

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

Pension Application of James Barron W12264 Mary A. B. Barron VA Sea Service/ US Navy
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 1 May 2015.

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Memorandum

When the revolutionary war became a doubtful and dangerous struggle for independence, and the means to support those, who, fearlessly and patriotically engaged in it, men could scarcely be obtained, and the State of Virginia found it absolutely necessary to consider the subject in a most serious light and also to double their efforts in pecuniary point of view to induce the officers, seamen and soldiers to enter and continue in the public service to the end of that memorable contest. and therefore made such promises as they thought would induce their army and navy to continued firm at their posts to the conclusion of it.

This promise consisted in a description of emolument called commutation or five years full pay or half pay for life, to the officers, and a certain portion of land in the west to the officers, seamen and soldiers, to each officer a certain portion according to the rank, and to each soldier a certain portion: Some of those lands were free from obstacles, and those who were so fortunate as to find them so, reaped the benefit thereof, but the greater part of them, were so situated that possession could not be obtained, and of course they have continued deprived of this promised reward ever since.

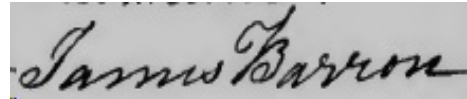
At the adoption of the federal constitution, the State of Virginia gave to the General Government all her public property, and as I have been informed, without reservation, this procedure produced a new and formidable difficulty, for, the General Government became involved, soon after, the confederation, and a war with the Cherokee Indians, who, were the former possessors of this land, and to them it was ceded back at the conclusion of that war, and thereby put our claim into a most doubtful and difficult condition

The Officers then petitioned the Legislature of the state, to see that their claims were attended to in some shape or other, which they promised, and a memorial was sent to the Congress of the United States setting forth the hardship and injustice that they were now exposed to, and praying, that immediate remuneration should be made. the answer was, that the claim should be attended to, that the general government would either give those claimants lands elsewhere, or get those ceded back again, or give them two dollars per acre.

Thus has this claim with the exception of some contention between Virginia and Kentucky stood for the last forty eight years, and without some spirited and patriotic exertion on the part of this state, this claim, one of the first in point of dignity, that any Country ever authorised, must perish, and along with it, the honor of the State irrevocably and for ever.

It is not for your petitioner to say how this debt is to be discharged, but if the State have the resources, they can at least recommend the claim to the Congress of the United States, who knows how generously Virginia acted towards the General Government at the time of the Confederation.

All of which is most respectfully submitted.



Feb'y 2^d 1828 ref'd to select Com'ee./ Feb'y 9th ref'd reasonable

[The following are from the federal pension file.]

To His Excellency Governor Floyd

Norfolk April the 7th 1833

Dear Sir I have heretofore forborne from presenting my claim to the Executive of my native state for Land Bounty due me for my revolutionary services as a midshipman in the state Navy of Virginia, not

being aware of any living person who could establish my claim to three years service.

That difficulty is now removed, and I ask permission to submit my claim for Land Bounty in conformity to the several acts of the Commonwealth of Virginia referring your Excellency to the several affidavits herewith enclosed.

The service rendered by me, being that of a Midshipman in the state Navy of Virginia during the Revolutionary War, and until the close of it, in 1783 for three years service.

I have the Honor to be, Most respectfully, Your Ob't. James Barron

I John S. Westwood of Elizabeth City County Virginia do hereby certify that I am well acquainted with Commodore James Barron of the United States Navy. Affiant has known him from his boyhood until the present period, and he well knows that the said James Barron, when a mere youth during the Revolutionary War, was attached to the Schooner Liberty, as a young midshipman, and served in that capacity under the command of his father Commodore James Barron, the commander in chief of the Virginia State Navy. The said Barron served as a midshipman in the said state navy until the close of the war in the year 1783. His service commenced at the close of 1780 or early in 1781 – Given under my hand at Norfolk this 4th day of April 1833.

