

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of John Archer W5348 Elizabeth Martin VA Sea Service
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 28 Dec 2016.

Navy Board Journal

Thursday May 15th 1777.

Present Mr. Whiting, Mr Travis, & Mr. Archer.

Mr. John Blassingham is desired to furnish Lieut John Archer, with a flat-bottomed boat, for the purpose of landing Anchors, from on board the Sloop Scorpion.

Saturday May 24th 1777.

Present Mr. Whiting & Mr. Archer.

Ordered that the Keeper of the Public Store, let Lieut. John Archer have such goods, as he be in want of, on his paying for the same.

Thursday Oct 16th 1777

Present Mr. Travis, Mr Archer & Mr Lewis.

Ordered that the Keeper of the Public Store, deliver to Lieut John Archer, as much cloth as will make him a suit of clothes, upon his paying for it.

Thursday 1st January 1778.

Present Mr. Whiting – Three Letters from Commodore [Walter] Brooke, Two from Capt Tompkins, one from his Excellency the Governor, one from Capt. Eliezer Callender [Eleazer Callender], and one from Lieut John Archer, were received, and being severally read are ordered to be filed.
true extracts Jas. E. Heath Aud Virg'a.

Williamsburg 22^d August 1778

Capt John Archer Sir

Your being appointed to the Command of the Boat now building under the direction of Captain Paul Loyale [Paul Loyall] of Portsmouth make it necessary for you to proceed with industry to get your sails and rigging ready, to do which you must employ on the best terms possible such persons as are proper for the execution of the business the materials shall be sent to Portsmouth early in the ensuing week a consideration well deserving your attention is the high wages asked by seamen, therefore in my opinion you should only engage for the present such a number as are indispensably necessary. Remember the speedy completion of this matter will give us advantages which a future day may deprive us of the situation of the Bay is more a grand object, and sufficient to induce us to make the most industrious exertions Let me hear from you often.

I am sir you mo Obd Serv Thomas Smith

I do certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a letter contained in an old letter Book for the year 1778

Given under my hand at the Auditors office Richmond 2^d August 1832

Jas E Heath Aud'r Pub. Accounts

Norfolk Borough to wit [17 July 1832]

The affidavit of Mrs Elizabeth Martin aged seventy five years and upwards taken before me John E Holt Mayor of the Borough of Norfolk. the said Elizabeth Martin being duly sworn saith that she was well acquainted with Lieutenant John Archer of the State Navy of Virginia during the War of the Revolution. The said Archer commenced service in the year seventeen hundred and seventy five and was attached to the Brig Liberty which vessel was in the early part of the War, commanded by Captain George Rogers of the said State Navy of Virginia. The said Archer was actively employed in the said Naval service except when a prisoner to the British according to the best of her recollection until the close of the War. the said Archer and the said Captain George Rogers were taken prisoners by the British in the year seventeen hundred and seventy eight, or seventeen hundred and seventy nine, and after the said Archers

liberation and return to Norfolk he informed this affiant that they had both been closely confined in New York as prisoners by the British and that the said Rogers had died from confinement and from a jail fever he had contracted. The facts here detailed have been impressed on the mind of the Witness from the circumstance of her having received the addresses of both Captain Rogers, and Lieutenant Archer at the time they both joined the Navy as before stated and she well remembers that after the said Archers return from Captivity the family of Capt Rogers with whom this affiant was very intimate considered him (Captain Rogers) as having died in the manner stated by the said Archer The said Archer died on the Eighteenth day of October in the year seventeen hundred and ninety three

Elizabeth Martin

Norfolk July 30, 1832

Mr Frederick Vincent

Sir, I will certify that I was acquainted with Captain John Archer who was formerly of the State Navy of Virginia during the Revolutionary War. He commanded the Vessel that conveyed a detachment of State troops & Militia from Portsmouth Virginia to Hampton commanded by Lieutenant Fleet and myself on our way to Yorktown immediately after the seige in 1781 the said Archer at his death left a brother named Edward and a sister named Fanny, with both of whom I was well acquainted

your Obed't. Serv. Stephen Wright [pension application R11907]

[Capt. John Cox, pension application S8223, also certified that he had known John Archer.]

Norfolk Borough

At a Quarterly Session Court held the 22^d day of August 1842

Elizabeth Martin aged Eighty six years being first duly sworn according to Law doth on her Corporal Oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions made by an Act of Congress of the 7th of July 1835 or of any subsequent amendments which have since been made to the said Act or which may hereafter be made entitled and Act granting half pay and pensions to certain widows, that she is entitled to the benefit of the provisions of the said Act of Congress or of any subsequent amendments thereto by virtue of her first marriage with John Archer, who was a Lieutenant in the Virginia Navy in the War of the Revolution that she cannot state particularly his services which were rendered previous to her intermarriage, although she knows he was a Lieutenant in the said Navy and served under Capt. George Rogers on board the Look Out boat the Liberty, that while on board the said Boat or Schooner (as she believes the boat was) he was captured by the enemy, carried into New York and held in Captivity till sometime in the year 1778 when he was released and returned home. She further declares that her maiden name was Calvert, that she intermarried with the said Lieutenant Archer in the Borough of Norfolk on the twelfth day of March 1792 at the residence of her mother Mary Calvert, that the marriage was solemnized by the Reverend James Whitehead of the Protestant Episcopal Church, that her said husband John Archer departed this life on the 18th day of October 1793, that in the year 1799 she again intermarried with Alexander Martin, that the said Alexander Martin, has been dead many years probably thirty years or more, that she is now, and has been since the death of the said Alexander Martin a widow and has always resided and does now reside in the said Borough of Norfolk, and lastly she declares, that the heirs at law of her first husband some Eight or ten years ago obtained from the State of Virginia and the United States land and money for the Services of the said John Archer during the War of the Revolution as an officer of the said Virginia State Navy.

[Elizabeth Martin made similar declarations on 31 Aug 1842 and on 7 Aug 1843 in applying under later pension acts. Thomas R. Ingram deposed that he had been at the wedding of John and Elizabeth Archer.]

NOTES:

The file includes a copy of the last will and testament of John Archer dated 15 Oct 1793 and probated 28 July 1794. The will names the following heirs: his wife Elizabeth; brother Edward Archer and

his wife; niece Anna Maria Archer; sister Frances Archer; and nephew John Archer.

A letter dated 9 Aug 1845 states that Robert Archer, administrator of the estate of John Archer, was allowed half pay for John Archer's services from 3 Sep 1783 to 18 Oct 1793, and that half pay was still due from 22 Apr 1783, when Archer's services ended. A letter from the Pension Office dated 1 May 1846 states that John Archer was not in the service after 31 Dec 1781.

The file contains a letter dated 30 June 1851 stating that John Archer had no children when he died, and inquiring whether Mary Archer, then 94, was due additional benefits.

Originals of some of the above documents are among the [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia](#). Some online images are undecipherable.]