

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

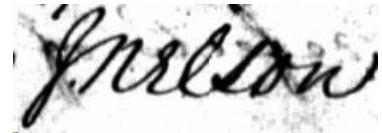
Pension Application of John Nelson W5414

Nancy Nelson VA Half Pay

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 31 May 2015.

To the Hon'ble the Speaker & Members of the Gen'l Assembly [of Virginia]

The Petition of John Nelson humbly & respectfully sheweth, that your Petitioner was appointed a Capt in [Theodorick] Bland's (the first raised on the continent) Regiment of Horse, in the month of June 1776 & marched to the north in the same year & joined the Continental army in the State of Jersey; that he was afterwards, in the year 1779 appointed to command four troops of Horse raised for the defence of the State, with the rank of Major Commandant; that as soon as the Corps was raised & equipped, he was ordered to the South as part of the State's quota of troops & served under Baron De Kalb & Gen'l [Horatio] Gates until the month of Nov'r of the same year, when he was ordered back in consequence of the invasion of the State by a British Army, under Gen'l. [Alexander] Leslie; that he was ordered back to the South under Gen'l Green [sic: Nathanael Greene]; when the State was invaded by Arnold [Gen. Benedict Arnold, 5-7 Jan 1781] & he continued to serve under Gen'l Muhlenburg [sic: Peter Muhlenberg] til the arrival of Gen'l LaFayette under whom he continued to serve as long as he continued to command in this; & remained in service til late in the year 1782, long after there was an enemy to contend with. Your Petitioner conceives that under several laws of this state, he is entitled to half or commutation pay & finding that several officers were allowed as commutation half pay by the last assembly, who became supernumerary as early as the years '78 & '79, he prays that he may be allowed his, & as in duty bound he will ever pray &c.



Aud. Off. January 9, 1827.

It does not appear by any evidence in this office that John Nelson ever received half pay or commutation.
J E Heath Aud.

Major John Nelson of Mecklenburg County was first a Captain in the Virginia Continental line early in the Revolution & served I think with the northern army in Blands Regiment of Cavalry until about the end of 1779 or beginning of 1780. He was a major of Cavalry in the Va State line & served to the south in 1780 under De Kalb, Gates & Greene; & in 1781 he served as Major aforesaid in Virginia under Lafayette, Muhlenburg &c till the end of the siege at York [19 Oct 1781], & formed part of the escort that conducted the prisoners to Maryland or wherever it was their place of destination; & I have always understood & have no doubt as far as the lapse of time will permit any ones recollection to serve, that he continued either in actual service or was a supernumerary to the end of the Revolutionary War, having never heard of his having resigned. But with respect to dates & other particulars, from a most thorough, long & intimate acquaintance with Major Nelson & knowing him as I do to be a man of the strictest honor, morality & truth, his own statements I rely much on to corroborate, at least the substance of the above, or correct any errors that there may be in the minute details arising from the defects of memory.
John Nicholas Cap & Lt Col Rev'ly Army

State of Virginia, to wit.

On this thirteenth day of November in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred & thirty-seven, personally appeared before me a justice of the peace, Nancy Nelson formerly Nancy Carter, a resident of the county of Mecklenburg & State of Virginia, aged seventy four years who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on her oath make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress, passed July 4th 1836.

That she is the widow of Major John Nelson, who entered the army of the Revolution, a Captain of Cavalry, in Blands regiment, in the month of June seventeen hundred seventy six, that in the year seventeen hundred & seventy nine, he was appointed Major Commandant of a Corps of Cavalry, in the State Cavalry of the Virginia Line – that he continued in command of said corps, til the latter part of the year seventeen hundred & eighty two – that he continued as a supernumerary til the treaty of peace & in eighteen hundred thirty two, that his Executor received from the government of the United States, his half pay for life, which terminated the eighteenth of February eighteen hundred & twenty seven.

She further declares, that she was married to the said Major John Nelson, on the twenty fifth day of July in the year seventeen hundred & eighty one, that her husband, the aforesaid Major John Nelson died on the eighteenth day of February, in the year eighteen hundred & twenty seven & that she has remained a widow ever since that period, as will more fully appear by reference to the proof hereto annexed.

