

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

Pension Application of George Michael Bedinger W2992

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

[Punctuation partly corrected.]

State of Kentucky } Sgt.

Nicholas County }

On this 25th day of January 1836 Personally appeared in Open Court before the Court of Nicholas County now sitting, being a Court of Record – George M. Bedinger a resident of said County & state of Kentucky, aged 79 years on the 10th day of December last, 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 7 1832. “That early in the month of June 1775 he entered the service of the United States at Shepherd’s Town Berkley now Jefferson County in the State of Virginia [sic: Shepherdstown then in Berkeley County VA, now Jefferson County WV], as a Volunteer rifleman for the term of one year, in the company commanded by Captain Hugh Stephenson, and that he marched from thence, as he now recollects on the 10th or 11th of the same month, in said Company to the siege of Boston [17 Jun 1775 - 17 Mar 1776], passing through Frederick Town, Little York, Lancaster & Bethlehem crossed the Susquehannah [sic: Susquehanna River] at Wright ferry, the Delaware at Easton, and passing through New Jersey and Hartford Connecticut thence to Roxbury [sic: Roxbury MA], continued there at the siege of Boston Eight months. early in March [2 Mar 1776] we left Roxbury and took our station in the night on Dorchester point, near Dorchester heights, where we were not discovered by the enemy until next morning, by which time it was not in their power to dislodge us from our position. We had during the night, by means of a strong working party, and all other means in our power, become so far secured, that little doubt existed but that the British Fleet & Army would not long be able to retain their station & possession of the Harbor and Town of Boston. Soon after this, and a few days before Boston was evacuated, Captain Stephenson’s Company was sent to New York City. I think we remained there, two or three weeks, from there to Staten Island where we remained in said Stephenson’s rifle Company, until I had served out the full term for which I entered the service to wit one year, and was honorably discharged – was not in any general engagement or Battle, during the above term of service, But was in frequent skirmishes, in one of which 26 of us took 13 prisoners my Lieutenants were William Henshaw, Samuel Findley [sic: Samuel Finley], George Scott & Abraham Sheperd [sic: Abraham Shepherd] successively. We were generally under the immediate command of Gen’l. Washington – while we remained at the Siege of Boston, we were not attached to any particular Regiment, or corps, but were generally near Headquarters prepared to act on short notice and upon sudden emergencies. Our Captain was appointed Col, came home to make preparations to recruit a Regiment of Riflemen but died soon after he got home. After I was discharged, I immediately volunteered and remained at Staten Island until driven thence by the enemy, they had already pitched some of their tents on the Island and were scouring it around in search of the “rebels” as they called us, when Joseph Swearingen and myself effected our escape from them in a small boat or skiff, got safe to the Jersey Shore but lost some of our clothes, blankets &c. went thence to our Army at New York; the British Army and Navy was then lying at Sandy Hook, commanded by the two Hows [sic: Gen. William Howe and Admiral Richard Howe], and a general engagement or some important movement was almost daily expected to take place. Our Army was weak, when compared to the then powerful Army & Navy of the British. We were in great need of all the troops that could be raised – to think of leaving our Army at such a time occasioned painful reflection, and to stay much longer from a widowed mother with an almost helpless family of children to support, and who was anxiously looking for my return the rest of my Company having gone home, and many other family reflections which agitated my mind, yet I continued with the Army three weeks after I received my

discharge then left the Army – got to Philadelphia on the 4th July 1776 – got home to Shepherds Town, I think between the 10th & 15th July.

