

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Martin Deer S8311

VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 11 Sep 2013.

Virginia Madison County To Wit:

On this 24th day of April 1846 personally appeared in open court before the court of said county Martin Deer a resident of the county aforesaid aged 89 years next October 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 the 7th 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated amounting to nine months in the Virginia Militia being three tours of three months each; that his first tour began last September 1776 and that he returned home after the christmas of that year and was at the time of serving said tour in his twentieth year, his birth day being in October about the beginning of his first tour, that said company was cald out by one Captain Frank Miller [Francis Miller] then living on Robinson River in Culpeper then, now Madison, that one James Thomas was Lieutenant and Charles Gadson was Ensign of said Company under Captain Miller; that he was drafted in said tour and performed the same on his own account; that he was then a resident of his present neighbourhood then cald Culpeper County and has ever since resided in the same; that his company was as before said cald out the last of September 1776 and marched from Culpeper courthouse to the lower country passing over orange Spotsylvania Carolina and Essex Countys, that his Company in marching down was Stationed for some time at Port Royell [sic: Port Royal] in Caroline County and thence on to Essex where his Company remained for some considerable time does not recollect how long but thinks it was over three weeks, from Essex his Company went to Richmond then a small place where they remained a short time and then marched on to a place called "Mobbin Hills" below Richmond [sic: Malvern Hill 15 mi SE of Richmond]; that there he found a great many soldiers Camped and were from various counties in the State; that he formed no acquaintance with any of them and therefore cannot give the names of any of the officers in command that two other companies were marched from Culpeper at the same time and were with his own Company during the whole Said two Companies were under Captain Rice and Kirtley he thinks; that at "Mobbin Hills" his Company remained for four weeks as near as he can say and were then marched to Williamsburg then the Capital of Virginia and there remained till the tour expired and he came home; that he does not recollect at this distant day the precise time of his stay at Williamsburg but whilst there made frequent marches towards the Bay in search of the enemy then burning the property of the citizens near the shore; that of this tour he is positive and remembers Joseph Snyder Moses Phillips and Michael Snyder Thomas Patison [possibly Thomas Patterson] Henry Chiles were with him under Miller and Messed together and he thinks returned home also together that one James Patrick was quatermaster of said company under Miller that nothing of remarkable character occurd during said tour was in no Battle and saw none of the British forces; that his company had no Colonel attached to it but was under the command of one in the lower country whose name cannot call to mind. That as before said he reached home after the christmast of 1776; he thinks it was the first week in January 1777 were four days coming home. That he remained at his home in Culpeper County till the spring of 1779 when his turn again came round and he served another tour of three months from his native County Culpeper, he was then going on twenty two years of age and a man full growed; that Captain James Smith raised said Company and Samuel Grove was Lieutenant of the same and Charles Gooding was Ensign and he thinks James Patrick was again quarter master for said company; that his Company marched from Barnetts ford in Culpeper County the fifteenth of January 1779 and went direct to Williamsburg and there took up head quarters and were stationed there with a great many other Soldiers during all said tour except a visit to Norfolk and one to Jamestown; that after his Company had been at Williamsburg upwards of a month they were marched to Norfolk and returned in ten or twelve days to Williamsburg and afterwards made a short trip to James town [Jamestown] where they remained only a few days and returned back to head

quarters at Williamsburg and there remained until the tour expired; that he understood the soldiers was stationed there to guard the seat of government from the enemy and that nothing of a remarkable character occurred during their stay at Williamsburg; men were frequently whipped for disorderly conduct, but he saw no one shot by command; that at Williamsburg there must have been between two and three thousand militia men at various times during said tour; that he remembers Captain Mars Company from Orange was with his own during said tour and one other Company from Culpeper under Captain Bohannon [Ambrose Bohannon]; that in going to Williamsburg his Company marched through Orange, Louisa, Hanover, New Kent and Charles City counties but they did not tarry long in either of them and marched direct to Williamsburg; that John Miller, John Deer, Ambrose Weaver, Lewis Graves, Henry Peters, Benjamin Haskell were Privates under Captain Smith and were from his neighbourhood in the said county of Culpeper all of whom he knew before this tour to Williamsburg; that his Company was not associated with any portion of the regular army during his first or this his second tour that if the regulars were at Williamsburg he had no knowledge of the fact because it was said at the time the forces out was composed of militia from Virginia entirely; that his Company were discharged at Williamsburg verbally and he together with John Deer, Ambrose Weaver and Lewis Graves came on home together reached home to the best of his recollection between the middle of April & first of May 1779. that of this tour he is also very positive and cannot be mistaken in it the particulars of which he has given to the best of his memory; that he received no written discharge from either his first or second tour; that verbal discharge was thought sufficient and he knows of no one in service ever applying for a written discharge; that he remained at his home in Culpeper County Virginia till the Spring of 1781 when he was again drafted and served on other tour in the militia of three months duration; that during the same his company was at the Battle of Petersburg [Battle of Blandford Hill, 25 Apr 1781] between the British and the Americans that he was in that Battle and the fighting was very hard and was attached to General Muhlenberg [sic: Peter Muhlenberg's] Brigade in rear of it; that said company was called out by Captain Mark Finks [pension application R3551] of Culpeper County whose descendants still resides in Madison County, Orange County that said Captain was considered very brave man and displayed his courage at the afore said Battle of Petersburg; that of said Company one William Dickens was Lieutenant and served as such during the said tour; that he was acquainted with said Lieutenant both before and after this tour; that said Company marched from Culpeper County to Louisa Ct'y. about the middle of March 1781 he was then in his 24th year; at Louisa C. House his company remained a week or so for other companies then marched to "Mobbins Hills" at which place he was stationed at head quarters till a day or two before the Battle of Petersburg whether his company had been ordered that after the Battle of Petersburg his company retreated to Chesterfield Ct. House and then marched on homeward passing through Henrico eastern portion of Louisa County and were discharged in Louisa County up to which his company had retreated to avoid the pursuit of the enemy that he saw General Lafayette troops during said tour his Company was at Williamsburg and at Richmond and various places on James River whilst stationed at "Mobbins Hills" that Major [Nathaniel] Welsh from Culpeper County was an officer in said Company but he has forgotten the name of the Ensign; he distinctly recollects his neighbours Moses Hart, George Clarke, Larkin Clarke, John Deer, Nick Yager [Nicholas Yager], Samuel Smith, John Rowzee, Andrew Deer, George Lamon were privates with him under Finks and were from his neighbourhood all of whom are now dead that in going to the lower country his company first camped at a place called Broad Waters then went on to "Cabin point" [on James River in Surry County] thence on to "Mobbins Hills" that there were two other companies from Culpeper during said tour and were with his own nearly the whole of it. they were under the Command of Captain Fisher Rice [Fisher Rice] and Captain Rucker that of said third tour is positive and reached home the 24th or 25th of June 1781 and never afterwards entered the army; during this stay in the lower country was associated with other militia companies the names of which he cannot recollect; he never was a substitute for any one having served all three of his tours for himself and never hired a substitute to take his place because he had no family to leave behind him; that afterwards he married and has ever since lived in his present neighbourhood then Culpeper now Madison County.

