

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

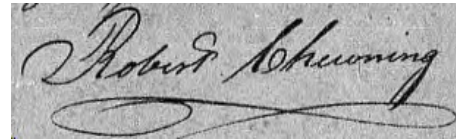
Pension Application of Robert Chewning R1915

VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 12 Sep 2013.

State of Virginia Orange County To Wit

On this 23rd day of September 1843 personally appeared in open Court before the Court of Orange County in the State of Virginia Robert Chewning a resident of said County of Orange and State of Virginia aged eighty eight years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832 That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers, first under Capt. John Tiler [sic: John Tyler] from the County of Caroline and State of Virginia and marched from Chesterfield in said County of Caroline to Morbin hills [sic: Malvern Hill 15 mi SE of Richmond] and joined the Regiment at that place, General Mathis [sic: Sampson Mathews] was the Commanding officer, and from thence he marched to Williamsburg remained some time at the latter place the length of time not distinctly recollected from thence he marched to port Royal on the Rappahannoc [sic: Rappahannock River] and Colo Anthony Thornton was the Commanding officer at Port Royal. he was then after remaining a considerable time at the latter place marched to Richmond remained there for the purpose of guarding the City some three or four weeks then took up a quick mach from thence to the County of Culpepper [sic: Culpeper] in said State at which place he was taken sick and returned to Caroline and remained at home abut three weeks, he then joined the Army again between Caroline and Yorktown Remained in the service some two or three months. he then returned home and in some short time was then called out again on an other tour under the command of Capt James Sutton joined the Army again between the County of Caroline and Richmond. was then some two weeks on an excursion in company with Joseph Jones [possibly pension application W9079] and David Bibb pressing horses – we obtained abut thirty and delivered them in the County of Westmoreland to the army it was said at that time they were for the French army, we then were ordered to return them to the owners from whome we had pressed them in as much as they were not wanting if they would receive them we returned them to the Chesterfield Tavern in the County of Caroline and what became of them he dose not know. he was present at the seage at YorkTown [Siege of Yorktown, 28 Sep - 19 Oct 1781] and after the seage returned to his native County Caroline. The various tours of duty he served in the Revolution he dose not now recollect owing to the laps of time and infirmity of boddy but was in service of and on for several years and dose verly believe that was in actual service for more than twelve months. He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any State
[signed by the scribe]



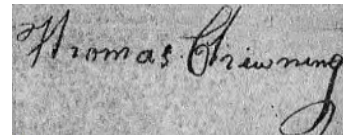
State of Virginia

Louisa County, to wit:

Personally appeared before me John T. Quarles a justice of the peace in and for said County, Thomas Chewning aged seventy one or seventy two years and made oath in due form of Law, that he knows his brother Robert Chewning who has made the foregoing declaration did serve in the Revolutionary War, but how long he does not now recollect and I the said John T. Quarles do hereby certify that I am well acquainted with the said Thomas Chewning and consider him a credible person, and believes he is as old as he states himself to be.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 30th day of September 1843

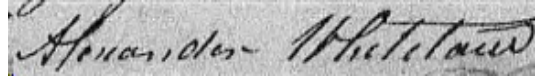
John T Quarles a justice of the peace of Louisa County



Greene County October 1 1843

Dear Sir

I have sent you the Declaration of Robert Chewning and if it is right please send me a check for the money and if not please send me where it is wrong and oblige your most Humble servant
Alexander Whitelaw



Note Be when you write to me Direct your letter To Ruckersville Greene County Post office
Mr Petter Hagnor A Whitelaw

[A 9 Dec 1843 letter from the Pension Office stated, evidently incorrectly, that the application had not been received.]

[The following declaration is in the handwriting of Coleman Payne.]

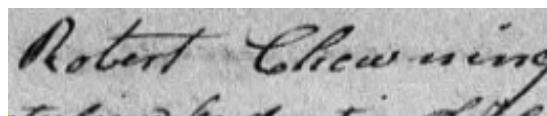
State of Virginia

Greene County S.S.

