

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

Documents¹ relating to the services of Edmund Petrie SC3788
South Carolina Archives

Transcribed and annotated by Will Graves

6/7/22

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Where the meaning is not compromised by adhering to the spelling, punctuation or grammar, no change has been made. Corrections or additional notes have been inserted within brackets or footnotes. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. A bracketed question mark indicates that the word or words preceding it represent(s) a guess by me. The word 'illegible' or 'indecipherable' or 'undeciphered' appearing in brackets indicates that at the time I made the transcription, I was unable to decipher the word or phrase in question. Only materials pertinent to the military service of the veteran and to contemporary events have been transcribed. Affidavits that provide additional information on these events are included and genealogical information is abstracted, while standard, 'boilerplate' affidavits and attestations related solely to the application, and later nineteenth and twentieth century research requests for information have been omitted. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading skills fail to catch all misinterpretations. Also, dates or numbers which the software treats as numerals rather than words are not corrected: for example, the software transcribes "the eighth of June one thousand eighty six" as "the 8th of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention. Researchers should not rely solely on the transcripts but should review the originals for themselves. These transcripts are intended as an aid to research, not to be used in lieu thereof.]

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen

I herewith send you a number of dispatches, with their enclosures, which I have received during the Recess of the General Assembly. – As they contain matter proper for your consideration, I therefore recommend them to your early attention.

S/ Jno Mathews [John Mathews, Governor of the State of South Carolina]



Jan^y 25, 1783

Head Quarters, South Carolina, Decr.
19th 1782

Sir [Governor John Mathews of South Carolina]

Your Excellency and the Legislature all fully sensible of the critical situation the political existence of this State has been in for a long time past and you must be equally sensible how much the happiness of the People and the interest of the State, depended upon the safety and success of the Army. Nor are you less sensible how important intelligence is both to the People, protection of property, and Security of the Troops. It has been my steady and earnest wish to conduct the Southern operations to a favorable issue: happily that hour is arrived. To affect this I have been obliged to employ a number of characters to furnish me with the earliest intelligence of the Enemy's intentions. From which, I have in most cases been able to counteract their designs. As Lt. Col^o. Laurens [John Laurens]² was better acquainted with characters than I could

¹ These documents are now available online at <http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/>. To find the documents for a specific person, click on the [Just take me to the search page](#) link, then enter the person's surname first in the "Full name" box followed by a comma and the person's Christian name. The "SC" file number shown on this transcript has been assigned by the administrator of this website for indexing purposes only and is not an officially recognized file number.

² Lt. Col. John Laurens (1754-1782) was a distinguished Revolutionary War Continental officer who served for a time as aid-de-camp to George Washington, fought at Brandywine, Germantown, and Monmouth Courthouse. He was appointed a special minister to France. He was a close friend of Alexander Hamilton. Upon his return to the States, he returned to South Carolina after the Battle of Yorktown and served under Major General Nathaniel Greene taking command of Lee's Legion when Henry [Light Horse Harry] Lee returned to Virginia. Laurens was killed in an engagement with a British foraging party at Combahee River on August 27, 1782. As noted in Greene's letter

be from being a Stranger in the Country I prevailed on him to select such as he thought best calculated for this service. Among others Mr. Edmund Petrie one of those whose Estate is confiscated and himself banished the Country, was employed. He served with great fidelity untill the evacuation [Charleston South Carolina was evacuated by the British in December 1782] took place. Upon doing which he had the promise that his Services should be recommended to the Legislature for such remission of his political transgressions as they might think the importance of his Services merited; and I hope when they come under consideration they will not be estimated from the present safety of the State, but from the dangers to which it would have been exposed had no such characters been to be found. People in general are not apt to forget past dangers. I hope it will be remembered that generosity and even prodigality is recommended toward such as give good information; and that a liberal policy in a Legislature is the best earnest for future Services; and also that new dangers may arise, and similar services become necessary. In this political point of view I beg leave to recommend the Services of Mr. Petrie to the consideration of the Legislature not doubting they will pay a just regard to Lt. Col^o. Laurens's engagements. I shall have discharged mine from this recommendation; – but I earnestly hope that as Mr. Petrie has been guilty only of one political evil his case will merit and meet a generous attention.

I have the honor to be with great respect

Your Excellencies

most obedient, and

most humble Servant

S/ Nath Greene [Nathanael Greene]

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Nath Greene". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the printed name.

above, Laurens coordinated the intelligence gathering activities of several 'spies' within the British lines in and around Charleston prior to his death.