That he would have applied for his pension before could he have found any person willing to under take it for him that he is a desendent of a German family that settled early in Culpeper County and has for many years been confined at home so as to exclude himself from Society and he doubts not had he been able to have gone from home he might have induced some one of his neighbours to have made his application years ago. He was however not much in need and thought but little about it for he fought at the time for love of Country and not for any pecuniary reward.

He hereby relinquishes evry claim to a pension or annuity except the present and declares his name is not on the pension roll of the agency in the United States



Questions and Answers taken in open court the 24th April 1846

1. Where and in what year was you born?

Answer. I was born on the Robinson River in Culpeper County in October 1757 near the old Dutch church built before the revolution and is yet standing in that part of Culpeper county since taken off now calld Madison.

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

Answer Yes I have and the same is herewith annexed being all the register I have had.

3. Where were you living when called into service where have you live since the revolutionary war & where do you now live

Answer at the time of my Services I lived on the Robinson River then in Culpeper County and have ever since continued to reside in the same neighbourhood where I was born & raised

4. How were you called in to service; were you drafted did you volunteer or were you a substitute and if a substitute for whom

Answer I was a drafted Soldier all three of my tours and was never a substitute for any one

5. State the names of some 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

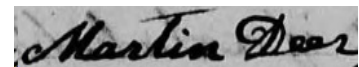
Answer during my two first tours we were not associated with any of the regulars but were with other militia companys the names of which he has forgotten except two from Culpeper as mentioned in his declaration that during his third tour his company was with the regulars at Battle of Petersburg. He refers to his declaration for the particulars of his service which he hopes will be satisfactory to the department.

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 no I never received a written discharge from either my first second nor third tour if I ever called for one I have forgotten it

7. State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighbourhood and who can testify as to your charactor and their belief of services as a soldier of the revolution

Answer I have lived ever since my infancy in my present neighbourhood and all my neighbours without any exception can speak of my charactor. I refer the department however to the court for there opinion.



Virginia Madison County To Wit

At a court held for said County this 24th of April 1846 personally appeared in open Court Mr Martin Deer and made oath the annexed leaf [see endnote] containing the register of his age is all the record he has and that he was born in October 1757 according to the first entry on the said leaf which entry is correct. Being the 4th entry to wit "Martin Deer born in October the year 1757."

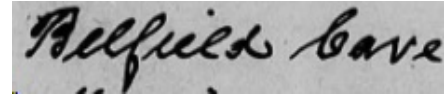


Virginia, Madison County April 24th 1846.

I can state that I know Martin Deer of this county, I think nearly thirty years; he is now a very old man, I can say for him that his standing in society is as good as any other man, and I should have as much confidence in any statement made by him, or in his veracity, as I could have in any other man I know. I have never heard his veracity called in question by any one.

Belfield Cave Clk. of Madison county

To Mr. J. L. Edwards Commissioner of pensions/ Washington

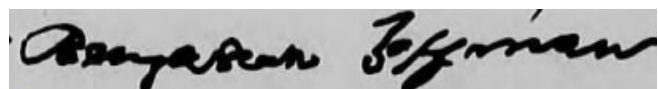


[On 20 July 1846 James L. Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions, wrote that Martin Deer's application had been rejected because of insufficient proof of service, and he suggested that the testimony of those who served with him be obtained. On 27 Aug 1846 Deer made another declaration of his services similar to, but less detailed, than the above, with the following three certificates.]

Virginia

Madison County To Wit [23 July 1846]

I Benjamin Hoffman a revolutionary soldier aged Eighty nine years next October Certify under oath I served three tours in the Virginia Militia my last tour was in the spring of 1781 under Capt Ambrus Bohanon which continued for three months we was at Mobing Hills Williamsburg Richmond and other places during said tour. Joseph Carpenter was also out in another company and so was Martin Deer, my old friend and acquaintance whom I have known from my infancy up. I know that said Martin Deer served a full tour in the summer of 1781 under Capt Finks I think. I am positive as to the tour for I saw him frequently in the lower country at Richmond James town and several other places. I have understood Mr. Deer served a tour or two before this of which I know nothing for I was not with him. He is reputed now, and always has been as a soldier of the revolution and I never heard it doubted in my life. Mr. Deer is a very old man and I have always understood him and my self were born in the same month and the same year. To wit in the month of October 1757 as be seen by my register above [see endnote] "1757" in full was put there by my self many years ago because the original [two illegible words] became defaced as will be seen; the words "57" are nearly gone. I am positive as to the tour Mr Deer served in 81 but I may mistake as to the officer; him and my self were raised in the neighbourhood not far from Madison Cthouse then Culpeper; I never have applied for a pension before the application I shall soon make for I did not know that I was entitled to the benefit of the law



Virginia Madison County To wit

This day personally appeared before me a justice of the peace in the County aforesaid Mr Benjamine Huffman aged 89 years next October and made oath to the truth of the forgoing affidavit. And I Certify the said Huffman is personally known to me; is a man of respectability and one of our oldest citizens and is believed to be a soldier of the revolution from what I have always heard.

Given under my hand and seal this 23rd day of July 1846

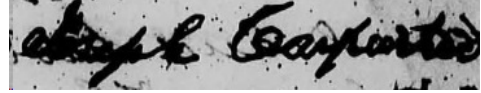
[signed] Elliott Blankenbeker J.P.

