of Virginia for his services in the Illinois Regiment. And also the heirs of Ensign or Lieutenant William Roberts an uncle of our memorialist for his services in said Regiment. The services of the deceased Father of your memorialist verily believe was of a character as arduous and as important as that, which was performed by any officer of the Revolution. He was one of those who volunteered to enter the North-Western [terri]tory to encounter all the horrors of combined British and Indian warfare and to carry into execution [the] object

of taking the British Posts thereby depriving them of their strong holds, which had afforded a safe retreat for the merciless Indians. And after succeeding under their bold and dauntless Commander in reducing the British Posts in order to protect and defend the Western frontiers, the deceased Father of your memorialist, "Joined the said Regiment for the War" and continued in actual service in the said Regiment Commanding as said Lieutenant in the strict performance of his duties until the final disbanding of the troops of said Regiment. Your memorialist to support by proof the alleged service of their deceased Father in the aforesaid Regiment, have the pleasure herewith to file the depositions of those soldiers of the Illinois Regiment who were present and eye witnesses to the performance of the same. And [illegible] persons as respectable as any in the State of Kentucky. Your memorialist for additional evidence – if such be required, will refer to the army registers of Virginia believing they fully instance the claim to Land Bounty due your memorialist, on account of the services of their said Father in the said state line of Virginia. Now your memorialist believing it to be their right as well as their duty to apply for that which was so honourably performed by their said Father they respectfully ask that an allowance may be granted them for the Land Bounty promised by the Commonwealth of Virginia to all those officers of the same Line of the rank of their said Father – and this they will ever pray.

[15 March 1844]

[signature of John Roberts partly missing at bottom of page]

State of Kentucky/ Shelby County Sct

Shelby County court April Term 1844

At a County court duly organized begun & holden at the Town of Shelbyville in & for the County of Shelby State of Kentucky on Monday the 8th day of April 1844 it is ordered by the Court to be Certified & recorded that, It appears to the satisfaction of the Court that John Roberts was a Lieutenant of the Illinois Regiment under the Command of General George Rogers Clarke & departed this life in the County of Shelby State of Kentucky on the 3rd day of June in the year of our Lord 1819 intestate leaving a widow who shortly thereafter died intestate & the following Children, to wit, John Roberts now living in the County of Shelby state of Kentucky Sally McMeekin & Elizabeth Gregory both widows & now of the County of Shelby Willis Roberts now of Owen County Kentucky Augustin Roberts now of [blank] in the state of Tennessee who are the only heirs at law of said Lieutenant John Roberts dec'd which is ordered to be Certified

The deposition of James Whitecotton of Marion County state of Kentucky taken at his own house in the said County on Friday the 7th day of June 1844.

Deponent after being first duly sworn according to law deposeth and saith that he was raised in the state of Virginia and came to the western Country under the command of Colonel George Rogers Clark (who thereafter became General) when he first came to the country in order to reduce the British Posts and that deponent was present at their reduction in the year of 1778 he thinks, and has remained in this country ever since never having even returned to the State of Virginia on a visit. That he knew at the falls of Ohio Captain Benjamin Roberts, Captain Abraham Chaplin Lieutenant Anthony Crockett [S10492] Lieutenant John Roberts Ensign William Roberts and other officers of the Illinois Regiment under the command of General George Rogers Clark and that he knows that said John Roberts was a Lieutenant in command in the said Regiment at the same time of the aforesaid officers, and continued in the service until the Illinois Regiment was disbanded. That said Lieutenant John Roberts was a Brother of Captain Benjamin Roberts and William Roberts and did continue in actual service as said Lieutenant as long as did Captain Benjamin Roberts or any other officer of officers of the said Regiment. That deponent knew [part missing at bottom of page] and that he knows the said John Roberts and his said Brothers were officers in command at the date of the disbanding of the troops which was the last of 1781, and knows that said Lieutenant John Roberts had been in the service as long as any officer of the whole Regiment for he was among the first that came with Colonel Clark when he first came out and continued down to the period of the disbanding of the Regiment as afs'd

James hisXmark Whitecotton

State of Kentucky Marion County Sct

I James Whitecotton of the county and state aforesaid Certify that I was a soldier of the Illinois Regiment and came to the western country the first time that Colonel George Rogers Clark (afterwards General George Rogers Clark) came out which was in the year 1778 That I was under his command at the taking of the several British Posts in the Illinois Country since which period I have remained in this country never having returned to Virginia. I testify that I knew Brigade Major John Crittenden [R13465] of the Illinois Regiment at the falls of Ohio and remember him well and know that he was there at the time that Captain Chaplin Lieutenant Anthony Crockett Lieutenant John Roberts Captain Benjamin Roberts and other officers were. I know I cannot be mistaken in what I have stated Given under my hand and seal this the 7th day of June 1844
James hisXmark Whitecotton

The deposition of Stephen Chilton [Stephen Chelton S1189] taken at his own house in the County of Woodford State of Kentucky on this the 29th day of June 1844.

