

[Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters](#)

Pension Application of John Cox S8223

VA Sea Service/ VA Half Pay

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 9 Feb 2019.

Norfolk County to Wit:

I Samuel Watts a Justice of the Peace for the County aforesaid hereby certify that Capt. John Cox this day made oath before me that during the war of the Revolution he was the Captain and master of a merchant vessel, and that in the winter of 1780-1 on the arrival of [Gen. Benedict] Arnold in Virginia he ascended James River as high as Prince George County, where his vessel amongst other merchantmen as well as the vessels of the state were captured and destroyed by Arnolds forces [at Osborne's 20 mi below Richmond, 27 Apr 1781]. He further made oath that he knew Edward Latimer [Edward Lattimore VAS840] who was a Lieutenant in the Navy and that he knew the said Latimer was in the service at that time (in the early part of 1781) he states that he himself was in October of that year dispatched to Bermuda with passports to be delivered to Colonel Tucker of that Island, to be given to English vessels friendly to the American Cause for the purpose of enabling them to trade with this colony. [See endnote.]

I certify furthermore that Captain Cox is a gentleman of the first respectability in whose memory & veracity the utmost confidence may be places. Given under my hand and seal this 30th day of September 1833.

Sam'l. Watts J.P.

District of Columbia } SS
Washington County }

I have known Captain John Cox of Portsmouth intimately from my earliest recollection up to the present day. My recollection of his services commenced with the Revolutionary War, and he continued in the service of the State of Virginia during the whole of that memorable Contest as a Captain principally employed in the Naval Armed Vessels of the said State of Virginia on foreign service. It is also impress'd on my mind and always has been that Captain Cox was one of the party that went to Bermuda, and took from that Island all the powder to be found in the Magazine on that Island. This act was deemed one of great patriotism and gallantry, and was performed in the early part of the war. The estimation in which my father [Commodore James Barron] held the services of Captain Cox, ranked him among the most high minded, zealous and patriotic in the service, and I know no man who is more entitled to the bounty of his Country than Captain Cox. He is now quite advanced in years, being upward of [blank] years, and wherever he is known, he is esteemed a man of unblemish'd integrity. – Washington March 1834.

James Barron [W12264]

Sworn to & subscribed before me this 13th March 1834.

Virginia At a Court held for Norfolk County on the 19th day of May in the year 1834.

John Cox a resident of this County aged eighty two years in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions made by the act of Congress passed the 7th day of June 1832 made his declaration on oath, which is in these words

“On this 19th of may in the year of our Lord 1834 personally appeared before me Stephen Wright a Justice of the peace for the County aforesaid John Cox a resident of said County aged 82 years who being 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 the 7th day of June in the year of our Lord 1832.

That in the month of march in the year 1777 I was duly commissioned by the Executive of virginia a Captain in the naval armed service of said Commonwealth, and commanded several vessels at different periods of time belonging to and in the service of that state. The first vessel which I commanded was the armed Schooner Hornet, and I was engaged in a cruise of 6 or 8 months with that vessel. I was also engaged in transmitting and carrying orders and dispatches in matters concerning the war which was

then waging against Great Britain. The well known Schooner called the Sally Norton [see endnote] was purchased by the Convention and fitted into a man of war vessel of Ten Guns and a Compliment of Seventy or eighty men, which vessel I commanded for more than a year, and I was at length captured with that vessel after a short action by the British Brig of 20 guns called the Eagle and carried to Tortola [Virgin Islands] from whence I made my escape and returned to virginia in a short time. I made however two voyages with the Sally norton to the West Indies by orders of the Convention and returned to virginia and succeeded on both occasions in obtaining large supplies of munitions of war for the Troops belonging to virginia on her own State and continental establishment.