Virginia

Madison County To Wit [28 July 1846]

I Joseph Carpenter aged eighty three years next may Certify under oath I was born and raised in the neighbourhood in which old Mr Martin Deer was raised and have known him ever since my infancy. The house in which he was born is in sight of my present residence I am a revolutionary soldier myself and served a full tour as Volunteer in 1781 under Captain Elijah Kirtley in the spring of that year. I did not enter the army afterwards on my return from the same another company was immediately raised and Martin Deer went as private and served a tour in the lower country. I was not with him but know that he went and returned and further I have always understood from old soldiers that Mr Deer was at York town

and Petersburg and he is reputed by evry body so far as I know to have been in the war as a soldier. I never heard his services doubted and he is regarded by evry person in my acquaintance as such And I do not believe a more honest man ever lived I say again that Martin Deer served a tour in the lower country after my returned which was earley in the spring 81. I know nothing of other tours performed by him but believe evry statement made by him to be strictly correct for his is an old honourable man and known as such by the people of Madison

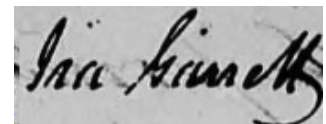


I John Gibson [pension application R3996] of Albemarle County certify; I was born and raised in Culpeper County near Madison CH, and am a revolutionary soldier. I served three tours in the Virginia Malitia two of them being for myself and the other in the place of my Father Peter Gibson. I distinctly remember my tour under Capt Miller which commenced in September 1776 and know that Martin Deer now of Madison was with me under Miller and served a full tour together in the lower country; I cannot say that Mr Deer recollects being in the same company with him, but know that on our return home we spoke of the privations we underwent during the tour under Miller for it was the depth of winter before our return. I knew Martin Deer well, we were raised about three miles apart, and had been schoolboys before the war. And I am positive in what I say respecting his being with me. We were at Port Royal in Caroline, Richmond, Williamsburg, and other places during the tour and were discharged by our officers in Williamsburg and returned to our homes in Culpeper in company with each other, and several others. I knew his Father before him and I suppose he knew my fathers family for we visited one another as neighbours. I served another tour of three months with Mr Deer in 1779 under Capt James Smith in the Militia of Culpeper and went over the ground we travelled in our former route, that tour commenced; that tour commenced the middle of January 1779 and continued for three months before our discharge; we were together daily and were messmates a portion of the time under Capt Smith; were at Williamsburg, Norfolk, & James Town together and were discharged at the first named place; all which I remember distinctly. Mr Deer was a fine soldier and good company. I think unless his memory has left him he will recollect all the facts mentioned by me. I was with him but two tours.

age 87.

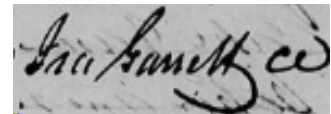


Sworn to and subscribed in open Court this 3^d day of August 1846 by the Rev'd. John Gibson
Ira Garrett Clerk C



Virginia:/ At a Court held for Albemarle county the 3^d day of August 1846

The Court now sitting doth certify that the affiant above is the Rev'd John Gibson, personally known to the court, and is entitled to the most implicit confidence, being of spotless character. In testimony whereof I Ira Garrett Clerk of said Court hath hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Court this 14th day of August 1846 in the 71 year of the Commonwealth.
[See endnote.]



To the Commis'r. of Pensions [James L. Edwards]

Madison Cty Va. Feb 25th 1847.

Dear Sir About a year ago Martin Deer of the Cty of Madison and State of Va. placed in the hands of Coleman Payne [see endnote] the proper vouchers for the recovery of a pension due the s'd Martin Deer. From the loss of confidence in the s'd Payne Mr Deer is anxious to be informed whether any papers have been filed seting forth his revolutionary services – or whether any money has been

recovered for his benefit. If the money has not been recovered or the papers have not been filed he wishes to know to what agent at Washington he can forward the proper vouchers for the recovery of his pension. Mr. Deer served in the revolution – is a very old gentleman. Your attention to the requests will much oblige an old Patriot of the revolution.

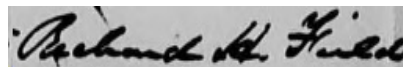
Written by a friend at the request of Martin Deer of the Cty of Madison State of Va
Direct the letter to Madison Ct House Va To Martin Deer.

[On 19 March 1847 James L. Edwards wrote to Martin Deer at Madison Court House that his claim had again been denied because the above three supporting affidavits were by men whose own pension applications had been rejected. I found no pension application for Carpenter. Hoffman failed to persuade the court of the validity of his claim, as stated below. There was a pension application R3996 filed in the name of John Gibson, which agrees with the affidavit filed above, but see the endnotes for more on this application. A 12 July 1847 letter from Edwards states that further evidence of Martin Deer's service and of the soundness of his memory was required.]

I am well acquainted with a man, who resides in Madison County Virginia by the name of Joseph Carpenter. He is an old man of considerable property and great respectability & whose veracity & integrity cannot be questioned. He is no doubt the person of that name within referred to. I am also well acquainted with a man by the name of Benjamin Huffman of Madison County, but whether he is yet living or not I do not know. I am under the impression that he at one time moved from Madison & do not remember to have heard of his returning. He was a man without property of much value. Was by trade a wagon maker, which he followed for a support. He was reputed to be an honest upright man. He is I think a much younger man than Joseph Carpenter, but I should suppose was of a sufficient age to be able to testify to the Revolutionary services of Martin Deer. I therefore presume he is the man of that name within referred to. I cannot at present bring to my mind the knowledge of a man by the name of John Gibson, whom I would suppose to be the same Gibson within referred to.

Martin Deer is a very old man residing in Madison County on a small Farm adjoining that of my sister Keeton[?]. I have not seen him for many years & have no personal recollection of him or his appearance. He had passed out of my mind for many years until I after I read the within letter. I know too little about him to speak of his reputation [three or four illegible words]. My impression is that he was always a very prudent unassuming humble man attending to his own matters alone and on a small scale & [several illegible words] a labouring man on his farm.