And again, in the month of January 1777 I volunteered in a Company of Volunteer riflemen Commanded by Captain William Morgan of Berkley County Va. E'd Lucas [Edward Lucas], William Lucas and myself were the Lieutenants and all of the said County; and early in said month we marched from Shepherdstown, where I entered said Company) by Philadelphia Crossed the Delaware at Trenton, and joined the Army under Gen'l. Washington near Morristown, our Company joined the Corps commanded by Col. Charles M. Thruston [Charles Mynn Thruston] of Frederick county Va. We were that winter stationed at different places, to guard against the encroachments and plundering parties of the British Army by opposing them whenever called on. early in March, perhaps the first day [sic: 10 May 1777], we fought the Battle of Piscataway – served out our full time of three months when at the request of Gen'l. Washington to stay three days longer, the company, who were then under my command the other officers being absent, or not present,) I had called together, and stated to them the request of the commander in Chief, and necessity and propriety of their complying, when the whole company with the exception of 3 or 4 agreed to stay and did stay, and was Honorably discharged and allowed a tour of duty of three months & three days (the 3 or 4 excepted.)

And further that afterwards towit a few days after having heard of the defeat of our Army at Brandywine [11 Sep 1777], Benoni Swearingen and myself left our houses at Shepherdstown va. and went to the American Army about 18 miles from Germantown and entered the service of the United States as volunteers in the company commanded by captain Joseph Swearingen, in the 12th Virginia Regiment, commanded by Col. James Wood, being in General [Charles] Scott's Brigade and in Gen'l. Adam Stevens's [sic: Adam Stephen's] division and remained in service six weeks, when I was honourably discharged. Gen'l. Wood stated in said discharge that we, Swearingen & myself, had distinguished ourselves in the most brave and extraordinary manner on the day of the Battle at Germantown, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October

From the time we joined said Regt. we mixed and associated with the officers with several of whom we had been long and intimately acquainted, most particulary with Capt. Joseph Swearingen & Gen'l. Stevens from my infancy. In the morning before the Battle, as soon as we got in sight of the forepart of the enemys encampment, next to us as we were going towards them from Chesnut Hill [sic: Chestnut Hill], the Adjutant Gen'l. addressed us thus, "Gentlemen Volunteers! you will now have an opportunity to distinguish yourselves, you are not confined to any particular platoon or Corps." these were his words to the best of my recollection, or words to that effect, when Benoni Swearingen & myself immediately advanced with such speed, that we soon left our advancing Army behind us. Prepared to defend ourselves with our rifles & swords, we got between the fire of the contending armies and it was believed by those who seen us advance, that we would both be certainly killed, but through the fog, smoke, and mercies of God, we both escaped unhurt. (the morning being very foggy, and day smokey) Before we left the Army to return home, we were both told we could have appointments in the Regiment but as our mothers were widows, and as I had one Brother who was then a prisoner with the British [possibly Henry Bedinger, pension application S8059], and another [Daniel Bedinger W8138] who had also been taken prisoner at Fort Washington and had just got home and whose life was despaired for, I returned home with my worthy companion and well tried friend Benoni Swearingen, to Shepherdstown. for this service we never asked or received any pay, although our horses and traveling expenses was paid by ourselves and was sensibly felt by me, as I was in low circumstances

In the spring of 1779 on the first day of March, this affiant in company with nine others left his home in Berkley County Virginia, and arrived at Boonsborough [sic: Boonesboro] in Kentucky on the 7th of April, where we found Capt. John Holder with only about fifteen men under his command, and the fort in great distress, and eminent danger, in consequence of a Mr. Starns and a party of 10 or 12 men having left the Fort, a day or two before our arrival and who, as it afterwards appeared, had near all fell into the hands