This day 14th day of June 1845 personally appeared in open Court before the Court of said County Robert Chewning aged ninety-three years next March who being first duly sworn doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein after stated being in the militia for the period of twelve months in the Revolutionary War That at the time of entering the army I was a resident of the County of Caroline where I remained till after the war & came to Orange to Live now called Greene that his first tour of three months was under Captain John Tyler of Caroline County then his neighbor, that during tour his company was stationed in the lower Country about Williamsburg and a portion of said tour his company was stationed at Williamsburg that before going to Williamsburg his company was stationed together with other companies at a place called "Morbin Hills" below Richmond and after remaining there a short time were then marched to Williamsburg where he remained till the term for which he enlisted expired and then all hands were discharged. That according to the best of his memory he entered this first tour in the month of October in the year 1780 and returned home some time in the month of January of the year '81; that during said tour of three months his company was not associated in any wise with the regular army; that during the stay of his company at "Morbin Hills" he well remembers that a man was stripped and whipped for firing his gun whilst in camp; that he was whipped by the Corporal and he was sorry to see it for he always thought it was an accident in firing the gun – he did not know the individual offending personally. That he did not get a written discharge from this first 3 months tour because he did not call for it, that discharges were given to such soldiers as called for them and many did obtain them; That after said tour of 3 months Captain James Sutton made a call for men in my County Caroline and I was draughted in his company for three months, that his company was raised as well as he can now remember in and about the month of February in the year 1781. That said company proceeded to the lower country near the Rappahannock River were stationed on its banks for some time in expectation of the enemy then in small squads scattered on the Lower part of Virginia; that whilst in that second tour under Cap Sutton he remembers the enemy visited the neighborhood where he was raised and did a good deal of mischief, That at one time during said tour of three months his company was stationed for some time near Fredericksburg in Spottsylvania [sic: Spottsylvania] County but did not get up quite to that Town; that at another period of said tour his company was stationed at "Port Royal" a small village in the County of Caroline from whence I went in the army; that no portion of said tour was his company attached with the regulars of the continental army that during said second tour under Captain Sutton his company passed through the following counties as well as he now remembers viz: Essex, Westmoreland and Richmond & King George – that when the company to which he belonged said tour reached "Port Royal" and remained there quartered for some length of time the men were discharged from duty and that he the said Robert Chewning returned to his

Home in the said County of Caroline where he remained till some time in the month of May '81 when he was again drafted and entered the militia company under command of Captain Thomas Ellis. That all hands were directed to meet at Caroline C. H. on a certain day to march & that at the time appointed his company were mustered at the C. H. and marched from that place to the County of Charles City, below Richmond and Williamsburg where they were stationed for some at a place called "Lansdowns." that after remaining near their for some time his company were marched through New Kent, King William & Essex Counties to near the Potomac in pursuit of the enemy scattered throughout that section and doing damage[?] to the inhabitants in that section. that no skirmish or any thing of that kind took place during said third tour under Captain Ellis that his company were at various places whilst in that tour that he cannot mention because the last of time [illegible word] to names them, as he once could, not only the names of all of his officers but at one time he could state all the facts great or small that occurred during said services. that during said third tour his company marched to a place called "The Grove" in Middlesex County where his company was discharged and he came home; that he did not call for a discharge others however did and received them. That he at that day looked on a discharge as but little valued to a man when he was in need and willing to fight for his Country whenever called on; that no portion of said tour were his men attached to the regular army whom he never saw. that having served out his 3rd tour in the militia under Captain Ellis he remained at home till the month of August in the year 1781 when he again was drafted in the militia in the company mustered by David Jameson who was Captain of this company in which he served his fourth tour and his company marched to lower Virginia passed through Hanover, Coochland [sic: Goochland] & New Kent Counties and other counties the names of which he cannot now call that a portion his company was stationed at a place called "Lews Dales"[?] in new Kent County but did not not remain long. that during this tour his company were in close pursuit of a parcel of British pirating on the inhabitants of the neighborhood but that the enemy escaped and made off that his company during this fourth tour were not in any way connected with the regular army and therefore he cannot give the name of any of their officers, that during this fourth tour under Captain Jameson he was in the following Counties as well as he can remember viz – Charles City, Gloucester, King & Queen [King and Queen] a portion of Surry and New Kent & Henrico Counties; That the above are tour he well and distinctly remembers and which he has spoken of ever since the war broke, but that previously he served as minute man and remembers to have been employed in witnessing[?] tories and performing short tours as a minute man for the occasion so as to be ready whenever danger approached – sometime he was out 10 or twelve days – sometime not as long and at other times longer, but which he cannot owing to their frequency mention with such particularity as to time and place as is requested by the department. My tour of 3 months in the militia I distinctly remember because it was a hardship not easy to be forgotten. That he employed Mr. Daniel White some years ago to prepare his papers and not knowing how to proceed he made mistakes as to my tours as is to be seen from the papers stating that I served six months at one time under – that he authorised Mr. White to sign his name to his former application. He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declares his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state whatever. Sworn to & subscribed the day and year aforesaid in open court.



