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 resigned 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 loop 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.


[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

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

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.

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:
[Many of the names that can be discerned appear to me to be German.]

[p 51]

Received 7 March 1831

I hereby certify that I Major John Roberts of Culpeper Virginia in the war of the revolution he was in Frederick Town Maryland in 1779 or 1780. I always believed him to be an officer – that he continued to the end of the war never hearing to the contrary: cases frequently occurred in which the officers were with no command but I do not think it probable that any officer would be in service in 1781 & then resign if he could get a command we then had more
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

[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.

Lucy Ann Roberts

[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.
Roberts' Memorial
November 19, 1796
Cts Justice
December 5, 1796 Rejected
Reported