of the Indians – one of the party who made his escape got into the fort about 2 hours after we did, and gave the information of the defeat of Starns & his party, fortunately for us, we had missed the path, and at the time the Indians who killed Capt. Starns & his party were passing on it, we were in a thick cainbrake near to it. We had not traveled more than about half a mile until we got into the path again, and were surprised to see a large trail that had just been made; and from a broken bow[?], the shape of the feet, and particularly the pigeon great toe, (as some call it,) we were convinced that a number of Indians had passed, and that providentially our lives had been saved by our missing the path at that place. We proceed on in the path that evening and got within 6 or 7 miles of the Fort, and encamped for the night; made a fire, and laid by it until day brake without a centinel or spy to watch for the approaches of Indians. This incautious conduct was occasioned by Col. William Morgan, he was I think the oldest man except one in the company – had been in Gen'l. Braddock's time an Indian Warrior, Spy and Scout, who when some of the young boys, as three of us were called, proposed going out from the path for greater safety observed, that "we would not die, until our time come" so we remained near the path; and it was believed that this apparently improper conduct induced another party of Indians, who were seen that evening and had chased two spys, towit, Col. Estel [possibly Samuel Estill] & another. the Indians came out on the path that we were on, and it was believed they saw our fire horses &c but that they expected the fire was made to deceive them and draw them into an ambuscade. this they were the more ready to believe from the fact that the people of Boonsborough had but a short time before tied an old mare by the heel out in the cainbrake, then laid in ambush, but the Indians discovered the deception and cautiously avoided the trap set for them, a prisoner who escaped from them reported "that the Indians laughd that the white people should think that they (the Indians) could be caught in a trap like a Beaver. This affiant for fear of not giving the general circumstances of his services, discovers that he has digressed too far by running into particulars. he hopes the digressions will be excused and will return to the main subject. When we arrived at Boonsborough the distresses of the Fort induced me to join Captain John Holders company, who had the command of the Fort at that time, in which company and service I served seven months – a part of the time I acted as an Indian Spy, Scout and hunter, always taking my turn with the other men of the Fort as hunter; to this course I was induced by the feeling of Humanity and sympathy for distressed women of children who were unable to leave the Country, and who, if they had attempted it, would have been sacraficed by the Indians, who were constantly scouring the country round the Fort and would have in all probability have taken it had we not joined it when we did. I have ever considered the service I performed at this place and during this term as the most dangerous, difficult, and at the same time the most useful to my country – as we were almost continually surrounded by parties of Indians, who were lying in wait for us, and as we had to supply ourselves and the inhabitants of the fort, mainly by the success of our hunting excursions, to effect which we had to slip out at night, retire to some distance from the fort, kill our game, which was generally Buffallo, and pack it in, in some succeeding night – and by our exertions the possession of Boonsborough was retained and the lives of the Inhabitants preserved. During the above mentioned term of service and expedition against the Indian Town then called new Chilecothe [sic: New Chillicothe in Ohio] now old Chillecothe under Capt. John Bowman was planned and executed in which expedition I was called on and acted as Adjutant & Quarter Master, in which capacities I acted not less than 2 weeks, we proceeded by the way of the mouth of Licking river, were detained some time waiting for other troops to join us – then went on to the Town, made an attempt to surprise and take the Town, but owing to one of our men stationed near the houses, in the night firing his gun at and killing an Indian, the Indians were apprised of our near approach, went to work and by day light had so secured, reinforced & prepared themselves as to induce us to make a retreat the best way we could, which we proceeded to execute, were surround and so kept for about 9 hours, when as a last resort, we made a charge and broke through their forces and made our escape after having fought them about from 12 to 15 hours, and carried off from them about 300 horses and some trinkets. many of the Horses had been stolen by them from Kentucky Our Company returned to our Fort (Boonsborough)

were I remained to the end of my aforesaid term of seven months then returned to my home at Shepherdstown.

I further state that in the month of May 1781 I took the command of a company of Militia in Berkley County Va. under Col. William Darke, and marched with them through different parts of Virginia to the Siege of York. In addition to performing the duties of Captain, I had also to act as Adjutant to the Regiment and occasionally performed the duties of Major. We were the first who approached the enemy at York, was not at York at the Surrender of Cornwallis [19 Oct 1781], the term of service of my company having expired a few days before the surrender. during this term I served 5 months as Captian of the Company, and all the time performed the duties of Adjutant to the Regiment, and a part of the time as a Major.

I would further state that while I was at Boonsborough I acted for about 3 months as Commissary in issuing out salt and some provisions purchased from Hunters for the use of the Fort.