We Thomas R. Dunn Clergyman residing in Mr. Robert Chewnings neighborhood and John B. White residing in the same hereby certify that we are well acquainted with Mr. Robert Chewning who has subscribed and sworn to the above declaration, that we believe him to be nearly ninety three years of age, that he is reputed and believe in the neighborhood where he resides to have been a soldier of the Revolution and that we concur in that opinion – that as a revolutionary soldier the belief is general never having heard any man doubt it in their lives.

[signed] Thomas R Dunn Clergyman

[signed] John B. White Neighbor

Teste. Ro Pritchett C.G.C.C.

And the said Court then propounded the following questions to the said applicant Robert Chewning as laid down by this War Department to which the annexed answers were given.

1. Where and in what year were you born.

Answer. I was born and raised in Caroline County Virginia was born in the month of March 1752 according to which I always heard from my parents.

2. Have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

Answer. I have no record of my age that I know of – always understood I was born in March 1752 and and I never forgot this date in my life.

3. Where were you living when called into service where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live?

Answer. When called into service I was a resident of Caroline County Va. where I remained till the close of the war and then came to where I now live in Greene County Virginia formerly Orange County.

4" How were you called into service; were you drafted did you volunteer or were you a substitute and if a substitute for whom?

Answer. I was a drafted soldier and went evry time called on but never was a substitute for any one.

5" State the names of the Regular officers who were with the troops where you served, such continental and militia regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service.

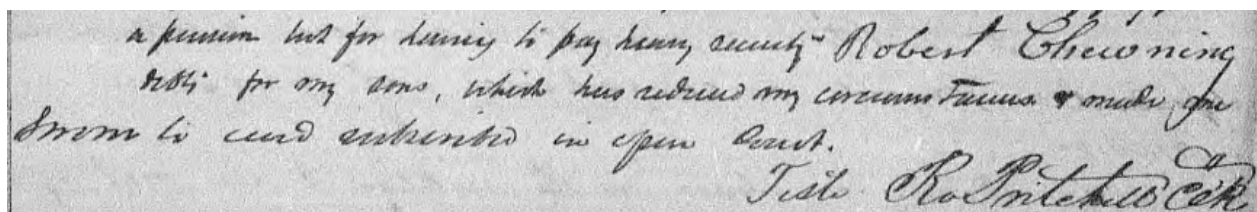
Answer. During my tours in the militia I was not associated with any portion of the regular army and consequently cannot give any of the names of the regular officers. During my last tour however our company reached Yorktown the day before the Surrender of Cornwallis and I knew Washington on sight – and other men of high station but I did not have time to learn their names before the army was dissolved. As to the militia regiments with whom my company was connected I distinctly remember a company from the Lower part of Orange County under Captain White who was with us nearly all the four tours – and this I remember because after coming to Orange to live I renewed the acquaintance of some of his old soldiers whose acquaintance I formed in the army. I think I could prove my services by a Mr. Dabny Freeman [sic: Dabney Freeman, pension application R3778] if living who was one of his soldier, but who left this county many years ago and also by one Takim[?] if alive who also went off

6" Did you ever receive a discharge from the service and if so by whom was it given and what has become of it.

Answer. I did not apply for a discharge and consequently did not obtain one from any of my services in the army others however applied and received their discharges but I did not consider it important and never that I remember of asked for one.

7" State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighborhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief belief of your services as a soldier in the Revolution.

Answer. I am known to all my neighbors they can furnish if desired the best evidence of my character for veracity and standing in society – my nearest neighbor are Alexander Whitelaw William Herndon an old soldier [possibly pension application S9575], James T. Fink, Jno.B. White both members of the Court for our County & others as many as may be required. If traditionary evidence will allow my claim I can satisfy the Department. I would not apply for a pension but for having to pay heavy security notes for my sons, which has reduced my circumstances & made me



a pension but for having to pay heavy security notes for my sons, which has reduced my circumstances & made me
from to could substituted in open Court.
Test Robt Chewning

Harrisonburg Virginia/ June 20th 1845.

