

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of John Roberts¹ W2347

Lucy Ann Roberts

f102VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

7/6/12 Supp'd 4/27/15

[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. 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 fails 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 errors or omissions to my attention.]

[p 20]

Major John Roberts

December 21, 1830

Mr. Dickinson, from the Committee on Revolutionary Claims, to which was referred the case of Major John Roberts, made the following

Report:

The Committee on Revolutionary Claims, to which was referred the petition of major John Roberts, report:

That the said John Roberts entered the Army of the revolution early in the war; that he was appointed a Captain in the Virginia line on Continental establishment, prior to January, 1779; that, in the month of March of that year, he was commissioned a major in infantry, in the said line; that evidence was produced that he continued to do duty as a major in actual service as late as September, 1781; that he was subject to the orders of Colonel James Wood of the Virginia Continental line, in that last named month and year, and discharged various duties in relation to the Saratoga prisoners, under the orders of said Colonel Wood, who subscribed himself his Colonel commandant. It appears by the certificate of Mr. Edwards of the pension office, that Colonel Wood was of the Continental line from the State of Virginia. The petitioner states, that, late in 1781, he was without command, and endeavored to find service by traveling to the southern states, which effort proved abortive, and that he had no command afterwards until the close of the war. He further states, on oath, that after the discharge of his troops, he was without command; that he never did resign his commission; and that he was at all times willing again to enter the service, if required to do so; but that he never was so required.

J. L. Edwards, Esquire, clerk of the Pension Office, certifies that the name of John Roberts appears in the list of the Continental officers of the Virginia line on Continental establishment, as a major; and that he received, on the 8th of November, 1783, a certificate of balance of pay, amounting to £404.1s.10d., Virginia currency; and that, on the 24th of June, 1786, a further certificate was received by him, from General James Wood, for £78. The resolve of Congress of October 21, 1780, promise half pay for life to all officers who should remain in service to the close of the war, or who should be supernumerary and willing to enter service again, if required so to do; and the resolution of the body of March, 1783, commuted the half pay for life, by five years' full pay, in lieu thereof, and all persons entitled, under the resolves of October, 1780; and your committee, believing that John Roberts, a major and infantry of the Virginia line on Continental establishment, is clearly within the said resolutions, entitled to the

¹ BLWt1718-400

benefit thereof, reported a Bill in his favor.

[p 33: Autograph letter dated March 5th, 1831 from Chief Justice John Marshall regarding some procedural point relating to half pay due officers of the Virginia line.]

[p 49]

State of Virginia Culpeper County Scilicet

Major John Roberts made oath before me a Justice of the Peace in and for the County aforesaid that in the fall of 1781 he ceased to have actual command in the War of the Revolution, the term of service of part of the men he commanded expired about that time & left him in that command, that after his return from the state of Connecticut where he delivered up the Convention Troops to the Executive of Connecticut agreeably to Colonel James Wood's orders in writing that said Wood advised him to go to the South in the expectation & belief that he would get a Command under General Nathanael Greene & gave him a letter to General Greene which he delivered, but it was impossible for him to obtain a Command, & after remaining some time to the South & getting command he returned to Virginia.

Said Major Roberts also made oath that he never did resigned his commission, and that he was at all times willing to have returned into actual service & said Leslie salt actual service but never was required so to do.

Given under my hand & seal this 28th of December 1830

S/ Marcus C. Buck, JP

[p 91]

you will be Pleased to proceed with the [indecipherable words] Regiment the nearest route to the Warm Springs, with the Guard Directed in [indecipherable word]. The Troops are to the Quartered in the Vacant Houses under your Direction, and to be informed at the time of their going into the Houses that they will be made And from old to any kind of Damage which may be done to the Houses or Enclosures. The Soldiers are to be restricted to a mile round the Town, and Passports granted to the Officers' Servants to go 10 miles into the Country, and upon request passes to be granted for the Purpose of sending returns [?] to Frederick town & Winchester. From your knowledge of the Management of the Convention Troops, it is unnecessary for me to add further than that I am