I do further state that I have not any Documentary evidence in my possession which will go to prove my foregoing services (except the Deposition of Jesse Hodges [pension application S31143] if it would be considered of that character) which I procured on the 7th instant. and that I know of no person whose testimony I can procure, except that of Henry Bedinger, of Berkley County, Peter Fisher of Jefferson County Va. and Dan'l. Bell [Daniel Bell, pension application S30271] of Mason County Kentucky also [blank space] Peck [William Peck, S31301] of the last mentioned County, should they or either of them be still living.

I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present, and declare that my name is not on the pension Roll of the Agency of any State.

The 7 interrogatories propounded by the War Department.

Int. 1<sup>st</sup>. Where and in what year were you born?

Ans. I was born in York County State of Pennsylvania on the 10th Dec'r. 1756.

Int. 2<sup>d</sup>. Have you any record of your age, and if so, where is it?

Ans. I have a copy of a record of my birth – the original is in Berkley County Virginia

Int. 3<sup>d</sup>. Where were you living when called into service; where have you lived since the Revolutionary War, and where do you now live?

Ans. I was living in Shepherdstown then Berkley, now Jefferson County, Virginia when I entered the service. shortly after the close of the Revolution, I moved to Kentucky, settled in Bourbon County near Paris, from thence I moved to the Lower Blue Lick, then in Bourbon, now in Nicholas county Ky, and have continued to live at the latter place, and in the neighbourhood of it, ever since and now live there. Since I came last to Kentucky I have been in several campaigns against the Indians, was a Major under [Arthur] St. Clair and [Gen. Anthony] Wayne both, was engaged for some time after I first came in Surveying Military lands, and subsequently served 4 sessions in Congress

Int. 4 How were you called into service; were you drafted, did you volunteer or were you a substitute, and if a substitute, for whom?

Ans. I was always a Volunteer.

Int. 5. State the names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops such Continental and Militia Regiments as you can recollect, and the general circumstances of your service?

Ans. In addition to the officers named in the body of my foregoing Declaration I was well acquainted with Gen'ls. Washington, [Charles] Lee, [Horatio] Gates. the two Stevens', Wayne and indeed nearly the whole of the Genls. Cols. & Majors in the regular and Militia service who were at any time in command in the states of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, &c. as to the general circumstances of my service, they are set forth in the body of my Declaration except short campaigns that I have not taken any notice of in said Decln. which I served during the Revolution and since.

Int. 6<sup>th</sup>. Did you ever receive a discharge from the service, and if so by whom was it given, and what has become of it?

Ans. As well as I now recollect I received a discharge from Capt Stephenson or rather from one of his Lieuts. I think the Capt. had signed the discharges before he went home to raise his Regt. and left them with one of the Lieuts to deliver to us when our time was out. I rec'd. said discharge on Staten Island about the 10<sup>th</sup> June 1776 and it has long since been lost or destroyed I also received a discharge from Col. James Wood of the 12<sup>th</sup> Va. Reg't. (see body of Decl'n.) which is also lost or destroyed. I do not recollect of having received any other discharge.

Int. 6<sup>th</sup>. Did you ever receive a Commission and if so, by whom was it signed, and what has become of it?

Ans. I do not recollect of having had a regular Comm. in my possession while in the regular volunteer service. the periods I served as an officer were short, and commissions may or may not have been made out for me. I acted in obedience to orders from my superiors and believe that I was duly authorized either by appointment or commission or both, to do so.