[Richard H. Field]
16th June 1847

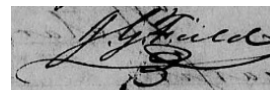


Nectarine Hill June 9th 1847

Dear Sir [John S. Barbour (1790-1855)]

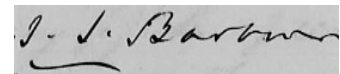
Mr Martin Dear an old revolutionist who lives near me is quite anxious to employ you to get him if you can a pension. I was at the Court House about two or three weeks ago to see you on this business but you had left for Washington. Old Mr. Dear says he entered the service in April 1781. That he was at Yorktown when Cornwallis surrendered. He went under the command of Capt Finks of this County. He remembers a good many of the fellow soldiers but knows not that any of them live. He says he knew your Father [Mordecai Barbour (1763-1846)] while in the army. Mr Dear employed a Mr Payne to attend to his claim, who has given it no attention scarcely at all, and if report be true a greater rascal lives not. I enclose to you some papers from the pension office relative to this matter. If you will undertake this claim Mr. Dear says he is willing to reward you a liberal fee. He wishes to know what the terms will be if you engage in it. Mr Edwin Booton will be in Culpeper until Monday. I wish you would let me know your determination by him that I may communicate the same to Mr Dear

Most Respectfully Yours/ J. G. Field



[On same page in handwriting of John S. Barbour]
Mem made this 1st July 1847

I rec'd this letter from Mr James G. Field while in Circuit Court was in session & referred to it as follows (in substance): That I w'd gladly render the old man any aid in my power without compensation especially as he was a Soldier under or with my father. My father was a Boy in 1781 & then entered the service in the Culpeper Militia. He was with Lafayette & [Anthony] Wayne in the Summer of 1781. was in the battles near Wmsburg, & James Town, which last battle was called "Hot Water." [sic: Battle of Hot Water Plantation 6 mi NW of Williamsburg, 26 Jun 1781; Battle of Green Springs Plantation near Jamestown, 6 Jul 1781] my father was [one or two illegible words] the Siege of York & was with the Prisoners when there & marched to Winchester. I think old Capt Griffin [Zachariah Griffin, pension application W7585] was a boy & a Soldier at the same time & he is yet alive & I referred Mr Field to him for evidence. Griffin is alive & his name is Zachariah and is a pensioner. I am also told, that Deer asserts that he voted in Feby 1789 in the [illegible word] Election in Culpeper, as he says "between old James Barbour & French Strother [James French Strother]." In this he must allude to the [two illegible words] in Culpeper between [James] Madison & [James] Monroe in which my Grandfather (old James Barbour) & French Strother in which (contrary to the Election just before it,) my Grandfather carried the election for Madison over Monroe to the 1st Congress. If Deer voted in that election the polls yet extant will show the fact and although this fact is immaterial to the pension issue, it will shew how far his statement of one [illegible word] occurrence, may be relied on either to prove or disprove both his veracity & recollection as to others. J. S. Barbour/ July 1st 1847.



I have no knowledge of Martin Deer. I will enquire of A. P. Hill esq & learn what he says. J.S.B

Sir [Colo J. L. Edwards],

Catalpa July 13th 1847

At the instance of my young & respected friend Mr James G. Field I send you this letter & its enclosures.

I do not know the facts set out in the declaration of Mr. Martin Deer – nor do I know him except by the late representation to me of others. Nor do I know what old Mr Joseph Carpenter or any other witness has sworn to of his services in the revolutionary war. No one can give testimony better worth credence than Mr Carpenter. Of his other witnesses I know nothing. Mr Deer sent me word that he was one of the voters in Culpeper County in Feby 1789 between my grand father James Barbour & French Strother – and that he inherited his fathers real estate under the laws of primogeniture two or three years before he gave that vote. Judge Field & Colo Banks have testified strongly to Mr Deers character – but this statement of the old mans presented to me a test which I applied to try his veracity to this extent. The laws of primogeniture ceased to exist in Virginia on the 1st day of January 1787, by the [illegible word] of 1785 which took effect the 1st Jan. 1787. It is hardly probable that the old man was lawyer enough to know this, & his statement of his fathers death 2 or 3 years before Feby 1789 & his inheritance under the laws of that era which gave him the right of suffrage (by being a freeholder,) is to this extent true.

In Feby 1789 the contest was between Mr Madison & Colo Monroe for the first Congress under the present constitution. Mr Madison was ostracised by what was then called the Antifederal party. French Strother had succeeded James Barbour the elder in the County Representative on the voluntary retirement of the latter many years before 1789. But on the occasion of this election, these two (Jas. Barbour & Strother,) had a fair & full trial of their strength in the popular esteem. The one exerting all his power to secure to the Confederacy the services & return of Mr Madison, the other to give effect to the arrangement at Richmond in 1788 mentioned by Mr Madison in his published letter of that era to Edmund Randolph, the object of which was to drive Mr Madison from all public [illegible word]. I have heard Mr Madison myself I know of this & of the fact that Culpeper (under my Grandfathers lead) came to his rescue, and I have heard him also say that many of the [illegible word] voters from the mountains of what is now Madison County did not speak english & cou'd not distinctly call his name or Mr

Monroes' Mr James Heasburgh Senr [?] now alive remembers that many of the voters in Feby 1789 pronounced at the polls the name of Colo Barbour others that of Mr Strother – each of those standing at the polls & the vote was put down accordingly for Madison if the voter pronounced my Grand fathers name or for Monroe if he called Strothers.

I remember Mr Madison telling me that the weather was so cold at that time & for a space of several days before it, that at the Dutch Church (& returning from it) he got his ear frost bitten, (Mrs [Dolly] Madison of your city has doubtless heard him mention the same, though he was not married for several years after) and Mr M. also said that the election day was one so cold a snowy, that the Snow in my Grandfathers Cocked hat, as he stood at the polls remained unmelted through the day. Mrs Madison can probably confirm this to you. When old Deer sent me word (by Mr Booten) that he gave his vote in the Contest of that year, Feby 1789 between “Barbour & Strother,” I knew at once to what he alluded – and to try it further I requested James Field to ask him if it was a cold & snowy day. Now on looking at the original polls between Madison & Monroe in the first column is the name of “Martin Deer” recorded for Madison. That poll I send you, but it must be returned me for it belongs to the Clerks office of this County. The notes on it I made in 1836 when I prepared my eulogy on Mr Madison published in the R. Intell'r [*Richmond Intelligencer*] of the first week in August 1836 & you will see there that I allude to the election of Feby '89 RS[?] now. Joel Early & French Strother were the Delegates to the Convention that [illegible word] the County in 1788 & the Delegates also to the Gen'l Assembly in that same year.