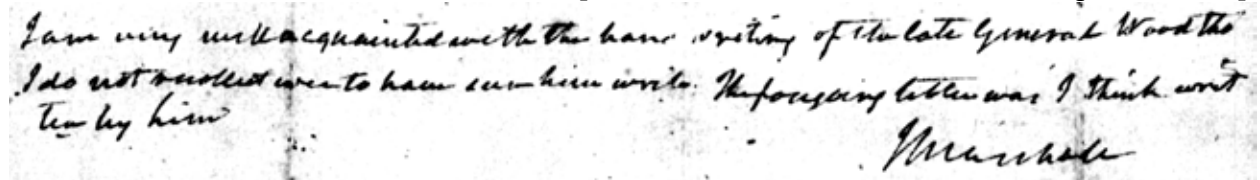
Served your obedient servant

S/ James Wood

Winchester 5th of March 1781

I am very well acquainted with the handwriting of the late General Wood though I do not recollect ever to have seen him right. The foregoing letter was I think written by him.

S/ J. Marshall [John Marshall, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court]



*I am very well acquainted with the hand writing of the late General Wood tho
I do not recollect ever to have seen him write. The foregoing letter was I think writ
ten by him*

Marshall

[p 88]

As soon as you return from the Flag Ship you [one or more indecipherable words] the Convention Officers in Immediate Motion for East Windsor in Connecticut; keeping them as

nearly together on the route as the Circumstances of the Case will Admit, upon your Arrival in Connecticut you will receive further Instructions from the Executive of that State, which you are Strictly to Comply with. The Officers are to avoid all Posts, encampments, or [indecipherable word] of our own or the French Army. After delivering the Convention Officers & Complying with the Orders of the Executive of Connecticut, you are to return to Virginia, you will be pleased to take receipts with the Articles by you Received to be Produced as Vouchers on the settlement of your Accounts. Wishing you and Agreeable Journey

I am Sir your Very Obedient Service
S/ James Wood, Colo. Com.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Wood. Colo. Com." The signature is written in dark ink on a light background. The first letter 'J' is particularly large and loops around the rest of the name.

Frederick Town 19 June 1781
Major John Roberts

[p 93]

Upon the Arrival of Mr. Gaddis you will Please to proceed with him and any other Convention Officer to the flagship now in Potomac, where they are to be permitted to receive money and any other Articles absolutely necessary for the Convention Troops. You are not to suffer them to have any Conversation with the People home Board the flag, but in your Presence and Hearing; or permit anything to be landed, disposed of to the Inhabitants; and as soon as the Business is dispatched to Direct the flag to fall down the River. When you arrive in the neighborhood of Alexandria, you are to Acquaint the Officer Commanding that Post as to your Instructions; and not permit the Convention Officers to go into Alexandria or George Town without his Permission and Approbation; or the Permission of Officers commanding at G. Town.

I am Sir your very obedient Servant
S/ James Wood, Colo. Com.

Frederick Town 19 June 1781

I am very well acquainted with the handwriting of the late General would though I do not recollect ever to have seen him right. I think the foregoing letter is in his handwriting

S/ J Marshall

[p 96]

We whose names are hereunto Subscribed, Officers under the restrictions of the Convention of Saratoga, have been Ordered to East Windsor in the State of Connecticut, Do hereby Promise and Engaged on our Parole of Honor, and on the faith of Gentlemen, that we will not say or do anything Prejudicial to the Interest of the United States of America, or any of them, nor will we on the route endeavor to Obtain a Knowledge of the State or situation of the Forces of the United States, the strength or situation of the Posts, [indecipherable word], Finances or resources of the United States or any of them and that we will Proceed to East Windsor by the route laid down to us by Major Roberts, Affording all Posts, encampments, or [indecipherable word] of the American or French Troops, and that we will on our Journey, Strictly Observe all Orders, rules and regulations laid down to us by Major Roberts; and that the servants now in our Possession

shall be Accounted for as and Exchange, except in case of Death; and further that we will in every respect, conduct ourselves as he comes Gentlemen and men of Honor.

Given at Lancaster Town in the State of Pennsylvania this the 7th day of July 1781

S/ James Hamilton

S/ A. Jameson [Andrew Jameson]

B. Genl.

S/ George Cotter [?], Capt. 24 Reg

S/ J. Calladine [Joseph Calladine], Adgt. 24 Regt.


