

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

Bounty Land Warrant of William Blackwell BLWt1861-300 VA
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 4 July 2014.

[The following is the only primary document in the file.]

Land Warrant No. 1861 for 300 acres issued on the 17th July 1832 in the name of Elizabeth Scott only surviving child and heir at law of William Blackwell deces'd. who was a Captain in the Virg'a. line – in virtue of the Special Act of Congress approved 14th July 1832. Wm. Gordon Clk.

[The following are from [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia](#). Some online images are illegible.]

Tuesday Jan'y 21st 1777

The committee of the Treasury reported that they have had under consideration the requisition of Capt William Blackwell for a sum of money to be advanced him bounty and subsistence of his company in a Virginia Regiment under the command of Col [Moses] Rawlings, that there shou'd be advanced to the said Col Rawlings, he to be accountable the sum of 1477:85 and that the sum to be delivered to the said Capt Blackwell for the purposes aforesaid.

[In the item below missing parts of the online images are indicated by * or inferred in brackets.]

Washington Feb 7th 183[0]

Sir [Alexander Scott]

I received yesterday your letter making enquiries respecting the military services of Capt. William Blackwell deceased. H[e] was in July 1776 appointed a Captain in a regiment composed partly of Maryla[nd]ers and party of Virginians which was [I] think to be commanded by Colo. McG[*]; probably Robert Magaw] or Colo. Rawlings. The Maryland part of [*] was captured in Fort Washington [16 Nov 1776]. The Virginia companies were not completed ti[ll] about the close of the year 1776. In the b[e]ginning of 1777 they were attached to th[e] 11th Virginia Regiment then command[ed] by Colo. Daniel Morgan. I was well acquainted with Capt. William Blackwell and know that he served through the campaign of 1777. In the course of the year 1778 as well as I recollect the number of Virginia regiments was r[e]duced by putting two together, and several officers became supernumerary there being no troops for them to command. I do not know certainly whether Capt. Blackwell resigned or became a supernumerary officer, liable to be again called into service. [See endnote] I do not recollect his resignation, and am confident that I did not see him afterwards in the army.

I have always understood that the muster rolls of the continental army were burn[ed] when the war office was consumed in this city. The public papers in Virginia were destroyed by the British during the invasion by Arnold [Gen. Benedict Arnold, Jan 1781], but I do not suppose those papers contained any evidence of Capt. Blackwells service

I do not believe that any person now alive can say whether Capt. Blackwell resigned or became a supernumerary. Every officer from the county [Fauquier] except myself, is, I believe dead. Capt. Philip Slaughter [W29886] of Culpeper was an officer in the same Regiment and may possibly be able to give some [*]tion on the subject, tho' I do not thin[k] [*] I do not recollect any other officer [*] [r]egiment that is now alive. I am Sir very respectfully your obed't/ [signed] J Mars[hall]
[John Marshall, pension application S5731, Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court]

Washington Feb. 18th 1830

Dear Sir [Alexander Scott]

Your letter of the 15th is just received. I was first Lieutenant in Capt. William Blackwells company. No person I believe ever doubted his courage. He conducted himself as other officers without attracting any

particular notice.

I am very respectfully your obed't



Dear Sir [Alexander Scott]

March 28th 1830

Your letter of the 2^d this Ins't. came to hand to day, I am sorry it not in my power to give you the satisfactory infomation you require, I was acquainted with Cap. Wm. Blackwell previous to the revolion I think as well I can recollect he went into the service in 1776 and left the service sometime in year 1778 that he had the commission of a Captain but wheather he retired from the service on furlough or as a supernumary I can't inform you or what Regiment but think was the 10th in the Va. line in the Continental service, I was near neighbour to Cap'n. When he died and know that your Wife Mrs. Elizabeth Scott was his only child I shall be glad to give you any information in my power, Please present my respects to Mrs. Scott I am with Respect your most Ob't. Serv't./ Wm. Foote

Culpeper September 25 1830

Dear Sir Your favor dated the 24th of July last [several illegible words] did not come to hand untill this Thursday on Court day. I can with truth say that it will at all times afford me pleasure to give any & all the information that may be required by the Descendants of any of the old Brother Officers I shall therefore proceed to [illegible word] you, which information I possess respecting the services of Capt Wm Blackwell In July 1776 the Committee of Safety of the County of Culpeper (for I was then Clerk) proceeded agreeably to a decision from the General Committee of Safety, then sitting in Williamsburg to appoint a Captain, & other Subaltern officers & raise a Company of Rifle Men [several illegible words] I was appointed a Lieutenant – the June next the Committee of Safety of Fauquier County [several illegible words] appointed William Blackwell Captain & John Marshall Lieut [the rest illegible]
[signed] Phil Slaughter