Int. 7<sup>th</sup>. State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighbourhood, and who can testify as to your character for veracity and good behaviour, your services as a soldier of the Revolution &c

Ans. I will refer to the Rev'd. James G. Leach, Rev'd. John Rogers, Gen'l. Thomas Metcalf, L. H. Arnold Esqr. Col. John S. Morgan, Andrew Couchman, Oliver H Stout and indeed I might name the whole of my old acquaintances in the County and adjacent Counties, and who are very numerous. I will also refer the Pension Department to the following Gentlemen now in Washington City to wit Hon. H. Clay, Hon. John Chambers, Hon. R. M. Johnson, Hon. J. I. Crittendon, Hon. Ed Lucas, Col. Jas. C. Pickett and many others I could name who would testify to my character & standing were it necessary.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid [signed] George M. Bedinger

Henry Bedinger of the County of Berkeley & State of Virginia Aged nearly Eighty One years: – declares that his Brother Major George M Bedinger, now Resident at the Lower Blue licks, Nicholas County in the state of Kentucky, and himself, did enter, as Volunteers for one year, early in the month of June 1775 in the Company of Volunteer Riflemen, then Raising in Berkeley County by Captain Hugh Stephenson, that they marched in said Company to the Siege of Boston, where and at new York & Staten Island, they served the full term of their engagement, that subsequently, the said George M. Bedinger served in Captain William Morgan's Company of Volunteers, in the Corps under the Command of Colo. Charles M. Thruston, was present in the Skirmish when Colo. Thruston was wounded [Amboy NJ, 8 Mar 1777] – but this deponent states, that George M. Bedinger, as a Volunteer, was in the Battle of German Town on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 1777, knows not how long he then served; Early in the spring of 1779 George M. Bedinger proceeded with a party to Kentucky, assisted at the defence of Boonsburg [sic] & Strodes Station [near Lewisburg in Mason County KY on the North Fork Licking River at Strodes Creek], Acted as a Spy & Scout, distributed to those who were blockaded, or cooped up, salt, sent by Virginia; and such provisions as he, with others, could procure; – during the summer of 1779; – within that season an expedition was set on foot against the Shawnees of the North West of Ohio, Commanded by Colo. Bowman to which said G M Bedinger was appointed the Adjutant, to which he acted as such, during the expedition; this Corps proceeded from Boonsburg, consisting of 260 men, made an unsuccessful attack on the Indians at their Town, was compelled to retreat with considerable loss; this deponent knows not the time expended in this expedition. This deponent knows said George M. Bedinger did take command of a Company of Berkeley Militia, in the campaign of 1781 as Captain, in the Regiment commanded by Colo. William Darke, and at same time acted as adjutant to the same, that he proceeded therewith to the Siege of York Town in Virginia, assisted at that Siege in reducing the British forces commanded by Lord

Cornwallis, – that thinks the company and Regiment were assembled and mustered for service Early in the month of May 1781 believes the time of service was about six month – a short part of this time G M Bedinger acted as Major to the Brigade commanded by Brigadier General Edward Stevens then investing the said York Town, – Given under my hand this 30<sup>th</sup> day of August 1834

Henry Bedinger Captain/ 5<sup>th</sup> Virginia Regiment/ Revolutionary Army

Be It Remembered that I Jesse Hodges of the County of Madison and State of Kentucky aged 75 years the 10<sup>th</sup> day of November Last being very Infirm but of sound mind – having not been able to leave my farm for the last 6 or 7 months, and now at my own house do hereby Certify this 7<sup>th</sup> day of January 1836. That I am well acquainted with Mag'r. George M. Bedinger and have been since April 1779 – in April 1779 George M. Bedinger now Mag'r. Bedinger came to Boonsborough in Company with Col'n William Morgan Mag'r. Thomas Swearingen and others and soon after they came to Boonsborough the said Bedinger Myself and others under the command of Capt. John Holder who was a Commissioned officer under Virginia lift Boonsborough to join Col'n. John Bowman command and got in company with him at or near the mouth of Licking on the ohio River – as soon as we joined Col'n. John Bowman the said George M. Bedinger was appointed Adjutant and Quartermaster and was continued as such throughout the campain against the Indians – My Impression is the said George M. Bedinger remained in now kentucky and ohio about 7 months before he left for Virginia – While under the command of Col'n. John Bowman we marched to Chillacothé and took about 300 horses from the Indians – and soon after Returned to Boonsborough. In was nearly all the time the said George M. Bedinger was in this section of Cuntry in Company with with him and do with pleasure state that he was a willing and an efficient soldier and so believed by others –  
and further saith not.