This image shows a close-up of the handwritten signatures and text from the document. On the left, the date "this the 7th day of July 1781" is written in cursive. Below it are the signatures of "James Hamilton" and "B. Genl.". On the right, the signatures of "A. Jameson", "George Cotter Capt. 24 Regt.", and "J. Calladine Adgt. 24 Regt." are visible. The text is written in a cursive script typical of the late 18th century.

The signatures continue on 2 other pages. Most are illegible so I have not attempted to transcribe them, but here are images of those pages:

This image shows a page of handwritten signatures and names, likely a list of officers or soldiers. The text is written in cursive and includes names such as "Jameson", "Richard", "John", "Lieutenant", "Major", "Lieut. de Weyherst", and "Lieut. de". The page is divided into columns by vertical lines, and the handwriting is dense and somewhat difficult to read in many places. The names are written in a cursive script typical of the late 18th century.

officers than [indecipherable word]

S/ Mountjoy Bayley
Capt. in the Maryland line Continental Army

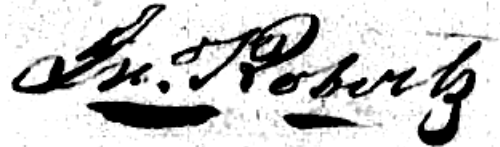


State of Virginia County of Culpeper

I John Roberts aged 73 years do upon oath declare that I entered the service of the United States in the Virginia line on Continental establishment on the __ day of __ 1778 as a Captain, that in the month of March 1779 I was duly appointed and commissioned a Major of infantry in a Regiment commanded by several colonels at one time by Colonel Bland and another by Colonel James Wood afterwards Governor Wood of Virginia – that I was without active command in 1781 in September in consequence of the expiration of the term of enlistment of many of the men & the consolidation of the regiments, that I never did resign my commission & by the advice of Colonel Wood I sought further actual service in the Southern States but was unable to obtain it and I further declare that I never have received the bounty land promised me by the United States nor any warrant for the same nor have I ever assigned, transferred my claim in any manner whatever. Therefore know all men by these presents that I John Roberts aforesaid do hereby constitute & appointed William Gordon Esquire to be my true & lawful attorney for me and in my name to demand & received from the Secretary of War of the United States a warrant for the quantity of land due me as aforesaid & my said attorney is hereby fully authorized and empowered to constitute and appoint one or more substitutes or attorneys under him for the special purposes aforesaid & above expressed.

Attest: S/ Wm Ward

S/ Jno. Roberts



[Attested March 14th, 1831]

Received March 1831 the Land Warrant No. 17184 400 acres of land from William Gordon my attorney

Witness my hand

S/ Jno. Roberts

[p 8: On April 11, 1853 in the Rappahannock County Virginia, Lucy Ann Roberts, 61, filed for a widow's pension under the 1853 act stating that she is the widow of John Roberts, a pensioner of the United States for his service as a Major in the Virginia line at the rate of \$600 per annum; that she married him April 27, 1809; that her husband died November 30, 1841.



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[p 66]

Virginia, Rappahannock County, to wit:

On this 8th day of August in the year 1853 personally appeared before me a Justice of the peace within and for the County and State aforesaid, William Slaughter and being duly sworn according to law, declares upon his oath, that he was acquainted with the late Major John Roberts deceased of Rappahannock County ever since the year 1800, leaving only six miles from him up to the time of his death, 1843: he also declares that he well recollects when the late Major Roberts was married in the year 1809 or 1810 in the city of Richmond Virginia, to Miss Lucy Ann Pollard daughter of the late Robert Pollard of that City, and also well know after marriage they lived together as husband and wife up to the time of the Major's death in 1843. He also states that he continues to be acquainted with Mrs. Lucy Ann Roberts the widow of Major John Roberts and that she still remains his widow not having married since the Major's death.

S/ Wm Slaughter

[Facts in file: Veteran died November 30, 1843; the veteran and his wife had 8 children, 4 sons and 4 daughters who survived their mother, namely:

William H Roberts who in 1868 was living in Rappahannock County Virginia

John A Roberts made affidavit in Culpeper County Virginia but his place of residence is not stated

Robert P Roberts also made affidavit in Culpeper County without stating his County of residence
Howell L Roberts

Jane J Ward, widow of William H Ward in 1867 was a resident of Culpeper County Virginia

Ellen L Turner, widow of Lewis C Turner

Elizabeth R Strother, widow of James F Strother

Isabella V. Jett, widow of John Jett, Jr. who in 1867 lived in Culpeper County Virginia.]

