

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of William Jennings S5615  
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Virginia

Elizabeth City County S.S.

On the 23<sup>d</sup> day of August 1832 personally appeared before the County Court of Elizabeth City aforesaid William Jennings a resident of said County and State in the eighty first year of his age, who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed June 7<sup>th</sup> 1832. That he enlisted in the year 1777 as a seaman on board of the Patriot under the command of Captain Richard Barron [pension application R5] and remained continually in service in that vessel till the arrival of the French fleet under Count De Grasse [Compte de Grasse, 30 Aug 1781], a short time before the Siege of Little York. Captain Barron then put him on board the French 74 [74-gun ship] called the Northumberland as a pilot, where he continued till after the arrival of that ship at Martinique to which port the Northumberland sailed after Little York surrendered [19 Oct 1781] to the combined American and French forces. At Martinique he was discharged with a letter from the commander of that Ship whose name he has forgotten to Count Roshembeau [sic: Rochambeau] requesting him to pay him said Jennings for his services, but on his return home in the Schooner Sally of Matomkin belonging to Colo Crocker of the Eastern Shore he was taken prisoner by the chatham a British fifty gun ship Commodore Douglass when being fearful that if known as a pilot he might be compelled to act in that capacity on board the Chatham or some other armed vessel belonging to the enemy, he destroy'd that letter. He was removed from the Chatham to the old Jersey prison ship at New York where he was detained four months. He was discharged from the prison ship through the interposition of a Mr. Lenox a British commissary with whom he became acquainted while Lenox was a prisoner on board the Northumberland of which he Jennings was the pilot as above stated. He returned to Virginia just before peace in low health and as soon as he was able to perform duty, he reported himself to Captain Barron who still commanded the Patriot and was again received on board that vessel as a Seaman in which capacity he served till after the proclamation of peace. 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 any agency in any State. Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid

Wm Jennings

[Certified copy.]

Council Chamber 21<sup>st</sup> Nov 1783

I do certify that William Jennings is entitled to the proportion of Land allowed Sailor of the State navy who has served three years

Th Meriwether [Thomas Meriwether]

[Governor] Benjamin Harrison

[Jennings made the following statement in the application of heirs of Francis Bright (R16).]

I William Jennings do make oath that I was intimately acquainted with Capt. Francis Bright who was an officer in the Virginia State Navy during the revolutionary war, I know that Capt. Bright entered the service at an early period of the war, and to the best of my knowledge, he continued to the end. I do not believe that he ever resigned. I know that, at the time of a fight either in 1779 or 1780, between Capt. Taylor [Richard Taylor, S25873] and a British privateer off the Capes of Virginia (in which battle I was wounded) Captain Bright was then Commander of a Brig. I know that Capt. Bright was in the service at the time of the siege of York Town, and I am confident that he continued to the end of the war, for I never heard of his having left the service, and if he had my intimacy with him would have made me acquainted with the fact. August 14<sup>th</sup> 1830

Wm. Jennings