From all that I can learn Mr Deer must have served three tours of duty. Arnolds [Gen. Benedict Arnold's] invasion commenced 1st Jany 1781. In March April & May it was followed by that of [William] Phillips & [Alexander] Leslie – Phillips died at Petersburg in May I think 1781[on the 13th]. Then came on Cornwallis & Tarlton [sic: Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton]. My belief is that the Militia tour of duty was never less than 3 months [until] after the May Session of 1781. at that session it was reduced to “2 months only unless the relief ordered shall not arrive in time from any unavoidable accident.” See 10th Vol. Hen. Statutes at large 420 [[Hening's Statutes at Large](#)]. And my strong and conscientious belief is that this old man Deer was really & [illegible word] all truth a Soldier in the militia – that he served upwards of seven months before he returned – and I believe too that he was with my father in the march with the British prisoners from York Town after the surrender of Cornwallis [19 Oct 1781] to Winchester. He mentions to others one or two incidents that I have heard my father relate. He is a [several illegible words] uninformed old man as Judge Field & Colo R. A. Banks assure me & he could not concoct a tale which dovetails itself in with other proven facts, unless he was an artful & cunning knave; and such a character as that is utterly at war with the evidence supplied you. Having now performed my duty to others & being an[?] agent in it, I have in conclusion to ask you that if you pass his claim will you enclose the certificate to The Hon'ble Richard H. Field, near Rixeyville Culpeper County Va? James G. Field his nephew a young man of promise teaching a School & reading Law at the same time in the neighbourhood [illegible word] the county of Madison. This young man & not Mr Payne is Deers agent; Judge Field [four illegible words] rightly & safely.

I am very Resptfully (in greatest haste) Yrs. J. S. Barbour

Old Capt Griffin a pensioner remembers in April 1781 a militia-man named Deer & he knows Simeon Deer. There never was but one Simeon Deer in this or Madison County & he was not over forty in 1823 John Covington his cousin says he was not 40. Simeon Deer & John Carrington both attended the Congressional Election of 1823 & both voted on my polls. A copy is sent. That Simeon Deer cou'd not have been in the revolution. Yet there was one Deer says Griffin. Martin Deer & Capt Griffin live now as then 35 miles apart.

The polls of 1789 I will thank you to return. They belong to the Clerks office.

Sir [James L. Edwards].

Catalpa July 15th 1847.

When I wrote you yesterday I believed that Capt Griffin & Mr Covington's affidavits were sent you. The one proving that [several illegible words] Simeon Deer served in Capt Fink's Company in 1781, or was drafted out of that company in '81 the other that he was Sheriff in Culpeper for twenty years &

that Simeon Deer who voted for Congress in April 1823 was the only person of that Christian name in Culpeper & that he was too young to have been in the Revolution. I now learn that these affidavits were not taken & sent you. That Capt Griffin is willing to swear that a man named Deer served in '81 a tour of duty. That [one or two illegible words] living for many years deputy Sheriff & now a Magistrate of Culpeper will swear to the other facts above found & he was in his capacity of D Sheriff of Culpeper & [illegible word] of Simeon Deer & knew him well & his age also. Covington is the son in-law of old Capt Griffin & thinks that it was Martin Deer that his father in law knew & not Simeon. I have [two illegible words] James Field this morning to take Griffins affidavit as the old man remembers now to be [illegible word] & of course that it is not proper to leave it [one or two illegible words] as to the Christian name, then his memory is not in doubt. I have this morning rec'd your letter, which I will send Mr Field. I doubt whether any records of Culpeper for 1776 will shew the officers of malitia. From July 1775 to the month of July 1776, it is not possible that the records should have any [four illegible words] appointments. The Committee of Safety made all such appointments during the Interregnum from July 1775 to the adoption of the Constitution of Virginia, which occurred the 29th June 1776. and that Constitution when adopted by express provision retained all the Militia officers then in Service & vacancies only were to be supplied by the Govt & Council or recommendations by the County Court. I have no doubt that the Archives at Richmond must contain a roster of all the militia officers & I will advise applications to be made there, and Capt Phil Slaughter [Philip Slaughter W29886] who left the army in 1779 & in 1780 or thereabouts became deputy Sheriff of Culpeper can be called on to shew whether [illegible word] persons were in the Militia Service as officers

I have no interest or wish in the matter but that justice be done this old man, and unless he shews himself entitled in fairness & truth to the pension he seeks it of course will not be allowed him. And I think that your last letter places the demand for proof on premises so reasonable that unless he or Mr Field for him supplies the evidence now called for that he [illegible word] it not to expect success.

With all Respect yrs/ J. S. Barbour

It is quite probable that I may be in Washington in a very few days. But this is contingent on information expected to be received & apprising me of its necessity/ J.L.B

Dear Sir [Major P. Lightfoot]. Catalpa July 15th 1847.

I have been enquired of in Washington, to know whether the following persons were militia officers in Culpeper in the years 1776 1779 & 1781.

In '76

[Left column below is in different handwriting, presumably that of Lightfoot.]

unknown to me	Frank Miller	}
No knowledge whatever	James Thomas and	} Company officers
Name unknown	Charles Gadson	}

In 1779.

unknown	James Smith	}
d[itt]o	Samuel Grove and	} Commissioned officers in '79
do	Charles Goodins	}

In 1781.

No knowledge	Mark Finks and	} Commissioned officers in 81.
unknown.	William Dickerson.	}

Although you could not have known any of these persons in the times named above, I have thought it possible you may have known them personally or by tradition in a later period. If so will you say so & what you have heard of them? The only name among them that I recognise is that of Mark Finks.

Very Resp'lly yrs/ J. S. Barbour

N.B./ Our young friend James G. Field has some interest in these enquiries./ J. S. B

D Sir [James L. Edwards]

Catalpa July 22nd 1847.

Soon after the receipt of your letter I set inquiries on foot to learn the truth of the declaration filed in your office on behalf of Martin Deer.