[p 11: Copy of a marriage bond issued to John Roberts and William C Williams April 26, 1809 in Henrico County Virginia conditioned upon the marriage of John Roberts to Lucy Ann Blair Pollard.]

[From [Digital Library of Virginia](#)] Culpeper County Legislative Petitions

To the Hon. the Speaker and House of Delegates

The Memorial of John Roberts of the County of Culpeper, respectfully represents.

That your Memorialist was appointed a Captain in a Corps on the establishment of the State, which was denominated the Regiment of Guards; sometime in the month of December 1778 soon after which, he completed his Company, and in the Course of a few months, was promoted to the rank of Major in the same Regiment, in which he continued until the fall of the year 1781.

Your Memorialist begs leave further to represent, that many Officers who served in the Different Regiments of the State, and who did not remain so long as he did in the Service of their Country, have received bounties in Land, proportioned to their respective grades.

Your Memorialist therefore prays that his case may be taken into Consideration and that the Bounty of his Country may be extended to him, upon the same liberal principles on which it has been granted to others; to be located on the North West Side of the River Ohio, on the Lands reserved by the State for that purpose.

[Reverse]

Roberts' Memorial

November 19, 1796

Cts Justice

December 5, 1796 Rejected

Reported

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Addendum to John Roberts W2347

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. 22 Feb 2021.

[From [rejected claims in the Library of Virginia.](#)]

Culpeper County Sc.

This day William Jordan of said County personally appeared before me a Justice of the Peace for the County aforesaid & made oath that he knew Major John Roberts of Culpeper in the year 1777 then a Lieutenant in the Service of the united states, & acting as such both in Maryland & Pennsylvania. That he same Jordan was a soldier in service at that time & saw Major Roberts before & after the battle of German Town [Germantown 4 Oct 1777] acting as a Lieutenant; that said Roberts was afterwards promoted as he understood & he believed first to be a Captain & afterwards a Major, which last rank he believes he held at the close of the War of the Revolution

Given under my hand & seal this 19th day of November 1832

B. K. Wood

Culpeper County Sc:

This day John Pearce made oath before me Magistrate for said County that he was in service in the war of the revolution as a Soldier in August 1777. That Major John Roberts of Culpeper was then a Lieutenant in the Service of the United States. That he saw him acting as Lieutenant in that service both before & after the battle of German Town; & that he is the same Roberts who was afterwards successively promoted to be a Captain & Major and as he believes & always understood was a Major at the close of the war.

Given under my hand & seal this 21st day of november 1832.

B. K. Wood

Culpeper County Sc:

Reuben Moore Esq [W8466] of said County personally appeared before me a Magistrate of the same County & made oath, that he is now in his seventy ninth year, that late in August 1777 he marched with a detachment from Culpeper County to the northward, that they were in the States of Maryland & Pennsylv'a reaching the latter immediately after the battle of German Town. He well remembers to have seen John Roberts then a Lieu't in Capt. Hills Company. That he has known said Roberts ever since & he is the same who was promoted as he verily believes to be a Major & was in command at Albemarle Barracks afterward

Given under my hand & seal this 26th 1832 [sic].

Rappahannock County to wit

This day Milly Browning personally appeared before me a justice of the peace for the county aforesaid and made oath in due form that she has known Majr John Roberts of the Revolutionary army for seventy years or more, she well remembers that he was in service as Lieutenant in the year 1776 and that she further recollects that he [undeciphered word] that com'y as an officer when Brents house was burnt by the common enemy [William Brent VAS2639, 16 Jul 1776] which she believes was in the summer of 1776. That he is the same Maj John Roberts who was afterwards promoted to the [part missing at bottom of page] and was in command at albem[rest missing at bottom of page]

[undeciphered] Tavern[?] [undeciphered] Nov'r 27th 1832

Dear Sir as I am not known to any other Gentleman of the Executive, you will excuse me for throwing myself upon your kindness and attention.