[signed 7 Jan 1836] Jesse Hodges

Mason County Circuit

At a meeting of the Mason County Court on Monday the 13<sup>th</sup> February 1837 William G Bailick Presiding Personally appeared in Open Court & being first duly sworn Deposés & says – Daniel Bell That in the month of September 1781 I was in the militia of Virginia and in the company of Captain [James] Prim and was at Williamsburg in Virginia training for some time, and from thence I was marched to the siege of Yorktown.

Whilst our company was training at WilliamBurg In first became acquainted with Maj'r George Michael Bedinger who commanded us at WilliamsBurg and musterd the men as adjutant and was general called and recognized as a Captain. But whether he was in actual commission or not I do not know – after the troops were marched from WilliamsBurg to the seige of York the said Majr. Geo M Bedinger marched with the troops to the siege of york where he the said Bedinger continued to command & muster the men as adjutant until I was taken sick, a short time before the Surrender of York. I have known Majr Bedinger ever since that time, and have frequently conversed with him about our revolutionary struggles, and have ever recognized the said Bedinger as a Captain of the Revolution. I have also conversed with William Peck who is resident of this town, & who is now as I am informed lying on His death bed, and the said Peck has informed me he has been a long while acquainted with Majr Bedinger.

The deponant further states that from his knowledge of Majr Bedinger and his high standing in Society, every credit is due to his word on his oath. [signed[ Daniel Bell

GEORGE M. BEDINGER

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 201.]

FEBRUARY 9, 1842.

Mr. ANDREWS, from the Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, submitted the following  
REPORT:

The Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, to whom was referred the petition of George M. Bedinger, report:

That the declaration of the applicant states that he was in the service of the Revolution between the years 1775 and 1781, inclusive, seven times, including service as Indian spy in 1779 at Boonsborough and its vicinity; the last of said services being that of captain (much of the time doing the duty of adjutant) five months at and immediately preceding the seige at Yorktown. His first tour commenced in the year 1775, and continued one year, during which he was at the seige of Boston. The whole time stated amounts to about two years and a half: but your committee doubt whether the service at Boonsborough, and in that region, as proved, is of that nature embraced within the principles upon which your committee have acted in recommending relief by pension; and that service is rejected.

Your committee think the proof of service one year as private (the first tour) and the last five months as captain, sufficiently corroborated by the testimony adduced. The remainder of the time your committee think not very definitely proven; but as there is proof that he was in the service at other different periods, though the time is not particularly set forth by the witnesses, your committee believe no injustice would be done by allowing three months therefor; and have concluded to report favorably on said petition, and ask leave to bring in a bill for a pension for five months as captain, and fifteen months as private, under the provisions of the act of June 7, 1832.

[A marked copy of the above act shows that credit for the five-months service was finally granted at the rank of sergeant rather than captain. The bill was approved 27 July 1842.]

NOTES:

Peter Fisher in statements dated 21 June 1834 and 14 Jan 1837, as well as in his own pension application (R14157), stated that Bedinger had served as Captain, Major, and Adjutant on the tour to the Siege of Yorktown.

On 4 June 1844 Henrietta Bedinger, 68, applied for a pension stating that she married George M. Bedinger on 11 Feb 1793, that he died 8 Dec 1843, and that about 1 Feb 1844 she moved from Nicholas County to Bourbon County. Matty Bedford stated that she was older than her sister, Henrietta Bedinger, by about five years, that their surname before marriage was Clay, and that the marriage of her sister and George M. Bedinger occurred in her home in Bourbon County. Daniel P. Bedinger stated that his mother, Henrietta Bedinger, resided with him, and he submitted a portion of the family register from a Bible transcribed as follows: "George Michael Bedinger was married to Henrietta Clay February 11<sup>th</sup> 1793."