

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

Pension Application of John Wingrove S11856

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

[Wingrove's pension certificate shows that he was initially awarded \$76.66 per year for 23 months service as a private beginning in the company of Capt. "Knowland." The file does not contain the original pension application, and a memo in the file states that the copies were sent to District Attorney Washington G. Singleton on 13 Aug 1839 to enable him to file suit for recovery of pension money obtained through a fraudulent application. For details of Singleton's investigation of pensioners from Lewis and other counties of present West Virginia, see pension application S6111 of David W. Sleeth and the endnote. The following is Singleton's report on Wingrove.]

Lewis county

John Wingrove aged 84 yrs. Serv'd 23 mo.

Saw Wengrove July 3, 1834 – Says he is 86 yrs. old. a native of England. landed in the United States in 1773. Settled in Loudoun County Virginia. that in the year 1778 [sic] (as well as he can now remember) he was drafted for two or three months (cant say which) and marched from Loudoun County to "Bolen Green" [sic: Bowling Green in Caroline County] thence to "Racoon Ford" [Raccoon Ford on Rapidan River] and thence on the "lines" was attached to Genl Wayne's brigade [Anthony Wayne whose Pennsylvania Continentals joined the army of Gen. Lafayette on 10 June 1781] Samuel Nolen was his Capt. Jno. Butcher his Lieut. [See endnote.] John Herriford [sic: John Hereford, pension application W1425] his adjutant and a Mr. [John] Alexander his colonel. on returning from this tour of duty he Enlisted for 18 mo. under Capt. Tarrent. marched to the same region of country Joined Lafayette and General Waynes Brigade at James Town was wounded by a Musket Ball just below the knee [probably at the Battle of Green Springs Plantation, 6 July 1781]. (He showed this wound.) after being wounded he was discharged and sent home haveing been in service this term only four months. these two tours comprise all the service he done during the Revo. War. at the Battle of Jamestown when he was wounded as before stated General Wayne lost three field pieces and had nine Waggon loads of men wounded.

Philip Cox Deputy Sheriff of Lewis county# wrote his declaration at his own house. (Cox's searched him out and told him he was entitled to a pension) gave him the same relation of his Revolutionary services that he now gives. if his declaration set forth a claim for service not here detailed he has been deluded & imposed upon by Cox. he agreed to allow Cox one years pay for getting him a pension.

this statement haveing been read and finding it all truly written as given in by me, I hereto subscribe my name.

Witness Nathan Goff [Pension Agent at Clarksburg]

John hisXmark Wingrove

A Copy from original

W. G Singleton

Respectfully Reported W. G Singleton Special Agent July 1834

#note. this Philip Cox is a son of Philip Cox [pension application S18360] & Grand son of Isaac Cox [S9215], both of whom are pensioners. See Report in their cases.

[Mr. David Houchin, Special Collections Librarian at the Clarksburg-Harrison Public Library, kindly provided me with notes given to him by Ms. Terry Ward of Daughters of the American Revolution, which were compiled by an unknown researcher from documents at the Philadelphia depository of the National Archives and Records Administration (RG21 Records of the US District Court for the Northern District of West Virginia Clarksburg Misc. Case Papers Criminal 1834-37 Box 1 E-10-05-06-3). The notes indicate that Wingrove was prosecuted for false swearing and obtaining money on false papers. In 1840 the jury

found Wingrove guilty “without intending thereby to express the opinion that the deft. is not entitled to a pension for 7 months service more or less as this jury is of the opinion that he is so entitled.” According to the notes, Wingrove had to repay \$229.98.]

Wheeling May 31st 1842

Sir I am induced, by a desire to have justice rendered to an old soldier, to address you again in relation to the case of John Wingrove, who has made repeated applications to your office for a renewal of his pension – From your letter of the 20th of April addressed to J. Hege Esq of Grave Creek Virginia, I learn that Mr Singleton reported this pension as one fraudulently obtained, and that in consequence of that report the pensioners name was stricken from the roll – I beg leave to say that from what has come to my knowledge of Mr Singletons manner of examining pensioners and their claims, rank injustice was in many instances done by depriving pensioners of their allowance – This opinion will be sustained by a reference to the pension rolls, to which the names of many, stricken off because reported by Mr Singleton to have been “fraudulently obtained” have since been restored – John Curtis [pension application S12645] pensioner under the Act of June 7 1832, of Ohio County Virginia, is an instance of this fact.

