

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of John Demasters W3394 Martha Demasters VA
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Virginia Nelson County S.S.

On this the 23rd day of July 1842 personally appeared before Edmund F Coffey a Justice of the Peace in and for the county aforesaid Mrs Martha Demasters a resident of the County and state aforesaid, aged Eighty two years and upwards who first being 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 John Demasters deceased who was a soldier in the war of the Revolution; that she is unable to state precisely how long her said husband was in service, but that he enlisted early in the war (she has understood) for two or three years and served his time out and was married to her the said Martha after his return home on the 29th day of July Seventeen hundred and seventy nine by Parson Weddle in the county of Augusta where they went to be married from Amherst County, that after they were married, the said John was again called in service and went to the south, was taken sick in service at a River Dan and returned home in very feeble health after being absent forty days, that the said John never applied during his lifetime for a Pension preferring to do without it, but always said he was entitled to it, he did apply though for his land bounty, before he died which has been rec'd by his legal heirs since his death, that her husband the aforesaid John Demasters died in the County of Nelson in the year 1830 and that she has remained a widow ever since that period as will more fully appear by reference to the proof hereto annexed Martha herXmark Demasters

State of Virginia }
Nelson County } SS.

On this 25th day of April eighteen hundred and forty five personally appeared before the subscriber a Justice of the peace in and for the said County of Nelson in the State of Virginia, Martha DeMasters alias Martha Masters a resident of said County of Nelson in the State of Virginia, aged eighty 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 the 4th 1836. That she is the widow of John DeMasters alias John Masters, who was a private soldier in the revolutionary war, that her husband the said John Demasters enlisted in the service of the United States under Captain Samuel J Cabell [Samuel Jordan Cabell] in the year 1776 in the Virginia line on Continental establishment to serve for the period of two years the said Demasters served out the period of his enlistment and returned to the County of Amherst (now called Nelson) and married the Declarant Martha Moran on the twenty ninth of July seventeen hundred and seventy nine. They went to the County of Augusta for the purpose of being married by Parson Wadell who lived in that county. She refers for futher proof of her marriage to the papers filed with her previous declarations in the war department

After their marriage her husband the said John Demasters alias Masters was called upon to go again into service, and left home for a southern expedition he went as far as the river Dan, and was taken sick, and after forty days returned home. her marriage therefore took place before the last period of her husbands service. Their oldest child Winifred was born on the 6th of February 1781; for proof of her husbands service she refers to the fact the bounty land was drawn on account of his revolutionary service. See the land office in the City of Richmond; and the record of certificate having issued to him. The Certificate was issued in the name of John Masters, but the receipt for the certificate was signed with the name of "John Demasters of Nelson County" [See endnote.]

John Demasters was born on the 14th October 1754 and died in the year 1830. Martha Demasters the declarant was born July 17th 1760. She has no documentary evidence of her husbands services except that which is filed in the land office at Richmond Va.

That she was married to the said John Masters alias Demasters at the time before mentioned and has

remained a widow ever since his death as will more fully appear by reference to the proof hereto annexed The last service of her husband was performed in the year seventeen hundred and eighty one. He left home before the battle of Guilford [Guilford Courthouse NC, 15 Mar 1781] in the militia at the time such large numbers of the Virginia militia were called upon to oppose the British.

Martha herXmark Demasters

I Edmund F Coffey a Justice of the peace in and for the County of Nelson in the state of Virginia certify that the foregoing declaration of Martha Demasters was subscribed and sworn to before me. I further certify that the declarant is unable on account of old age and sickness to attend court for the purpose of making her declaration. I further certify that I have been acquainted with the said John Demasters and his widow the Declarant from my earliest recollection, and that the said John Demasters has universally been believed to be a soldier of the revolution, and of the fact I have not the slightest doubt. I further certify that the children of the said Demasters alias Masters drew land bounty on account of his services, and that there was no other Jno Demasters alias John Masters in the county of Nelson who was old enough to have been a revolutionary soldier. I further certify that Winifred Demasters the oldest child of Jno Demasters alias Masters was nearly as old as myself, and I am sixty six years old. The said Jno Demasters and his widow the said Martha Demasters lived together from the time of my recollection as husband and wife and I have no doubt they were lawfully married the said Marth Demasters has remained a widow ever since the death of her husband the said Jno Demasters and is now a widow. She is moreover a credible person any her statements are therefore entitled to full belief. I further certify that I myself divided the scrip for the land bounty among the heirs of the said Demasters alias Masters. The name of "Demasters" is frequently written "Masters" in the neighbourhood. Witness my hand this 25th day of April 1845

[signed] Edmund F. Coffey J.P.

State of Virginia }
Nelson County } S.S.