John S. Westwood

Before me William Hope a justice of the peace in and for the County of Elizabeth City appeared William Jennings [pension application S5615], an old and respectable inhabitant of said County and being duly sworn states that he served as a mariner in the state Navy of Virginia during the Revolutionary War, and was well acquainted with midshipman James Barron (now Commodore James Barron) of said Navy. The said Barron was a young midshipman, and performed service during the said War for at least three years until the peace of 1783 he served principally in the schooner Liberty, and as an aid to his father visiting the various vessels composing the fleet. [8 Apr 1833]

Wm. Jennings

Personally appeared before me William Hope a Justice of the Peace, Richard Payne [pension application S8929], and being duly sworn on the holy bible, states that he was well acquainted with midshipman James Barron (now Commodore James Barron) said Barron was a young midshipman and performed service on board of the schooner Liberty, and I think was occasionally on board of other vessels attached to the squadron commanded by his Father; he was in the service at least three years till the peace of 1783. [8 Apr 1833]

Richard Payne

I John Cox [pension application S8223] of the town of Portsmouth do hereby certify that during the War of the Revolution I held a private commission in the service of Virginia as a Captain, and commenced service in the year 1777, and commanded for several years thereafter, many private armed vessels which were engaged in the transportation of munitions of war from the West Indies to the United States, and in performing other duties in the service of the state of Virginia – My public duties frequently required me to receive the commands and instructions of that distinguished officer Commodore James Barron, the commander in chief of the Naval forces of Virginia, and I well remember to have seen on several of these occasions young James Barron, his son (the present Commodore in the U.S.N.) as an officer performing duty in the Naval Service I was struck with his youthful appearance and the alacrity, zeal, and intelligence with which he performed service, but the Navy being afterwards reduced or broken up, and the War terminated, I could not then nor can I now say what was his rank as an officer.

[16 Dec 1833]

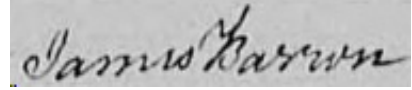
Jno. Cox

District of Columbia }
County of Washington }

On this 14th day of Jan'y. 1834 personally appeared before the subscriber, Jas Barron a resident of Phil'a, in the county of Phil'a and State of Pennsylv'a aged sixty five years, who 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 June 7th, 1832. That he entered in the Navy of the United States in the year 1780, and served in the State Navy of Virginia, to the close of the War in 1783.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or an annuity, except the present, and he declares that his name is not on the Pension Roll of any Agency in any State

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

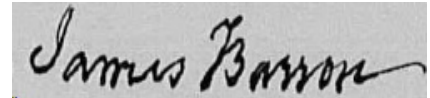


To the Hon J. L. Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions. [26 Aug 1850]

Your memorialist James Barron, of Norfolk, Virginia, represents, that he is now in the receipt of a Pension, under the Act of 7th June 1832, at the rate of \$144 per annum for services as a midshipman in the Virginia State Navy, in the war of the Revolution he served also as Aid de Camp to his father the late Commodore James Barron, who was Commander in Chief of the Navy of Virginia, and whose rank was equal to that of a Brigadier General in the land services.

Your memorialist therefore claims that he is entitled to an increase of his pension, over and above what he is now receiving, equal to the amount that would be allowed to an Aid de Camp to a Brigadier General in the land service. He also claims, that for his services as midshipman, he has never been allowed as high a rate of Pension as that service alone would entitle him to – the pay of a midshipman in the Virginia State Navy, in the war of the Revolution having been two shillings and nine pence per day, which would amount to more than \$144 per annum.

He therefore asks that his case may be reexamined, and that such increase of his pension may be awarded to him, as he is by law entitled to.



NOTES:

There were three Commodore Barron's: James Barron, Sr, [VAS1949] Commodore of the Virginia State Navy; his son James Barron, Jr., Midshipman in the State Navy and later Commodore of the United States Navy, the subject of these transcriptions; and Samuel Barron [pension application R6] also a Commodore of the USN.

On 10 Jan 1847 James Barron wrote from Norfolk to request a new pension certificate, the former one having been stolen with his writing desk.

On 27 Dec 1853 Mary A. B. Barron of Portsmouth VA applied for a pension as the widow of James Barron, whose pension was payable in Philadelphia when he died on 21 Apr 1851.