Dear Sir [James L. Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions]:

Enclosed herein are the papers of old Mr. Ro't. Chewning for a pension under Act of June 1832. His claim was once rejected by the department as will be seen by the enclosed decision derved to the Hon. T. W. Gilmer his agent. As soon as the case is disposed of be so good as to inform me of the result. In truth/ Your obt. Servant



P. S. Since taking Mr. Herndons declaration we have fortunately procured evidence of his services which is herewith enclosed. Mr. Herndons [William Herndon, pension application S9575] papers were sent on the middle of June past.

C. Payne/ July 19th 1845.

Virginia/ Greene County SS

I Zachariah E. Harrison do hereby certify under oath I have known Mr. Robert Chewning for four years past and for the last eighteen months have been a member of the said Chewnings family by intermarriage with one of his daughters, that ever since my first acquaintance with Mr. Chewning I have at various time had conversations with him in relation to his revolutionary services and he always said he was in the service between eighteen months and two years & that at the time of said services he was a resident of caroline County Virginia. I have also at different times heard Mr. Chewning speak of his different tour in the war but do not at this time remember the number of tours he said he made, nor the names of the officers under whom he served. From his repeated conversations in relation to his services I always understood as above that he was in the militia between eighteen months and two years as above stated – he never in my hearing spoke of having been in service only six months.

As witness my hand this 8th day of September 1845.

Zachariah E. Harrison

Greene County S.S.

This day personally appeared before me the Rev'd. Zachariah E. Harrison a minister in the methodist Episcopal Church and made oath in due form of Law to the truth of the facts set forth in the foregoing affidavit and I do certify to the War Department that said affiant is personally known to me and is an individual of great respectability and good standing and by marriage one of Mr. Robert Chewnings family. Sworn to and subscribed before me on this day as witness my hand and seal this 8th day of September 1845.

[signed] John B White J.P.

Virginia, Greene County SS.

I Elisha Chewing aged thirty years do certify under oath I am a son of Mr. Robert Chewning of Greene County Va. and have always lived in his family and that time after time I have heard my said father speak of his revolutionary services ever since my earliest recollection – he always spoke of having been in the militia between eighteen months and two years – and I never heard him say he was in service only six months. I have also heard him frequently mention his different tours and officers but do not remember at this time the number of his tours and none of his officers except one (who I think was a Col. Matthews) & I now recollect distinctly of hearing him speak of. Whenever he conversed with his friends and acquaintances & with his family he invariably stated he was in service between eighteen months and two years – and never in my life have I heard him asset to the contrary. As witness my hand this 8th day of September 1845.

Elisha Chewing

[Certified by John B. White, J.P.]

Virginia – Greene County S.S. [10 Sep 1845]

I Alexander Whitelaw aged about fifty years and a citizen of said County hereby certify under oath I am a son in Law to old Mr. Robert Chewning having married into his family about 25 years ago – and times innumerable I have heard the old man speak of his revolutionary services and he invariably said

he was in service between 18 months and two years – he has frequently mentioned in my presence the numbers of his tours which in the militia were 6 drafts which he said he stood. His conversation in regard to the length of his service have been so often repeated that I remember them as well as I do any circumstance whatsoever. I have often heard him speak of his tours which he said he served in 1780 under Captains and of Caroline Cty. I do further certify under oath I was present with old Mr. Chewning and Daniel White Esq'r. one of the justices of Green County when the latter drew up the first declaration and I can safely say Mr. White did not put down all Mr. Chewning said about his tours in the War. I remember distinctly his telling Mr. White all of his officers whom I think was & a few men subordinate officers the names of whom have escaped my memory. Mr. White then drew up a kind of declaration which he said he would send on to Washington, that he had not gone into the details mentioned by Mr. Chewning and had put down as much as he thought was sufficient to carry the case through. He signed the old mans name, but I well remember he did not read to Mr. Chewning what had been written, nor did Mr. Chewning read it himself, for his sight was very bad. Neither was there the usual oath administered to Mr. Chewning by Mr. White – he stating it was not necessary. I am confident he informed Mr. White the magistrate that he was in the service between 18 months and two years. the declaration which Mr. Chewning recently testified to in Court to my knowledge was a repetition of what I always heard him say in relation to his services. I think the declaration drawn up by Mr White was taken in the winter of 43 & 44.

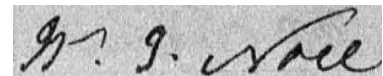
Alexander Whitelaw

[Certified by Autley Thornton.]