I have understood that Mr Singletons mode of determining in relation to the validity of a pensioners claim, was by closely questioning the pensioner himself and making any erroneous or inaccurate statements of his, evidence against his right to a pension – You are aware that the advanced age of the soldiers of the Revolution has impaired the vigour of their minds and in many cases rendered them entirely imbecile – How could justice be done these men if their own imperfect memories were, under the cross examination of a skillfull lawyer, to furnish, according to strict rules of evidence the proof of their claims upon the Government – Yet such was in many of the cases of discovered fraud the manner of proceeding Mr Singletons report should not then be considered conclusive evidence of fraud –

And I would here respectfully suggest whether some other more certain mode of examining the claims of pensioners than upon ex parte evidence, such as I believe Mr Singleton was in the habit of receiving, might not be authorised – Under the operation of the present system some whom I know to have performed but slight and irregular service in Western frontier forts & Garrisons receive pensions while others of the regular service are refused any allowance or afterwards stricken from the roll –

I do not know what papers or evidence of service you have of Wingroves filed in your office at the time of his being placed on the rolls, but of course at that time they were considered sufficient, and if genuine, which from my personal knowledge of Wingrove, I believe they are, they ought to be sufficient now – It is impossible for conclusive proof of his services to be obtained at this late day, his officers and companions are dead or dispersed, he knows not where, and all he has to rely on is the papers at the War Department and an affidavit of a single individual which I send herewith –

But I would state that, from my own acquaintance with Wingrove, I believe his representation in relation to his services in the Army of the Revolution to be true – I was personally an actor in some of the scenes through which he passed and know that unless himself present and a soldier in our Army he could not with such minute accuracy detail events with which I was myself familiar – He is 95 years of age and mainly dependant on charity for support – He bears about his person evidence of his service in severe and disabling wounds received in battle, sufficient evidence to convince those, who hear his ingenuous narrative, and know his honorable character, of his right, but which have been insufficient for his Government

I would therefore respectfully ask that you will review this case, and not considering the report of Mr Singleton as by any means conclusive, give the most liberal construction to the imperfect voucher of the applicant – there is no doubt in my mind that he is entitled to a pension, and but for the destruction of his evidence of service in the death of his companions in arms, he would adduce positive proof of an undoubted character – The old man is unwilling to believe that he is barred from the bounty of his country, when he is conscious of haveing served her faithfully – He cannot think that justice though tardy,

is to be refused him altogether – I earnestly solicit your most favourable consideration of the case –

Very respectfully Your Obt Serv't

Archd Woods [Archibald Woods, pension application R11825]

J. S. Edwards Esq Com'r of Pensions

Washington D.C.

NOTES:

According to L. A. Burgess's *Virginia Soldiers of 1776* (Vol. 3, 1929), "John Wingroves" was on the payroll of the Loudoun County militia company of Capt. Samuel Noland and Lt. Samuel Butcher for the period 14 May – 14 July 1782.

Wingrove's pension certificate was issued to "J. Wamsley" – Jonathan Wamsley, who fraudulently obtained many pensions and kept most of the money. On 16 Sep 1834 one Catherine Divers, 74, deposed before Jacob Coplin, a Justice of the Peace, that she knew that Wingrove had been a Revolutionary soldier. Coplin was also implicated in some fraudulent pension applications.

A letter dated 18 Sep 1840 to the Commissioner of Pensions states that Wingrove was then 94 years old and living in Ohio County (now WV) in "a state of the most abject poverty," and it inquires about the possibility of having his pension restored. Further inquiries were sent in 1842 when Wingrove lived in Marshall County (now WV) and in 1845. Wingrove's pension does not appear to have ever been restored.