[signed] Nancy Nelson

[The following are from [rejected claims in the Library of Virginia.](#)]

Sep 26 1783

Colo Meriwether will give Maj Nelson a land certificate as a Maj'r Commandant of Horse
Benj Harrison

The undersigned respectfully represents to the Executive, that he is the legal representative of his Father, the late Major John Nelson, who as a revolutionary officer, was entitled to additional bounty land, for military services. The validity of the claim for additional land bounty, was frequently asserted by Major Nelson to the undersigned, during his life, & its justice, must be evident from public documents, as his name is found on the list of those officers, who have been reported by John H. Smith, the commissioner appointed to investigate such claims, as justly entitled to additional land bounty. the quantity of land claimed as due to him by Major Nelson is two thousand acres. All which is respectfully submitted.

John Nelson/ May 14th 1836

NOTES:

On 5 Feb 1839 John Nelson, son and Executor of John Nelson deceased, swore to the authenticity of a family record transcribed as follows:

John Nelson & Ann Carter were married the 25th July in the year 1781 in the Chapel of Wm. & Mary College.

Thos. Mauduit Nelson was born the 27th Sept'r 1782

John Nelson was born the 31st March 1784

Lucy Nelson was born the 11 Sept'r 1785

Robert Nelson was born the 30th Jan'y 1787

Hugh Nelson was born the 22 Nov'r. 1788

Nancy Carter Nelson was born the 27th Sept'r 1790

William Nelson was born the 31st July 1792 and his daughter Anna Matilda Nelson was born the 15th November 1817

Mary Nelson was born the 16th March 1794 & died the 20th April 1795. The Lord's will be done.

Nath'l Nelson was born April the 9th 1796 at Oak Hill

Caroline Matilda was born December 24th 1798 at do.

5th of April 1802 The Lord took unto himself my dear little Nat. "He can create & he destroy."

Sarah Nelson was born 14th August 1802 and on the 25th November following was taken from this transitory life to be made a little Angel

18th of February 1827– John Nelson departed this life.

25th of February 1830 Hugh Nelson departed this life.

24th of May 1831 Nancy C. Kernan wife of E. Kernan departed this life.

In Richmond VA on 21 Mar 1838 Robert Greenhow, 77, stated that “Secretary Nelson of York had two sons Thomas & John,” and that the older son married Sally Carey, eldest daughter of Wilson Miles Carey, and that she died shortly after giving birth to a son named Carey Nelson. He also stated that the second son was Major John Nelson.

Among the [Library of Virginia Legislative Petitions Digital Collection](#) is an 1847 petition from Mecklenburg County by Mary Ann Nelson, widow of Hugh Nelson, and their children: John C. Nelson; Rosalie J Kennan, wife of Richard Kennan; Hugh Nelson; and Sally M. Nelson. (A supporting document adds Lucy Swayne and her husband Josuah Swayne.) The petition alleged that Hugh Nelson had inherited bounty land on the Ohio River from his father, John Nelson, but after moving to settle on the land he discovered that Virginia had granted the same land to Gen. George Rogers Clark, William Reynolds, John Harris, and Jacob Myers. Some of the 41 images in the file are illegible.

With this petition is a letter dated 31 Aug 1827 from John Nelson of Abbeville VA to “Doctor Hugh Nelson” at Columbus Post Office in Hickman County KY enclosing a copy of the last will and testament of their father, John Nelson, dated 6 June 1826. Among the bequests are the following: “Whereas I have made deeds, to my sons Thos & Robt & Hugh for the land I have given them & to my two oldest daughters deeds for the Buffaloe plantation, I now give to my daughter Matilda the land on Hico [sic: Hyco River], purchased of Wm Pointer, & confirm to them the gift of all the negroes I have heretofore given them, except the girl Sukey, which I give to my grandson Charles Thomas Nelson.... In the division of my negroes, I give to my son John, Lucy Parker with her increase, to my son William, I give the boy George, in lieu of Phil, deceased – to my son Thomas, I give Samson, Nanny, Kesia & all their increase, also Jim Powel & Tom Powel – to my son Robert, I give Tom Austin, Mary Austin & all her children, to be valued as part of his share in the general division of my negroes – the residue of my negroes, I direct shall be equally divided & in families as nearly as may be, among my sons John, Robert, Hugh & William deducting the value of those given to Robert, from his share in the general division & I desire they may be divided by my son Thomas – as my old servant Lewis can’t be of much more service, I give him & his wife to my son John, to take care of in his old days. To my servant Corbin I give his freedom, as far as he can enjoy it in this state. If he prefers emancipation & to quit the state, let him be emancipated.”