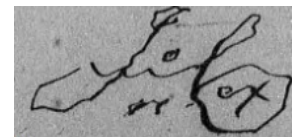
The Brig musquito [sic: *Mosquito*] was under my charge for a short time and having been sent by his Excellency Patrick Henry on a mission to the West Indies to contract for further supplies this vessel was transferred to Captain John Rogers [pension application R88] who was an officer of the said navy and holding the Rank of a Captain. I again returned to virginia & made other voyages in the West Indies in the armed Schooner of Six Guns called the "Gamecock" [*Game Cock*] and delivered other supplies for the use of our Troops consisting chiefly of powder, muskets and other Fire arms which proved of immense advantage to the further successful prosecuting the war. I continued thus actively employed until after the Battle at York Town [siege of Yorktown, 28 Sep - 19 Oct 1781] when the war was considered as finally determined and the navy nearly or entirely broken up. I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declare that my name is not on the agency of any state or only on that of the agency of the State of virginia

Jno Cox

Virginia District of Norfolk To Wit

The affidavit of Captain John Cox, taken before me John D. Urquhart a notary public in and for the District aforesaid, being explanatory of the declaration made by said Cox, before the Court of Norfolk County on the 19th day of May 1832 [sic] in order to obtain a pension, in conformity to the provisions of the act of Congress passed the 7th day of June 1832

The affiant states, that he was commissioned as stated in the said declaration, a Captain in the State Navy of Virginia during the war of the Revolution in the month of March 1777 and immediately assumed the command of the armed Schooner the Hornet, and continued in the command of that vessel in cruising and carrying despatches to and fro, until the month of February following – he then took command of the Sally Norton as stated in his declaration, and was in command of her until the year 1779, when to the Southward of Santa Cruz he was taken by the British brig Eagle – Captain Magauley, and carried to Tortola, from when he made his escape to Santa Cruz [St. Croiz, Virgin Islands] – he afterward made his way to St. Eustatia [Saint Eustatius, Netherlands Antilles], where he found the american Ship the Renown of 22 Guns commanded by Captain Robert Elliot [Robert Elliott] and took passage in her for the United States. From the best reflection, that this affiant can bestow, he is certain that the Brig Musquito was under his charge during a period of not less than four months. The next vessel he took charge of was the naval state Schooner of six guns called the Gamecock – affiant commanded that vessel from the early part of 1781 – To wit, from the month of March or April of that year until about a month after the Siege of York, when he returned to the United States with a full supply of munitions of war, which he safely delivered – and affiant continued thus actively engaged until the termination of the war.



Treasury Department./ 12 June 1834.

I hereby certify that it appears by the records of this office that Capt. Richard Taylor [S25873] commanded the Virginia State Schooner Hornet on the 6th Aug't. 1776 and that Capt. John Harris [R41] was ordered to take command of the Virginia State Brig Musquetto 24 Oct. 1776. I also certify that the Virginia Navy Journal from which the above information was obtained only comes down to the 7 April 1780.

Francis A. Dickins.

Gosport Navy Yard June 18th 1834

Sir Having known you intimately since the year 1800, it gives me pleasure to contribute in any manner to your convenience, or your interest and I state for the information of those to whom you may apply, that your conduct has been irreproachable, and your standing in society equal to that of any other of the same community. In corroboration of the above, it may be proper to state that for a great portion of the above time, you have commanded vessels out of this port, to the satisfaction of your employers, and have been since 1821 employed at this yard, where your conduct has met the approbation of it's several commanders I am respectfully your ob. ser./ L. Warrington
Captain John Cox/ Gosport

Norfolk Borough

At a Quarterly Session Court continued and held the 30th day of June 1834 John Cox, a resident of Norfolk County aged eighty two years in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions made by the act of Congress passed the 7th day of June 1832 made his declaration on oath, which is in these words: "State of Virginia, Norfolk Borough, to wit:

On this 30th day of June in the year of our Lord 1834 personally came and appeared before the court of Norfolk Borough John Cox, a resident of the County of Norfolk aged 82 years and upwards, being first duly sworn according to Law, doth on his oath make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions made by the act of Congress passed the 7th day of June 1832. That in the month of March in the year 1777 during the Revolutionary war, I was duly commissioned by the Executive of Virginia a Captain in the Naval Armed service of said Commonwealth, and at different periods of time, commanded several Vessels, belonging to and in the service of that State. Immediately on receiving my Commission I assumed the command of the armed Schooner the Hornet and continued in the command of that Vessel in cruising and carrying dispatches until the month of February following, and I soon after took the command of the schooner Sally Norton of Ten guns and a complement of 70 or 80 men. This vessel continued under my command until the year 1779 when to the southward of Santa Cruz, I was captured after a short action by the British Brig Eagle of 20 Guns, commanded by Captain Magauley and carried to Tortola; In a short time made my escape from that Island and after safely making my way to St. Eustatia, I there found the american ship the Renown of 22 Guns, commanded by Captain Robert Elliot and I was promptly accommodated with a passage in that vessel and safely reached the United States. I had prosecuted however with the Sally Norton by orders of the convention, two voyages in the West Indies and successively returned to Virginia with large supplies of munitions of war, for the use of the Troops belonging to Virginia on her own State and Continental establishment. The Brig Musquito was subsequently under my command for a period of not less than four months, and she was then transferred to Captain John Rogers of the said State Navy of Virginia, with whom I was well and intimately acquainted. The next and last vessel I took charge of was the Naval armed schooner of six Guns call'd the "Game Cock" which vessel I commanded from early in March 1781 until about a month after the close of the seige of York Town when I returned to the United States with a further and large supply of munitions of war – which I safely delivered and I was then actively employed until that period. The war being considered as closed. And I do further swear and certify that the only evidence of which I am aware & which I can at this distant period procure of my services as a Captain in the said State Navy of Virginia is that of Commodore James Barron now of the United States Navy whom I well & intimately knew during the war of the Revolution. My commission I cannot produce and according to my best impressions it was lost at the time of my Capture by the British Brig Eagle as already stated. I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity, except the present and declare that my name is not on the agency of any state or only on that of the Agency of the State of Virginia Jno Cox
Sworn to in open court on this 30th day of June 1834 Jno William"

Before me Merit Jordan a Notary Public in and for the County of Norfolk Personally appeared George Younger, an aged inhabitant of the County aforesaid, who being duly sworn, states that in the first of the Revolutionary War in 1775 he enlisted in the Naval Service under the command of Lieut. John Smith of the Marines. Deponent then served three years, less two months, on board of the Brig Independence, Captain Matthews, and then shipped on board of the Schooner Dolphin Capt. Tho. Bryant [Thomas Bryant] of the Virginia State Navy. Affiant was crippled in an action fought between that Vessel & some British Barges off Tangier Island, and the marks of the wounds are still visible.

Affiant knew the armed Brig Musquitoe well, she was commanded by Capt. John Rogers and carried 12 or 14 guns. He also knew the Schooner Game Cock, she was a small Vessel of the same class with the Dolphin, and carried 6 or 8 guns. Both Vessels belonged to the Va. State Navy, and tho' affiant knew the Game Cock well, yet he cannot at this distant period call to mind the name of her commander. And further he saith not. [20 June 1834] (Signed) George hisXmark Younger

Extract from a letter received from John W Murdaugh Esq Portsmouth Va. dated 19 Oct 1834 in answer to the letter of the Sec'y of the Treasury respecting Thomas Ewell's [Thomas Ewell R14502] claim. "May I enquire, how, Capt. John Cox of this town obtained a pension for services as a Captain in the Virg'a. State Navy. This must be a mistake. I have conversed very many times with Capt Cox on the subject of the War, & know the fact from his own declarations that he never rendered military services except as a volunteer militia for a few days at a time. In some one of my cases he has given an affidavit which shews that he never was in the service."

The above respectfully referred to the Secretary of War./ Treasury Department./ 22^d Oct. 1834.

Portsmouth Virga/ Nov'r 4th 1834

J. L. Edwards Esq

Sir I wish it distinctly to be understood, that in my former communication relative to Capt Cox pension, that I did not design to charge him with having committed a fraud. Capt Cox is now 82 or 83 years of age, is a man of strong mind for that age, & is of an irreproachable character – he is a gentleman of the greatest respectability, & would not I am sure knowingly subscribe to any thing improper, which he understood to be so. I have frequently conversed with him upon the subject of the Revolutionary war & have enquired of him as to the service of officers in the State Navy, and never except in two instances could I obtain any information from him relative to Navy officers, for he always said that he knew very little of the Navy. I have heard him tell of his sailing during the whole war in the employ of merchants. I refer you to an affidavit of his, on file in the Executive Dept. at Richmond with the papers of the application of Lieut Sam'l. Latimer for Land bounty rejected about 8 or 10 months ago – and also to another affidavit of his on the records of the court of Norfolk County (at this place) certifying as to the services of Capt Robert Elliott Capt. Cox will not say that he ever held a commission in the Va Navy. If so the Executive Journal of this State will shew it if he were commissioned in 1778 or 1779 as is expressed in his declaration He is very deaf, and I am confident he did not understand the declaration from hearing it read. There are several old men here who knew Capt Cox as the Master of a merchantman during the war – Wm Wilson Esqr – Capt Wm Moffat – Major S Wyatt & others