At a Court held for said County, at the Courthouse, on Monday, the 28th day of April, 1845.

The affidavit of Charles Purvis, made in open Court, before the Court of said County of Nelson, on the 28th day of April, 1845.

The affiant having been first duly sworn according to law, deposed as follows, to wit: That he will be Eighty six years old on the eleventh day of next December, and has resided in this County for more than seventy years. That he was acquainted with John Demasters, alias John Masters, who was a soldier of the Revolution, and resided in said County of Nelson. The affiant further deposed, that a considerable number of men of this County enlisted under Captain Samuel J. Cabell, about the commencement of the Revolutionary war, and went in to the service of their Country. The Affiant believes that John Demasters, alias John Masters, was one of the number who enlisted at that time under the command of said Cabell. The affiant having resided in the neighbourhood, was acquainted with a great many who enlisted about that time. The said Demasters, alias, Masters, after his first period of service was terminated, returned to this county, then included in the County of Amherst, and was married. The Affiant is quite certain that the said Demasters was married before the close of the Revolutionary War – at any rate, he was a married man at the termination of said war. The said Demasters, alias Masters, has always been considered a soldier of the Revolution, and the affiant has no doubt of the fact, notwithstanding, that he never served with him – for the affiant was exempted from military service on account of bodily infirmity. (Signed) Chs. Purvis

State of Virginia }
Nelson County } SS

Affidavit of Col Charles Perrow made in open court on this 26th day of November 1845

The affiant having been first duly sworn according to Law deposed as follows to wit that he is fifty seven years old, and that for twenty five years past he has been a practising Lawyer[?] That he was

well acquainted with John DeMasters alias Masters who died some years since in said county and that he has always understood and believed that the said DeMasters alias Masters was a soldier in the Revolution under the command of Samuel J Cabell who went in to service from the county of Amherst. From about the year 1805 till 1808 the affiant has frequently seen the said Col Samuel J Cabell meeting with his old soldiers upon court day at Amherst Old Court House at which times he was in the habit of treating them. The affiant has seen the said DeMasters and Col Samuel J Cabell in company, and Col Cabell always recognised the said Demasters as one of his old soldiers in the Revolutionary war and he has no doubt that said DeMasters was a regular soldier of the Revolution, for he was always regarded and believed to be such in the county of Nelson, and he was likewise regarded as a man of Honesty and veracity. In testimony whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name this 26th Nov 1845

[signed] Chas. Perrow

[28 Jan 1846] I Martha Demasters of the County of Nelson & State of Virginia having made a Declaration on oath, in order to obtain the benefits of the provision made by the act of Congress passed July 4th 1836 in which I stated that my deceased husband John Demasters served a tour of forty days after marriage when he was taken sick and returned home, do now set forth the following facts, towit, that my memory has not been very clear in relation to my said husbands services during the Revolutionary War, but that having conversed much concerning the matter recently, with others, and had my memory refreshed, and believing that I am lawfully entitled to a Pension from the United States I am induced to state in addition to what I have heretofore said, that I believe my said husband returned home on furlough at the time he was sick, (spoken of in my former declaration) and after his recovery returned to the army again, that she is the identical widow of John Demasters dec'd. who rec'd. land for his services of which she hopes abundant proof has been exhibited and that this her explanation will be deemed satisfactory.

Martha herXmark Demasters

NOTE:

No record was found for a bounty warrant issued to John Demasters either by Virginia or by the federal government. There may have been some confusion with John Masters (pension application S36057), who received a land warrant from Virginia.

A letter from the Amherst County Clerk's office states that no record could be found of the marriage of John DeMasters, alias Masters, with Martha Moran. The file includes part of a family register written at the end of a New Testament, transcribed below. Written on the page is "Purchased 1818/ De Master."

A letter dated 7 March 1843 states that John Demasters had a brother named Ed Demasters.

On 25 April 1845 Mary Coffey, 40, stated that her mother, Martha DeMasters, had been mistaken in the date of John DeMasters's death – that he actually died in March 1831, which she remembered because one of her children was born the day before.

The file includes a letter by Nicholas DeMasters of Waynesboro dated 3 Feb 1847 inquiring on behalf of his grandmother, Martha DeMasters, how to apply for additional pension.

John D Masters was born Oct. the 14th 1754

Martha D Masters Was Born July 17th 1760

Winiford D Masters was Born Febuary the 6th 1781

Nancy D Masters was Born April the 27th 1783

James D Masters was born October the 18th 1785

Nicholas D Masters was born Febuary the 18th 1788

Jane D Masters was born Oct. the 13th 1791

Jesse D Masters was born March the 19th 1793

John D Masters was born December the 15th 1796

Moris D Masters was born October the 29th 1801

Polly D Masters was born December the 4th 1804