Deponent after being first duly sworn according to law doth on his Oath state, that he was a Soldier in the Company commanded by Captain Benjamin Roberts of Colonel Joseph Crocketts Regiment under the Command of General George Rogers Clark who was commander in Chief of the Illinois Regiment. That Captain Benjamin Roberts arrived with his company at the falls of Ohio about the first of June Seventeen hundred and Eighty. That deponent continued in actual service after their arrival until toward the fall when he was taken prisoner by the Indians and remained a prisoner of the Indians & British until the close of the War. That at the time of their arrival at the falls of Ohio, John Roberts a Brother of Captain Benjamin Roberts was a Lieutenant in command in the said Illinois Regiment in actual service, and from the arrival of Captain Benjamin Roberts Company at the falls of Ohio down to the time deponent was taken prisoner, deponent knows that said John Roberts was a Lieutenant in Command in actual service in said Illinois Regiment. Deponent says he cannot be mistaken in the fact that said John Roberts did serve and command as Lieutenant in the said Regiment from the time of deponents arrival at the falls of Ohio until deponent was taken prisoner. That deponent knew well and was intimately acquainted with Lieutenant John Roberts and Cap[part missing at bottom of page] Roberts were Btothers. Deponent further saith that after the Revolutionary war he removed from Virginia to Kentucky & have known since his removal many of the soldiers and some of the officers of said Illinois Regiment has always understood from them that Captain Benjamin Roberts and Lieutenant John Roberts continued in the service in said Illinois Regiment until the same was discharged. And never in his life heard a word to the contrary. Further deponent saith not
Stephen hisXmark Chelton

The deposition of Henry Foster [W25586] of Nicholas county taken at his own house on the 12th day of July 1844

Deponent after being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath State that he was a Soldier in the Company commanded by Captain Benjamin Roberts of Colonel Joseph Crocketts Regiment under the Command of General Rogers Clark who was Commanded in Chief of the Illinois Regiment. That deponent enlisted in the said Company about the first of the fall of the year Seventeen Hundred and seventy nine and lay at Redstone Old Fort the following winter and in the Spring of the year descended the Ohio River to the Falls of Ohio. That deponent continued in actual service until the Company of Captain Benjamin Roberts was discharged. That at the arrival of Captain Benjamin Roberts Company at the Falls of Ohio in the Spring of the year Seventeen Hundred and Eighty, there were other troops then at the falls, and deponent knows well that John Roberts a Brother of said Benjamin Roberts was a Lieutenant in command there, in the said Illinois Regiment and continued in actual service until the troops of the Illinois Regiment were discharged which was the last day of December 1781. Deponent says he cannot be mistaken in the fact that to his own personal knowledge said John Roberts was a Lieutenant in command and continued in actual service as said Lieutenant from the time of the arrival of said Captain Benja Roberts Company at the Falls of Ohio, until the troops of the whole Regiment were disbanded. Deponent says he knew well said [part missing at bottom of page] Roberts who were both [part missing from bottom of page] said

Regiment or any other officer of the whole Regiment. Deponent says that he is receiving a Pension under the act 7th June 1832 for the fullest amount granted by said act to the Soldier of his rank & further he saith not.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Henry Gaster". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the main text block.

This is to Certify, That it appears from a List in this Office of such Officers and Soldiers of the Virginia State Line, during the Revolutionary War, as settled their Accounts, and received Certificates for the balance of their Full Pay, according to an Act of Assembly, passed the November Session, 1781, that a Certificate issued on the 10th day of December 1785, in the name of John Roberts as a Lieut. Illinois Reg't for £129.19.8, which Certificate appears to have been delivered to himself and was given for services prior to the 1st January, 1782.

Given under my hand at the Auditor's Office, Richmond, this 28th day of December 1844.
Jas E. Heath AUDITOR.

NOTE: On 10 Feb 1835 Willis Roberts, administrator of the estate of John Roberts, appointed Charles McMeekin, husband of Sally McMeekin, as attorney for himself and the other heirs.