I am very respectfully/ Yr Ob Sert./ J W Murdaugh

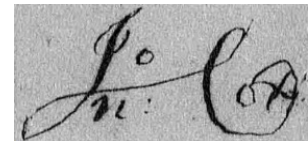
P.S. The certificate referred to in Tho. Elliot's case was not Capt. Cox' but was Capt Moffats but the affidavit in Latimer will shew the fact that Capt Cox was not in the Navy ever[?]

Gosport Virginia/ Feb'ry 7th 1835

Sir [J. L. Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions], On Mr Vincents return to Norfolk some weeks ago, he stated that in an interview with you at Washington on the subject of your letter to me of the 10th November last, the difficulty which occurred in your mind originated from an affidavit executed by me professing to establish the services of Lieut Edward Latimer, the statements of which when compared with the declaration filed by me, in support of my pension were supposed by you to be contradictory with each

other. I have not as yet had the means of ascertaining the contents of the affidavit alluded to though I had every reason to expect, from what Mr Vincent told me that a copy would have been furnished me, and I could then have offered such explanations, as would I flatter myself have been satisfactory to your department. He states to me that the discrepancy consisted in this that in the affidavit, I represented that in the year 1781 I commanded a merchant vessel &c. whereas in my declaration, I represented myself at or about the same time as commanding one or more vessels in the State Navy of Virginia. now I do in the most solemn manner assure you, that I never authorised or intended to sanction any such statement to be made, as that in 1781 I commanded a merchant vessel, the statement is wholly inaccurate, though I might safely confide in the general custom of that day, for it is a fact known to many of the survivors of the Revolution, that many very many of our Naval Officers being without employment were obliged to engage temporarily in the merchant services as a means of support. I was not so engaged and I therefore disclaim it. My sence of hearing is very defective, and I can only infer, that the statement was the result of misconception, on the part of the gentleman (Mr Murdaugh) at whose instance my affidavit was taken, and who in the haste of transcribing it, no doubt misunderstood the purport of my remarks. my attention was drawn to the single inquiry, whether I knew Lieut Edward Latimer to have been in the service in 1780.81. I recollected the fact well, and I stated to Mr Murdaugh that he was attached to one of the small vessels captured by the British forces in James River during the invasion of Arnold, that I myself Commanded a small State Vessel, which had only recently been turned from the stocks, that she was at that time ballasted with flour, and that I was on my way to Williamsburg to receive my final orders to proceed on my destination, which I did not then know, though I had every reason to believe, that I should have been ordered on the voyage, which I afterwards performed in the Game Cock my vessel was however captured or destroyed as was the greater part of our little fleet, and I was shortly thereafter ordered to repair to the Eastern Shore of Virginia and take charge of the first vessel I might find ready for sea, and proceed with all possible alacrity to Bermuda with Mr Crew bearer of dispatches to Colonel Tucker. I will add that I found the armed schooner the Game Cock and with this vessel I proceeded in the execution of my orders, and returned to Virginia with this same vessel some short time after the surrender of Little York loaded with munitions of war as stated in my declaration. In this last document I stated that Commodore Barron [James Barron W12264] whom I personally knew as a midshipman and aid to his father Commodore James Barron [VAS1949] during the war of the Revolution, was the only witness whom I recollected that could establish my services as a Captain in the State Navy of Virginia during that period. The Commodore I am informed is now in Washington and I intreat you Sir to obtain a personal interview with him and by a personal examination ascertain to what extent my statements are true. This course will be soothing to my feelings and will save me from the humiliation of [illegible word] having it supposed that my conduct in bringing myself to the notice of your department has been instigated by any other than correct and honourable motives.