Augusta Va 10th Dec'r 1830

Sir [Alexander Scott] Your letters of Oct'r. & Nov'r 20th arrived on the 3rd Instant. To your first & fifth Interrogatories I answer that I was well acquainted with William Blackwell of Fauquier. He was a Captain in the Virginia Line on Continental Establishment, and, my recollection is, belonged to the 11th Virg'a. Regiment.

To your 2nd 3rd & 4th Interrogatories I answer that I have no distinct recollection of the precise time Captain Blackwell was in actual service but, from circumstances, believe it could not have been much mor or less than two years.

At or near the close of the campaign of 1778 the ranks from various causes had become thin, and the recruiting service having lingered, It was thought proper to blend & consolidate the Regiments which left a considerable number of supernumerary officers, some of whom were ordered on recruiting service, others to retire. until called for and some few perhaps too umbrage [two or three illegible words] and resigned but to which of these classes Captain Blackwell belongd I do not now remember About that time however he [illegible word] the Army and I think it most [illegible word] as a supernumerary.

Captain Blackwells patriotism or bravery I believe was never questioned or doubted by any.
respectfully/ our ob s't/ Ro. Porterfield [Robert Porterfield S8965]

To the Honorable the Governor and Council of the Commonwealth of Virginia;

The memorial of Elizabeth Scott respectfully sheweth, that your memorialist is daughter and sole representative of the late Captain William Blackwell of Fauquier County, that her father was appointed in July 1776 a Captain in the Virginia service and continental line, Chief Justice Marshall, being, as he states his first Lieutenant (no 2) It appears from the evidence submitted that Captain Blackwell was a

patriot, and a brave and meritorious officer (no 4 & 6) that he was at the head of his company at the battles of Brandywine [11 Sep 1777] and Germantown [4 Oct 1777]; that he belonged to the eleventh Regiment (see adjutant Gen'l Porterfield's letter No 14). it is proved by Col Slaughter (no 3) that the 11th Regiment was, about two years after Captain Blackwell entered the service, consolidated and annexed to the 7th Virginia Regiment and a number of officers discharged as supernumeraries; it is very certain from the testimony here presented that at or about that time Captain Blackwell left the army. Neither Chief Justice Marshall nor any other person remembers to have heard that he resigned; on the contrary the respectable revolutionary officers herein referred to, are of opinion that he left the army as a supernumerary. Captain Thomas Blackwell [S35193], who served to the end of the war states that "being a near relation and [one or two illegible words] of great intimacy with Capt Blackwell, the resignation [illegible word] so intimate a friend at that critical period of the revolution wou'd have made so deep an impression on his mind that he must have retained a recollection of it!! (no 10) William Foote Esq'r whose estate joined that of Captain Blackwell, is uncertain whether he returned on furlough or as a supernumerary (no 5) For the character of Mr Foote see Nos 6 & 7) Your petitioner wou'd observe that most of the military Documents in relation to the Virginia troops were consumed by fire in Washington (see No 1) She is therefore compelled to resort to [several words missing from the online image] of the testimony of surviving revolutionary officers; after the lapse of half a century, the ravages of death, the destruction of fire, and the casualties of time and chance it is matter of surprize that she has been able to throw so much light on a subject, which in a few years more would have been buried in the midnight of oblivion. Your memorialist wou'd observe that her father and all his brothers, three in number were found at the post of honor in their country's course (see 3^d auditors statement) Her uncles did not resign and why shou'd it be presumed that her father did? The same motives of patriotism which induced him to take up arms, wou'd have prevented his resigning while his country required his services. Your memorialist wou'd observe that her father died in 1785 when she was about six years old, & she having married at an early period, has from the time of her father's death been incapacitated from prosecuting her rights – In consequence of this long delay, her witnesses are few in number, tho high in respectability. She has often heard her mother (who died in 17[last two digits illegible]) say that her father was entitled to land and pay for his military services. A similar statement was made many years ago to your memorialist's husband by the late uncles Col John [John Blackwell, possibly BLWt264-300] and Col Joseph Blackwell [S37781].