Virginia

Greene County towit: [10 Sep 1845]

I W. I. Noel a citizen of the County aforesaid do certify under oath I am in my 26 year and by marriage a connexion of Mr. Robert Chewning reputed to be a revolutionary soldier. Some short time after old Mr. Chewning requested Mr. Daniel White to draw up his declaration for a pension I happened at Mr. Whites house and the pension claim of Mr. Chewning came up as a topic between Mr. White and myself. Mr. White said he had no doubt the old mans claim would be allowed by the Department and he then remarked that Mr. Chewning went so much into detail in telling him of his services that he thought it best not to put down all that he said in regard to his services for that old men were too tedious on “that subject.” The close of his remarks respecting the case was that he only reduced to writing as many of the facts as he thought would be sufficient to that he was in the War. And I inferred from what was then said that Mr. White considered the claim a just one.

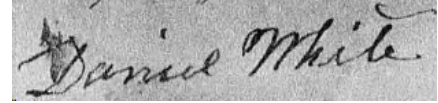


At a Monthly Court, held for the County of Greene,
on Thursday the 11th day of September 1845.

The Court doth Certify to George W Crump Esqr [Chief Clerk and sometimes Acting Commissioner of the Pension Office] that each of them have been acquainted with Robert Chewning Esqr for many years, and cheerfully bear testimony to his high standing for honour and veracity. He is one of our oldest and most respectable citizens and has the perfect confidence of all who know him, and a Man of Strict integrity and veracity. A Copy Teste/ Ro Pritchett Clk/ Greene County Court

I Daniel White do hereby certify the declaration of Mr. Robert Chewning for a Pension was drawn up by myself in the presence of the old gentleman and his son in Law Mr. Alexander Whitelaw. In matters of Pensions I never had any experience and was not aware of the necessity of naming particularly the officers and tours of soldiers till recently; had I been so informed I could easily have given an account of Mr. Chewning's tours in the militia, as [illegible word] his officers, for he named them to me very minutely and from my recollection I thought he stated more facts than was necessary to send to the Department. I therefore drew up a short statement of facts from memory without asking questions and

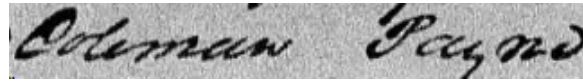
forwarded them to Washington. I remember very well Mr. Chewning said he served between 18 months and two years but I thought it unnecessary to state more than 3 or six months service either of which I believed would entitle him to as much pay as for the time he said he served. According to memory he informed me of about six tours in the militia and I think one of them he said was in the early part of the year 1780 and the other tours if my memory serves me came in quick succession. He also named officers whose names I have forgotten entirely. I have no doubt I made unintentional mistakes in drawing up his declaration for at the time I may have been too much under the influence of intoxicating drinks – in which at times I indulge too freely for my own good.



Harrisonburg Va Oct 9th 1845

Sir [James L. Edwards]:

The enclosed affidavit of Dabney Freeman as to the services of Robert Chewning of Greene, I wish filed and examined together with the papers I left in your office the 20th of last month I think in Mr. Chewning's case. The decision when made will please be forwarded to me. Mr. Freeman is himself a claimant for a Pension. Yours very Respectfully
Coleman Payne



Virginia – Rockingham County towit: [9 Oct 1845]

I Dabney Freeman certify under oath I was acquainted with Robert Chewning before my service in the Revolution and the acquaintance was formed by my visiting Caroline to see my mother's relations. Robert Chewning and myself met in the war near Williamsburg in the fall of 1780 and from that time till the surrender of Cornwallis were in almost daily intercourse except when our drafts expired. I think Mr. Chewning served his tour during my six month's tour in the fall of eighty – one of those tours the first I think he served was under Cap. Tyler also and acquaintance of mine – and his company was attached to was during the three months – which that draft expired I think Chewning returned home and not long afterwards came down again under Cap. Sutton I think and served about three months with my company and others and we were then discharged – in the Spring of '81. I was with Mr. Chewning again near Williamsburg at a place called "Mobin Hills" but I cannot name his Captain – though at the time I knew him for we were together some time their was afterward another tour made in the fall of '81 and I again saw Mr. Chewning on York River but I cannot say how long he served or under whom he served. He was however a private and I saw him again at Hampton near the Bay. Mr. Chewning I always understood left Caroline and moved near the Blue Ridge – but I cannot say whether such is the fact. I never saw him but twice after the war broke and he was then in Caroline. If yet alive he must be a very old man for he was much my senior, he was a man grown in the War. Dabney hisXmarkFreeman