If I now appear before you as a suppliant, it is to vindicate those motives from improper imputations, and that I may be permitted at least to go from this transitory life, short as must be the space now allotted to me, with a reputation as unsullied as that life has been long and eventful. With every sentiment of Respectful consideration. I am yr Obedt Servt

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. W. Murdaugh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a circular flourish at the end.

[J. W. Murdaugh wrote to the Pension Commissioner on 3 Apr 1835, "I am certain & positive that I correctly wrote what he said."]

Norfolk, March 10th 35

My dear Sir, In reply to your enquiries I take much pleasure in stating that, in a particular conversation with the late Comd're. Samuel Barron [R6] in relation to you he speaks in high terms of your services as a Capt'n. in the Virginia State Navy during the Revolutionary War particularly in repelling an attack made

by a superior force on your Vessel which, however was renew'd, & you finally vanquish'd – but the gallant resistance made by you was well deserving the highest commendation which you rec'd. Comd're Barron mentioned in the Course of Conversation that as you were in the same service, he had an opportunity of observing, & knowing your Valuable services to our Country

Cat'n. Jno. Cox

I remain with great respect, Yr. Ob. Svt./ E. P. Kennedy Cap'n. U.S.N.

Portsmouth May 14th 1835

To Mr Edwards/ Sir After waiting with great anxiety for several months to learn our final determination respecting the pension of my Father I have taken the liberty to address a few lines to you on the subject and beg the favour of you to relieve us of the very unpleasant state of suspence in which we have been so long, I deeply regret that my Father should have apply'd for a pension as he had been able to live so long without it I trust he would still have done so, but considering it as justly due him as others he thought it right that he should have it,

The greatest uneasiness I feel on the subject is that my Father should be supposed to wish to defraud the Government of a pension of 480 dollars a year a man who has lived to the great age of 82 years without the breath of slander against him should be at last supposed to be so base, it is truly distressing to every member of his family but much more so to himself I have no doubt it will shorten his few days a great deal from the effect it has already had on him, he says in reference to Mr Murdaugh's certificate that he positively declares he never mentioned his being in a merchant vessel at the time he alludes to, He has received from his agent Mr Vincent 680 dollars which he has used, and he has no way of repaying it himself but I have some property and you may rest assured that the last cent I possess should be sacrificed for the honour of my Fathers name, I feel pride in saying that whatever may be thought of him at a distance that at home where he is best known no evil will ever be attributed to him, I shall ever feel gratefull for the forbearance you have used in his case, and hope sir you will excuse the trespass I make on your time the cause I hope will be my apology

I remain very respectfully &c &c/ Ann P Swift

[The above is only part of the extensive correspondence relating to whether Cox deserved a pension as a military officer. The following documents indicate that the decision was decided in his favor.]

Pension Office/ January 20, 1844

It is hereby certified that on an examination of the case of John Cox, deceased, it appears that he was a Captain in the Virginia State Navy during the revolution; that the case is embraced by the act of the 5th of July 1832, entitled "An act to provide for liquidating and paying certain claims of the State of Virginia;" and that the claim of his daughter and only surviving child, Ann P. Swift, of Virginia, under said law ought to be allowed. The half-pay will commence on the 22^d. of April 1783 [formal end of the war], at the rate of Two Hundred and Forty Three Dollars and thirty three and one third cents per annum, and cease on the 17 of December 1837, when he died; and all payments made to said Cox as a Pensioner or his daughter after his death, under the act of June 7, 1832, at the rate of \$480 per annum will be deducted from the amount payable under the act of July 5, 1832. the amount is to be paid to Frederick Vincent, attorney of the said Ann P Swift, Adm'r.

Approved/ Secretary of War

Commiss'r. of Pensions

Pension Office/ July 18, 1844.