The interest I have felt in it, is that the result of belief that honestly & fairly he is clearly [illegible word] the provisions of the pension act and the impression had [five or six illegible words] that he had served one tour of three months & 2 of two months each & that one of the latter tours was Ten days over the two months in consequence of his declaration at guarding the British prisoners from York Town to Winchester in Virg'a. I had learned from old Capt Griffin enough to satisfy me of that fact, and that he was entitled to the 6 months provision of the Act of Congress of June 7th 1832. The records of Culpeper afford no proof whatever to sustain the declaration of Mr Deer. The records to 1779 are lost & a portion lost from 1780 to 1783. But Capt W. Lewis (a pensioner) [William Lewis, S8827] says that Samuel Graves not Grove was a militia officer – that Mark Finks, (not Fink, but there is a family of the name of Finks) was a Militia officer, & that William Dickins, (not Dickerson) was his Lieut. It is also known that James Thomas was an officer in the militia at some time of the revolutionary struggle but at what time, is not known even by tradition. I addressed a letter to my respected neighbour Major P. Lightfoot soon after I got your letter & I enclose it. Major Lightfoot was just 21 years old in the election between Madison & Monroe. At 26 years of age he took [illegible word] of the Culpeper Clks office [one or two illegible words] of Colo John Jameson, (of B[?] Creek notoriety) & this was in 1794. Madison County had that year been cut off from Culpeper but Major Lightfoot was well acquainted with [illegible word] to people in the whole Country. He knows none of the parties named in your list of enquiry, & this fact casts its shade for suspicion but not, over the whole pretension of the old man.

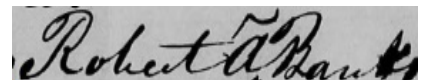
Still his character is so good & his respected supporters bear some testimony to his favour, that I w'd. reluctantly yield to the belief that he is guilty of intentional perjury. His agent is another affair. I have sent my distrust this day to Madison County & I have requested Colo. R. A. Banks to give me fairly & truly his opinion in the shape of an affidavit At present my mind is inclined to the belief that the old man, & all of us have been imposed upon. I wish that I could see his declaration. Yrs very Respt'ly

J. S. Barbour

As soon as I receive a letter from [illegible name], justifying it; I will be in Washington. I wrote him some days ago & have no answer.

I do hereby certify that I am well acquainted with Martin Deer of (this) Madison County in the state of Virginia & have known him for about Twenty years. he is a very old, very plain & very honest man – He retains his mental powers very well for a man of his age – It is generally believed that he was a Soldier in the War of the Revolution – I also was well acquainted with Mark Fink who died some 12 or 15 years ago in the County & who I always understood was a Captain in the Militia service in the Revolution from Culpeper County Virginia. Said Fink was said to have been a brave man & was a very upright one in all his relations – Given under my hand this 22nd July 1847 in the County & state above named

[Robert A. Banks]



Virginia to Wit
Culpeper County

This will certify that Captain William Lewis now in his eighty fifth year & who was in the militia service during the war of the revolution & for which he is a pensioner of the united states, made oath before me a Justice of the peace in the state of Virginia & for the county of Culpeper, that he well knew the late Captain Mark Fink & the late William Dickins (both now dead & the said Dickens died a great many years ago) that the said Fink & the said Dickins were officers in the militia for Culpeper County the year that Cornwallis was captured at Yorktown & both before & since, but how long he does not know, but he well remembers them as officers, the said Dickens being his co[?]ion. And I further certify that the said Capt. William Lewis is a citizen of fair character, and has borne through life, and now bears

the reputation of being an upright man, of respectability and integrity, and that, every way, he deserves credence as a witness.

Given under my hand and seal in my character aforesaid, this 4th day of August 1847.

James M. Broadus/ Justice of the Peace

Sir [James L. Edwards]. Catalpa Aug't. 10th 1847

I rec'd. your letter & the documents relating to the claim of old Mr Deer. I have my own misgiving of the declaration filed and the proposition to make a new one before Judge Field, without the presence of any one: may bring forth the whole truth of his pretensions, & nothing else. That he served upwards of five months, from January, 1781, to the capture of Cornwallis & the removal of the York Town prisoners, to Winchester in October & late in November 1781, I believe from circumstances and I have nothing to satisfy my mind of his service, at any other time. That he is truthful & honest, I am persuaded by the testimony of worthy persons, who testify to this effect – and the minute accuracy, with which the old man recounts to me (through another,) the incidents of the election in Feby. 1789; with the exception of a misnomer as to the parties contesting for the office of Congressman, though accurate as to the contest between the leaders in that election, shews a strength of mind & memory, which justifies an appeal to his unbiased statement, fairly to be retaken, by an intelligent Judge – in the absence of all extraneous agency, which might twist the evidence to [illegible word] uses.

If in the process for eviscerating[?] the real truth you can find that the old man is legally entitled to his claim, I shall be pleased with his success – for a part of his tale sent me in his appeal to me (for hereditary objection[?] to his interests,) gives me a kind feeling to his wishes – and on the other hand if his claim is worthless, & fraudulently hopes for success, by worse than fraudulent means; the act & the actor in it ought to be exposed & punished.

Old Daniel Cole [pension application S8236] came to see me yesterday because of a difficulty into which he is drawn by a certain Coleman Paine [sic]. He says that Paine has rec'd. all the pension money allowed him down to March 1846 & that recently his (Cole's) neighbour Colo. John Thorn, (formerly State Senator) with whom Dr. Crump [George William Crump, Chief Clerk of the Pension Office] is acquainted (for they served at the same time in the Gen'l Assembly of Va) has made enquiry for the pension due since March 1846 & was informed it is suspended in payment, for some cause, which Cole does not understand. Dan'l. Cole is a very correct old man, and it will be hard for him to suffer, on acc't of any dereliction of Paine's. I promised him to write you in enquiry about it; and advised him to get from Colo Thorn the letter setting forth the difficulty. In these matters, I have no personal interest, other than one, resulting from feeling of humanity, & good will; to an old man who has claims on them, (in his behalf) that I must respect./ With all Respect, yrs as usual./ J. S. Barbour

N.B. The Secretary of War has not yet answered my letter, to which I have taken the liberty of calling his case once and oftener through you. I will visit the City of Washington shortly after I hear from him. The third Monday in Aug't is our quarterly County Court. I wish to be at that Court. Mr McLanes decision in other cases, settles a principle, which makes it the duty of the department, now charged with the ulterior execution of the subsisting duties, enjoined by the act of July 5th 1832, to pay the claims. I have recently hoped on its attention. Being wholly without influence either personal or political, I shall nevertheless plant myself in the principle, with a confidence in the justice of the Law of the department, which will hear and determine by the right of the case, although unsustained by the "precer armata;" (armed prayers) which are often so efficacious, in sustaining injustice & error. This question does not need such aid.