I have rec'd land bounty for three years service in Continental line, whilst I am by law entitled to 2/6th more of extra land bounty. The grant by act of Congress of my Commutation pay with considerable

interest and the allowance of lands by the United states, show that I was considered virtually in service at the close of the War, which is the 15th Nov'r 1783. my first service in the revolutionary War commenced in 1776. But I have not my Commission as Lieut, it being long ago lost or mislaid. The affidavits of Mr. William Jordan Mr. John [undeciphered] and Capt. Reuben Moore shew that I was in service about the Month of Aug't 1777. Dating from that time only and counting to Nov'r 15th 1783 makes me entitled to one year more of land bounty. But I think that the 2/6th ought to be allowed as I was really an officer in 1776. late in 1778 I was made a Captain and early in 1779 had orders to recruit my company and in less than one month I had my complement of soldiers, and was soon after promoted to be a Maj'r. I submit the case to your Judgment and kind attention.

With great respect
yr ob Ser't [signature cut off at bottom of page]

January 26th 1833. Advised, that as the Executive has heretofore acted upon the fact that the war closed in April 1783, and as there is no evidence of Major Roberts service for even six years previous to that period, this claim be Rejected.

Rejected J. F. [Gov. John Floyd]

April 24 1833 Postponed until the list is made out pursuant to a resolution of the General Assembly of the last session. J. F.

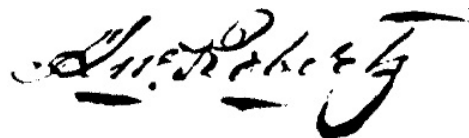
[The following memorial is from [rejected claims in the Library of Virginia](#) indexed as Robert, John. This file also contains a report by John H. Smith, Commissioner of Pensions, that pertains do a Lt. John Roberts (R17483).]

To his Excellency Littleton W. Tazewell Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia

John Roberts late a Major in the Virginia line on continental establishment in the War of the Revolution represent. That he has already received lands for three years Service that he is informed that he is entitled to other and further Lands for his services aforesaid in consequence of the following facts Namely: He was appointed a Lieutenant early in 1776 and was in the States of Maryland and Pennsylvania in 1777 and 1778; [illegible] 1779 he was appointed to the rank of Captain and in March 1779 he was appointed and commissioned a Major of Infantry in which capacity he continued in actual service until September 1781 when he was without command the term of enlistment for his men having expired. That he consulted with his friend General James Wood [BLWt2419-500] and by his advice travelled in pursuit of other service to the Southern Army under the command of General Nathaniel Green [sic: Nathanael Greene] [illegible] for the purpose of [undeciphered] a letter to him from said General Wood and remained there and near the army until the fall of 1782 when finding that he was not likely to get a commission in that army he returned to Virginia at which time he held himself in readiness to enter service again whenever [part missing at bottom of page]tation of five years full pay in lieu of the half pay for life which was passed the ___ day of ___ 1832, and which recognized him, your petitioner, in service untill the 15th November 1783. Your petitioner is further advised and informed that he is entitled to one sixth more of bounty Land for every year of service beyond six years, and computing his service from April 1776 untill November 1783 will give him claim to additional bounty lands for which he asks an order for a warrant to the Register of the Land Office.

The testimony of Mrs Browning, William Jordan, John Pierce, and Capt. Reuben Moore is filed, to which reference is respectfully requested. the act of Congress is also filed in the Executive Archives, and which if not to be found your excellency will probably recollect it, as you were then in the Senate of the United States and contributed as your petitioners is informed in this act of justice in his behalf. And your petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray &c.

[23 Sep 1834]



[From [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia](#). Some documents in the files are illegible, including a petition signed by John Roberts.]

Rappahannock County To wit

This day personally appeared before me a justice of the peace in and for the County aforesaid Mrs. Milly Browning and on the holy evangelist made oath that she has known Major John Roberts for seventy seven years and has also lived close neighbour with him, that he is the same John Roberts who was a major in the revolutionary war in the Virginia line on continental establishment, that she distinctly remembers that he entered in the said line on the same continental establishment late in the year One thousand seven hundred & seventy five as lieutenant; and that she is confident that the said Major John Roberts after having been in service returned home & in the month of may One thousand seven hundred & seventy six the said John Roberts went to Winchester & was inoculated for the small pox, and that after recovering from the small pox he the said Jno Roberts again entered the continental service as lieutenant and subsequently that the said Jno. Roberts was promoted first to be a captain & after that to be a major.