I certify that I have examined the claim of Ann P. Swift, administratrix and only heir of the late John Cox, deceased, who asks that the amount may be refunded to her which was deducted when her claim under the act of July 5th 1832 was settled in January last. By a recent decision of the Secretary of War, the receipt of a pension under the act of June 7 1832, is no bar to the receipt at the same time of half-pay under the act of July 5, 1832, entitled "An act to provide for liquidating and paying certain claims of the State of Virginia;" I am therefore of the opinion that the amount paid under the act of June 7, 1832 in

the case of said John Cox, deceased, and deducted as above stated, should now be refunded to said administratrix and heir Ann P. Swift, at the rate of four hundred and eighty dollars per annum from the fourth of March eighteen hundred and thirty one to the seventeenth of December eighteen hundred and thirty-seven, when said Cox died. The same is payable to Frederick Vincent, Esq'r. of Norfolk, Virginia, attorney of Mrs. Swift.

Approved/ Secretary of War.

Commissioner of Pensions.

[The following are from [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia.](#)]

Virginia Norfolk County to wit


The Affidavit of Commodore James Barron of the United States Navy taken before the subscriber a Justice of the Peace in and for the County of Norfolk in the State of Virginia.

The Affiant being duly sworn states as follows. I have known Captain John Cox of Portsmouth well and intimately from my earliest recollection to the present day. The said Cox served in the War of the Revolution as a Captain in the Naval armed Service of Virginia during the whole of that memorable Contest principally on foreign service, and the impression on my mind is very vivid that Captain Cox was one of the party who went to Bermuda, and took from the Island all the Powder to be found in the Magazines of the said Island. The act was always spoken of as one of great patriotism and gallantry.

From the unbounded confidence reposed by my father (who was the Commander in Chief of the Naval Armed Vessels of Virginia) in the great personal bravery of Captain Cox, and the many important services rendered by him to the Cause, I say with great pleasure adding my own personal knowledge of the fact that no man is more entitled to the bounty of his Country than he is.

Capt Cox was in Service anterior to the year 1778 and he continued actively employed throughout the whole War.

[20 Sep 1835]



Memorial and petition of John Cox to his Excellency L. W. Tazewell Esq'r Governor of Virginia [31 Mar 1834 - 30 April 1836] and The Executive Council of Virginia

Your Petitioner respectfully represents that some time in the Spring of the year 1777 he was duly Commissioned as a Captain in the Naval armed service of Virginia and commanded several vessels of war at different periods belonging to and in the service of the State.

Near the close of the year 1778 your Petitioner was appointed Agent of the State of Virginia in the Islands of Martinique and Guadaloupe (by the then Governor Patrick Henry Esqr.) for the purpose of purchasing such articles as were wanted for the military then in Service. After performing these duties your Petitioner returned to Virginia and shortly after was employed in superintending the fitting out, of new Vessels for the State, from that period, untill the close of the war repeated voyages were made, and arms, and ammunition were brought in by your Petitioner for the use of the State of Virginia which were generally purchased by the American Agent Mr. Bingham Commadore James Barron was Commissioned Commander in chief of the Navy of Virginia in the year 1780 from which time most of the duties performed by your Petitioner were under his supervision and orders

Your Petitioner having continued actively employed in the Service of the State untill the close of the war Respectfully prays, that the Bounty promised by the state of Virginia in Land may be awarded to him agreeable to his rank as a Captain in the Virginia State Navy for the war Your petitioner is undable to produce his Commission which has been lost

All which is respectfully submitted

[Certified 20 Nov 1835]



U.S. Navy Yard
Philadelphia 20th March 1837

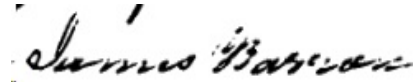
My dear Sir I have this moment received your letter dated the 15 instant by Captain Ivey, and hasten to reply to it.

It is painful to me in the highest degree to learn that such a patriot in our revolution and such a good man on all occasions through life as Captain Cox has always proved himself to be, should now meet with such difficulties in recovering his just claims, as he has done.

How can this nation boast of its wealth, and the payment of its debts, while so many of the revolutionary officers claims remain yet unsatisfied, let the statesman of the day look to this, history will record their doings in those matters, and I apprehend not much to their credit.

My Fathers Commission begins with these words, The Commonwealth of Virginia to James Barron Esquire greeting &c &c &c, and I can also tell you that our officers when abroad in those days were not very sage in their official characters, and therefore were not over tenacious of their titles

Very sincerely your friend & Servant James Barron
To Frederick Vincent Esq'r/ Richmond Va.



