

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

Pension Application of John Towers W14896

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

This day personally appeared before the subscriber William Cranch one the Judges for the County of Washington in the District of Columbia Mrs. Dorcas Henderson aged 76 years, who being duly sworn makes the the following Declaration, for the purpose of obtaining the benifit of the acts of Congress approved the 4 July 1836 & 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1837. that she was the widow of John Towers an enlisted soldier of the Revolutionary War in the 1<sup>st</sup> Virginia Reg. commanded by Col. George Gibson, and was in the company of Capt. Hamilton [Thomas Hamilton, company raised in Fairfax County] & Capt Marbury or Mabary & a part of his time in the light infantry. That after the Battle of Brandywine [11 Sep 1777] he seved in the States of Pennsylvania New Jersey & that quarter, and was at Brandywine, Valley Forge, Trenton [Battle of Trenton NJ], 26 Dec 1776] & Monmouth [28 June 1778] as she herself knows being personally present & being greatly injured in his health was turned over to the Laboratory [see endnote] and discharged as the certificate annexed dated Richmond 16 May 1783 and did receive as a during the war soldier 200 acres of Land from Virginia. She farther declares that she was legally married to said Towers by Parson Braken at his House near Williamsburg in Virginia on the 22 day of June 1780 agreeably to the accompanying certificate which she has held in her possession ever since, and that John Towers died at Fairfax County State of Virginia on the 25 day of December 1803. that she remained a widow about 6 months & married William Henderson [pension application X344] who died about 2 years before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1836 but cannot say the day, & since has remained a widow. Signed this 28<sup>th</sup> day of March 1837.

[signed] Dorcas Henderson

John Towers an invaleed Soldier of this State Line and of the Laboratory Department having duly and faithfully serv'd during the late war against Great britan is hereby Discharg'd the service, by Order Government, The behaviour and good Conduct of the above Soldier entitles him to the Respect and esteem of all his Countrymen –

Given under my hand 16<sup>th</sup> day of May 1783 in the seventh year of the Commonwealth D. Mann Lt. S.L.

NOTE:

During the war Dorcas Henderson had apparently traveled with the troops. Many such “camp followers” were family members or sweethearts and performed valuable services for the troops. The Laboratory Department was typically engaged in manufacturing gunpowder.

The certificate of marriage referred to in the application reads as follows:

“Wmsburg June 22 1780. I certify that John Towers & Dorcas Godfry were on this day joined together in Marriage by me            John Bracken Rector of Bruton Parish”

On 31 Mar 1837 Abraham Butler of Washington, DC deposed that his mother-in-law, Dorcas Henderson, was “confined at his House in sick bed, and she has spent much of her time the last [illegible] years at his House and in Alexandria.” The file includes a copy of the will of John Towers dated 27 Aug 1800 leaving everything to “my dear Beloved wife Darky Towers” except for items bequeathed to the following: daughter Peggy, wife of John Simms; daughter Nancy, not yet of age; daughter Polly, not yet of age. On 29 June 1847 daughters Margaret (Peggy) Simms and Ann (Nancy) Simms applied for bounty land as heirs of John Towers. Other documents indicate that Dorcas Towers Henderson died on 3 Feb 1841.