Rockingham August 2 1846

Please write me word whether Coleman Payne has drawn the pension claim of Robert Chewning of orange and if he has not what is the chance of getting it as he is very much in want of it and By so doing you will much oblige your most Humbel Sirvant [signed] Alexander Whitelow
Not Be when you write direct your letter conrds Store post office Rockingham County virginia
To the pension a gent Washington

Rockingham October 21 1846

Dear Sir [W. M. Selden, US Treasurer]

I am sorry to be so troublesome as it regards Mr. Robert Chewning's pension claim that Mr. Colman Payne informed me that from the proof of Mr. Chiles that the claim had passed the old man is a farther and law of mine and is in very much Need and if there is any thing coming it would be very

Excepabel the old man has made me a power of Attorney to do all his buisness please write me word wheather mr Payne can Be relide on or not and by so doing you will much oblige your most Humble Servant
[signed] Alexander Whitelaw
Note Be if you write direct your letter to conrods Store Rockingham County Post office/ virgin

Greean County August 26 1849

Mr Peter Hagner [a pension agent in Washington DC]

Dear I sent on a pension Claim Sum time a go of mr Robert Chewnings of the county of Orange and Never heard what was done with it please inqire wheather he was intiteled to it or not he proved that he did Searve upwards of twelve months in the regular Service and the capttins that he was under and at what place and what carnals [colonels] and was at the seage of yourk when that was taken and I should think if others was intiteled to draw a pension he ought to draw one also he is now 91 years old Please write me wheather thear can Be any thing got as he is in want of it and if nothing can be had please return the papers Back to me at Ruckersville Post office greean County I am willing compensate our for your trouble
I am your most Humble Servant [signed] Alexander Whitelaw

State of Virginia } SS:
Greene County }

This day Elisha Chewning personally appeared before me Anthony Thornton a justice of the peace and made oath, that he is the Son, and Executor of Robert Chewning Dec'd. who died in the County of Orange Va. That his father Robert Chewning was reputed to have been a revolutionary Soldier, and that he has frequently heard his father speak of his services in the Revolution, that he remember, other incidents, but cannot state them positively. He is well convinced his father rendered service. He also states that his father made application during his life for a Pension, but the same was not decided during his life. He will also state that his father was a man of unimpeached veracity, and ever bore, a good character, of which he can obtain unquestioned evidence. His Father made during his life, a Declaration in Open Court, stating his services and he beleives but for the bad reputation of one Coleman Payne who was then his agent, the Department at Washington would have believed his statement, and paid his claim in accordance with the regulations.

Sworn and subscribed before me this 12 day of March 1851.



The Hon'l. Comm'r of Pensions will please give to my agent and attorney Ben A. Pritchett of Stanardsville Greene County Virginia any information in regard to my father's claim & oblige
Very Respectfully Yours.
[signed] Elisha Chewning

Stanardsville Greene Co Va/ 18 April 1851.

Hon James E Heath/ Commissioner of Pensions/ Washington City DC.

Dear Sir:

Enclosed you will perceive a statement of Mr Elisha Chewning Son and Executor of Robert Chewning Dec'd. who was a Revolutionary Soldier and made application during his life for a Pension. He has papers in his possession from the former Commissioner Mr James L Edwards, who seems to have entertained some prejudice against the claim because presented by one Coleman Payne the then acting agent of Mr Robert Chewning. Mr. Chewning was a man of unexceptionable character having made his Declaration in his life time [in] accordance with the Regulations sanctioned by the Government, it is strange his pension has not been allowed him. The lapse of time precluded the possibility of positive proof, neither do the regulations require proof, when the soldier is living and makes his own statements. The fact of his not making earlier application, may be explained, & can be in the following manner, Mr. Chewning was in

good temporal circumstances, & did not desire to become a pensioner on the Government, until he became enfeebled from age & could do nothing. You will please give the claim an early examination, & much oblige the parties interested; who feel more on account of the probable disgrace, some would endeavour to draw from the rejection of the claim, than the amount involved. Please address me at this office.

Very Respectfully/ [signed] B A Pritchett.

[On 20 July 1853 Pritchett wrote to the Commissioner of Pensions asking if any action had be taken.]

NOTE: In my endnote to John Gibson's pension application R3996 I list some apparently fraudulent cases handled by Coleman Payne, as well as some other cases in which Edwards suspended the pensions probably because Payne was the agent.