I further certify that the said Mrs Milly Browning is a lady of great age about or near eighty years and of known & established character for veracity & integrity & that full credence is justly due to her evidence

Given under my hand & seal this 1st day of June 1838. B. K. Wood

[From [rejected claims in the Library of Virginia](#).]

To his Excellency the Gov'r of Virginia

Sir The undersigned was allowed by the predecessor of your excellency in Noveb 1840 additional land bounty for his military services in the War of the Revolution, of the Va line on continental establishment. That allowance does not render to the services of the undersigned the justice due him, according to the usages & the laws of this commonwealth. In this: The allowance is for one year & three months only when it should have been for two years in full. The undersigned was in service under the first appointment made on continental establishment & was an officer duly appointed & commissioned. The decision of the Executive that he is entitled to additional land; settles the question that he was in Service in the year 1776 & the proof by witnesses, is, that he was in Military duty in his aforesaid official capacity before the burning of Brents House in 1776. That being a memorable event in this quarter [part missing at bottom of page] to that event & his services, from the positive & known reminiscence of that occurrence, in its connexion with his military duties. [undeciphered word] these witnesses do not speak of his service beginning at that time. it was antecedent thereto; & it will be shewn that it cou'd not have commenced with the burning of Brents House; as the undersigned will further shew; for if he was in service at that date, he must have been so under an appointment of prior existence.

The burning of Brents House was at the time Dunmores ascent in the Potowmac [sic: Potomac] River in July 1776. (See Gerardin, history, Va page 175)¹ No military opportunities were made at that date & the ordinances of Convention, under which any Troops in service in July 1776 cou'd have been raised for duty at that date was in December 1775; and the 12th day of January 1776. (See 4th Vol. Hist. Va page 107. The undersigned must have been commissioned under these ordinances & the appointment followed.) There was no intermediate Statute, Resolution, or ordinance, under which it was possible for him to have been appointed; [undeciphered]; the term of his service must begin at one of these periods of time Dec'r '75 or Jany '76. Additional land bounty for two years has been allowed [part missing at bottom of page] due him, & the only open question, is for how long a period of time? The laws of the land, answer this interrogatory in the date of their enactment. And the usage in like cases with that of the undersigned,

¹ Burk, J. *The History of Virginia, from its First Settlement*. Vol. 1-3. Petersburg, 1805-5. Continuation of Same, by S. Jones and L. H. Gerardin. Vol. 4. Petersburg, 1816.

shews that impartial justice demands for him additional land bounty for two years instead of that allowed in [undeciphered word] last by Govr [David] Campbell.

The undersigned is informed, that a rule was of late attempted to be set up, by which no bounty claim (resting on time) can run the other side of 4th July 1776 as that is said to be the epoch in our national existence, from which claims ag[ains]t the Gov't must commence. This is scarcely [undeciphered] for a serious reputation. The various ordinances creating armies, taxes, loans, debts, & issues of currency were all anterior to that epoch. Battles were fought and war in fact raging from Concord [undeciphered] to Norfolk in Virg'a before that date. And the practice of the State of Virginia has conformed as to this [undeciphered] of things. The lapse of regal sovereignty, and its lawful successor (in full possession of comitted power & supremacy) were such in the eye of mankind long before the declaration of independence. Such a rule never cou'd [undeciphered], upon the history of the Commonwealth. It is expressly repudiated by act of assembly of — 1779 fixing the period of time for which the allegiance of the Regent ceased & [undeciphered] & the duties of the citizen were raised up in its stead. That act fixes as [part missing at bottom of page] decision of March 1840 be reviewed by your Excellency & that additional land bounty for two years service be now granted him, as has been invariably [undeciphered] by the gov't for those serving as he has done.

Submitted with Confidence in the result, and in all Respect for your Excellency by

Y'r Ob't & faithful Servant

Rappahannock County Va Nov'r 26 1840

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. R. Roberts". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed text.