Norfolk March 27th 1837

Sir [Frederick Vincent Esqr/ Norfolk In answer to uour question, whether officers are addressed as Esquires,

I have to state, that since I have been an officer in the navy, I have been frequently given that title, and I have often know officers both of the Army & Navy, to have been addressed in the same way.

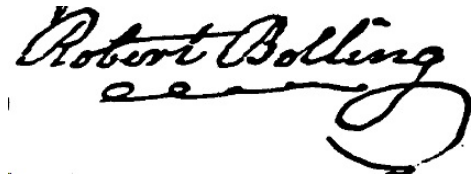
Respectfully your obt srt/ Foxhall A Parker/ Captain US Navy

Town of Petersburg to wit:

The affidavit of Robert Bolling [S6689] of Petersburg now aged seventy eight years taken before me [undeciphered] Branch an Alderman of said Corp[oratio]n

The deponent being duly sworn states that he was intimately acquainted with Capt'n John Cox of Portsmouth when deponent first knew him, as this deponent understood and belive'd, was a captain in the naval services of Virginia during the Revolutionary War – that from the time he became acquainted with the said Cox which was in the year 1777 until the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783 the said Cox was actively and usefully employ'd in procuring ammunition and supplies for the West Indies for the use of the State of Virginia, and in one of these expeditions as was generally understood acted with distinguish'd gallantry and great enterprise. The deponent further states that he has known the said Cox from his early youth, and has always entertained the highest opinion of his [undeciphered word] worth, and public services during the said war.

[28 March 1837]



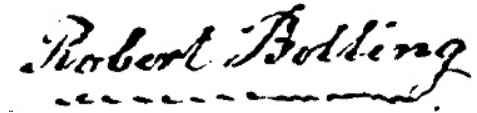
1837 May 17th This claim rejected [Gov.] David Campbell

Town of Petersburg/ To Wit: May 23 1837

The affiant being duly sworn states that in his original affidavit taken on the 28th day of last month [sic] before Thomas Branch Esquire he affirmed that he had been well and intimately acquainted with Captain John Cox of the Virginia state Navy during the Revolutionary War and that the said Cox rendered very efficient aid by his gallantry and efforts during the whole of the memorable and forever to be remembered contest from the period when he first became acquainted with him to wit in the year 1779 or before and that he continued thus actively employed as the affiant believes and always understood until the close of the war in the year 1783. The affiant now adds that he himself when a youth in the year 1778

enlisted in a Troop of Cavalry commanded by Captain Thomas Nelson of York Town (previous thereto a General of the Militia) & marched to Philadelphia where after some time he the affiant with the rest of the troop was discharged & returned to Petersburg in Virginia about Sep'r 1778 and was subsequently himself appointed Captain of a Troop of Cavalry in which service he continued until the capture of Cornwallis at Little York in Virginia. Affiant further states that, as he has above stated, his acquaintance with Captain Cox commenced about 1779 or before, he now thinks about 1778 after his return from Philadelphia, and had opportunity of appreciating the character of the services rendered by Cap'n Cox when commanding one or more armed vessels in the service of the State until the close of the war in 1783.

And further the affiant saith not.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert Bolding". The signature is written in dark ink and has a decorative flourish at the end.

1838 March 26. This claim is allowed as a Captain in the State Navy from 15th May 1777 to Nov 3 1783
David Campbell

NOTES:

After the Continental Congress banned trade with British colonies that remained loyal, Col. Henry Tucker negotiated with Benjamin Franklin for an exemption for Bermuda. On 14 Aug 1775 Tucker allowed two American ships to take 100 barrels from the Royal Powder Magazine.

E. M. Sanchez-Saavedra, *A Guide to Virginia Military Organizations in the American Revolution 1774-1787* (The Library of Virginia, 1978) lists John Cox as Captain of the Sally Norton and the Game Cock, both of which were cruisers or privateers, not in the Virginia Navy. "These constituted a class of privately owned armed vessels, carrying from one to three masts, which were used for patrolling, blockade-running, and raiding merchant ships. Approximately one hundred privateers from Virginia were given letters of marque during the war, but only about sixty-five can be positively identified." (p. 163)