J.S.B.

Sir [James L. Edwards]. Catalpa Nov'r. 23rd 1847.

I regret to give you any further trouble with the case of Mr Martin Deer, a Militia Soldier of the War of the Revolution. His character is fair, the good opinion of his neighbours is favourable to him, and their belief is that justice has been withheld from him. You proposed in the correspondence of the last summer, several tests for the accuracy of his narrative, which were applied without any result favourable

or otherwise. The records of the executive were lost. The Minutes of the Culpeper Court were searched & a [illegible word] to exist certified to me by the Clerk for the particular period referred to by you Every reasonable & [illegible word] & faithful effort was made to bring forward the primary evidence that you requested, & this eventuated in proving to you that the primary evidence was not to be procured. Genl Richardson wrote that the rolls of the executive were lost & I sent you his letter. The Clerk's certificate was also sent you; and in one of your letters you informed me that if Judge Field w'd. take the declaration again without the prompting of any one, that this might aid his application

Your letter was sent the old mans agent (Jas. G. Field nephew of the Judge a very respected young man) & [illegible word] made the Judge to do so. His reply was that the old man resided thirty miles from him, in the mountains of Madison & that he could not do it. That in [illegible word] it was wrong, and if he yielded in this case at the request of his nephew, he could refuse in no other. I thought of obtaining the aid of some Magistrate of character & intelligence in the place of the Judge & knowing George Smith Esq it occurred to me that a better selection could not be made than of him. But he (I learned) was [illegible word] Sheriff. The next individual was Colo Robt. A. Banks (for some years Delegate in the Gen'l assembly) who was stoping[?] here in [illegible word] to the Spring & [illegible word] it to bring. He said he felt very kindly to the old man & w'd. do anything he could for him. and if you requested it, he w'd. take the labour of riding to his House (some twelve or fifteen miles) & propound to him any questions you will instruct him to ask. At the same time remarking that he was one of the Court of Madison before whom old Mr. Deer made his declaration, that he had critically examined him according to the formula prescribed by you, that he stood the examination well, that he put other questions to him under your formal direction, & that all his answers satisfied him, that he was entitled to his pension – and, that you have his opinion officially certified & also reiterated in more than one additional certificate from him (besides his official certificate, made through the Clerk to the declaration itself) Colo Banks further said that he was prompted to a rigid interrogation of this old man & another named Benja Huffman [Benjamin Hoffman] brought up at the same time in Madison Court & that the result of his critical cross examination was that Deer passed to the entire satisfaction of the whole court & Huffman was rejected. Notwithstanding this he will upon examine him & go to his house for the purpose provided you will send him particular enquiries to make & will report his answers precisely as given. The old man is now unable to leave his house & hardly his bed or chair & if he is to have this pittance, it should come at once or it will be too late. I think there is no question for doubt that the old man served three tours – one three, & two of two months each. If he erred in stating them all at 3 months, the law which is stronger than any mans memory corrects him – prior to the May Session of 1781, the usual tour of duty I believe was 3 months. at that session see 10th Hen: Statutes at large page 420, the length of the future tours was confined to 2 months. The old man says as I am told & believe that his deposition was taken for other pensioners who succeeded on his testimony and a narrative of his services is on file with you in his testimony in their cases. He refers for one to the case of Capt Mark Fink or that of his widow or family & that of Major Graves [pension application not found] & some others which my informant forgot. He sends me word that he thinks it hard that others obtain pensions on his evidence for services identical with his own & that he is denied. I put his memory to several trials relating to the election in Feby 1789 between Madison & Monroe, & in which I had both the record & tradition of that event to falsify him, if he uttered falsehood. He passed this crucible very satisfactorily and I really believe him worthy of the pension & every way entitled to it. It is again brought up by the facts that his friend James G. Field is very recently appointed Clerk to [illegible word] Major Hill [probably A. P. Hill] and being averse to leave the country called to take leave of my family last Saturday before (he goes to the army) and took the opportunity to hand me these communications & to beg my interference.

So knowing good people of his county & neighbourhood w'd. not advocate his claim, if it had the least taint of deception about it.

Yrs very Resp'fully/ J. S. Barbour

I you pass his claim for the seven months (which I know is right) will you send his certificate to Judge Field, Rixeyville Culpeper County Va., or to my son James Barbour Culpeper C. or to George A. Smith Esq. of Madison County near Liberty Mills Post Office Orange County Va. Either of these will

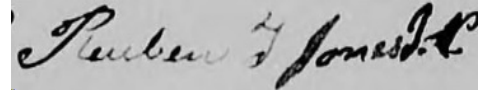
see that he gets it and after getting it, he can pay Payne, the agent whatever is reasonable.

If you send it to Payne wrong may be done./ J.S.B.

I am assured at this moment by letter that all the forms of your Dept, all the requirements & proofs of your regulations have been fully complied with & sent you. It is asked why is this man denied the benefit of those rules (& proof under them) extended to others? No mans character is fairer or more strongly proved to you/ J.S.B.

State of Virginia }
Madison County } To wit

This day Martin Deer aged ninety years, who was in my belief, a soldier in the war of the Revolution, personally appeared before me a justice of the peace for the county and state aforesaid, and made oath in due form according to law, that he was at three several times drafted to serve in the militia of Virginia from Culpeper County in the war of the revolution; and that he served until he was discharged in each of those tours of duty for which he was so drafted; and in the manner and times and places set forth in his declaration made some time ago in the County Court of Madison. If he made any mistake as to the time of his service in that declaration mentioned he wishes it put to the true time according to the laws then existing. He went into Madison County Court when that declaration was made, and was examined by the court, and he testified to what he knew to be right and still thinks right, though he admits that the law which fixed the length of his tour of duty, must be relied on with more confidence than any man's memory; and he desires that any error in it (if any) shall be corrected by the law regulating the length of the tour of duty. – And he further made oath that he is now too old to go from home and that age and infirmity confine him to his house and home. He stated that he has a distinct recollection of having given his vote in the election in Culpeper between Madison and Monroe for the first Congress; that he gave his vote with old Colo. James Barbour for Madison and that the election was on a cold and snowy day; and this fact he mentioned to Mr James Field in the last summer. And I further certify that the said Martin Deer is a very old man, of sound mind and memory and good character for integrity and truth; and I give full faith and belief to all that he has herein stated – Given under my hand and seal as a justice of the peace for the state and County aforesaid this 23rd day of december 1847 Reuben T Jones J. P.



NOTES:

On 30 Dec 1847 Martin Deer was granted a pension of \$23.33 per year for seven months service.

On the same date as John Gibson's statement supporting Deer's pension application, pension application R3996 was filed in Gibson's own name. Gibson later denied applying for a pension. The application was alleged to have been a fraud perpetrated by Coleman Payne, and the same allegation would also apply to the statement in support of Deer. Coleman Payne was implicated in several other suspicious pension applications listed in my endnotes for Gibson's application. The fact that Payne was Martin Deer's agent is the probable reason for Commissioner James L. Edwards's reluctance to grant the pension.

In a letter dated 7 July 1847, James G. Field stated that Martin Deer had said that his father was also named Martin Deer, from which Field inferred that Martin, Jr. was the first-born son. Deer's family register is transcribed below.

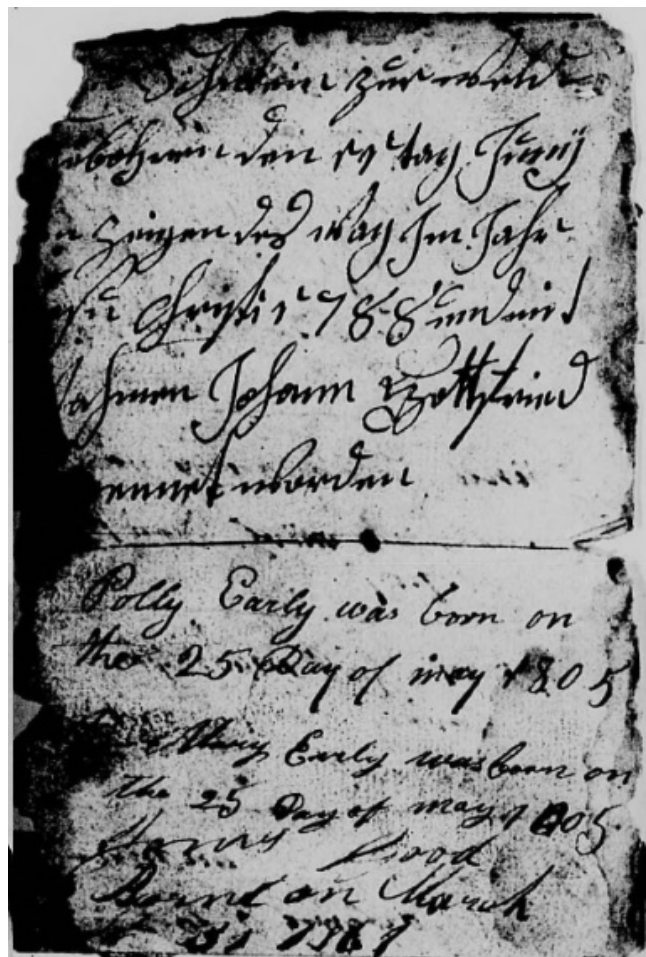
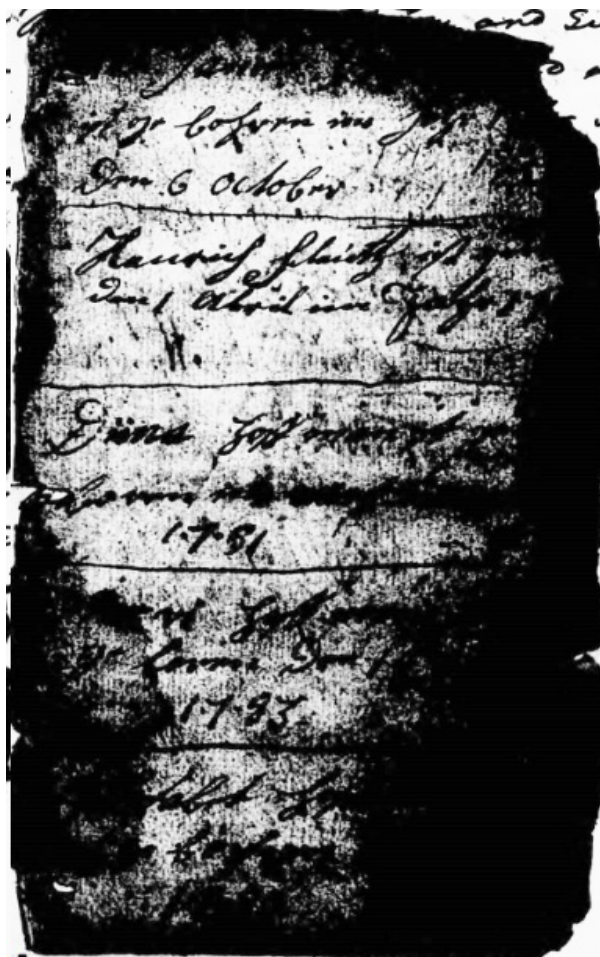
On 25 December 1854 Sarah Deer, Fielding Deer, and Frances Skinner, heirs of Martin Deer, assigned power of attorney to obtain any pension or increase in pension. The file contains a document dated 23 November 1854 stating that Martin Deer left no widow and the following children: Absalom Deer, Fielding Deer, Sarah Deer, Fanny Skinner, Nancy Loyd, and Peggy Blee.

With Benjamin Hoffman's affidavit was a family record partly in old German script, shown and partly transcribed at the end of these notes.

[Martin Deer's family record:]

Sary Deer was Born anno Domini Markt 1th day 1791
Paga Deer was Born february 1th day anno Domini 1793
Faney Deer was Born June 15th day anno Domini 1795
Nancy Deer was Born anno Domini December 15th 1796
Absolom Deer was Born October the 15th anno Domini 1800
Feilden Deer was Born in the year 1809 September 11th Day
William Zackary was born July 1th[?] 1784
William Zackary & fanney Deer was married 22th of No'vr 1817
Larkin Zackary was Born in the date Nove'r. 20 1818 Their[?] Son
Martin Deer was born in october in the year 1757
Martin Deer and Susannah Deer[?] was married in 21th of June year 1789

[Benjamin Hoffman's family record:]



Polly Early was born on the 25 Day of may 1805
Mary Early was born on the 25 Day of may 1805
James Good Bornd on March 31 1807