Your memorialist, under an impression that her father was entitled to five years pay, or the Commutation, at the last session of Congress presented a petition, which was referred to the committee on military affairs in the Senate. No report was made, but the chairman, Col Benton, stated to your petitioners husband, that "the committee was perfectly satisfied with the testimony as establishing the facts of Captain Blackwell's having served two years, and retiring as a supernumerary or deranged officer, but that having been deranged prior to 1780, when the resolve of Congress passed, no precedent allowing similar claims cou'd be found" – that this was the only difficulty in the case, is proved by the letter of the Hon'ble Mr [illegible], a member of the committee (see no 15). The committee admitted that Capt Blackwell had a good claim on the United States, for one years pay, and three hundred acres of Land but it was too [two illegible words] the session for another petition.

Your memorialist reflects with pleasure that he native state has always been distinguished for gratitude, justice, and liberality, to thos brave men, who in the hour of danger repaired to the standard of their Country; who encountered the inclemencies of the Seasons, and perils of war, to obtain that independence which we now enjoy; by whose valor this nation has been able to assume a high rank among the sovereign powers of the earth. It is gratifying to her to reflect that her father and all her uncles were in this number. Your memorialist under these circumstances prays [unknown number of words missing form the online images], and that they will direct a warrant for her father's bounty land as a Captain serving from July 1776 to the end of the war to be issued in her favor.

[signed] Elizabeth Scott

[A note at the bottom of the above states that 4822 acres were claimed, of which Elizabeth Scott received

4000 acres. Among [rejected claims in the Library of Virginia](#) is her petition for the additional bounty land. In addition there are the following.]

I was well acquainted with the late Captain William Blackwell of the Virginia line, on continental establishment. He was appointed a Captain by the Court or Committee of Fauq'r County, I forget which in July 1776 (as well as I remember) in a regiment composed partly of Marylanders and partly of Virginians, to be commanded, I believe, by Col Stevenson. The second in command was Col Rawlings. I was myself appointed first Lieutenant of the company on the same day. The Maryland companies were captured with Lieutenant Col Rawlings in Fort Washington as I have always understood, and believe. The Virginia companies were not then completed, and did not march until late in 1776, or early in 1777. The original regiment being broken up by the capture of a large part of it in Fort Washington, the Virginia companies including Captain Blackwell's, were placed in the 11th Virginia Regiment then commanded by Colonel Daniel Morgan. Capt Blackwell served thro' the campaign of 1777. At it's close he went home, and as well as I can recollect I have never seen him since. I think he marched with us to Valley Forge and left us there. I certainly have no recollection of his resignation, and think my situation in the company wou'd have induced me to notice it had the fact occurred

J. Marshall July 6th 1831

In a former certificate I mentioned Col Morgan as the original Colonel of the regiment in which Captain Blackwell was appointed. That mistake was occasioned by the fact that Col Morgan was captured in Fort Washington I am since satisfied that Col Stevenson was to command the regiment. Tho' this variance is unimportant, I think proper to mention it. I never saw Colonel Morgan or Col Stevenson

J Marshall

State of Virginia and City of Richmond Ss

The Honorable John Marshall this day appeared before me the subscriber an alder in and for the said city and made oath that the foregoing certificate by him subscribed, is true according to the best of his knowledge and remembrance. Given under my hand this 6th July 1831

James Rawlings

[Copy certified by Alexander Scott.]

Augusta County Virginia

Mr Alex'r Scott/ Sir

Sept 20th 1831

Your letter of the 31st Ultmo was duly received; my health however and other circumstances, and especially an unwillingness to undertake wielding a pen with my tremulous hand, has prevented in this my complying with your request. You have my statement and affidavit Below.

Yr obedt Servt/ Ro. Porterfield

I hereby certify that I was well acquainted with William Blackwell dec'd late of Fauq'r County Virginia. He was a Captain in the Virginia line in the War of the revolution. He belonged to the 11th Regiment, which was blended and consolidated with the 7th regiment. My recollection is some time in the year 1778, about which time Capt Blackwell retired from the army, and I believe did not again join in during the war – but whether Capt Blackwell resigned his commission obtained a furlough, or retired as a supernumerary I have now no distinct recollection, but am under the impression that he retired as a supernumerary

Given the 20th day of Sept 1831

Ro Porterfield late a Captain in the 11th Virginia Regiment.

[Certified copy.]

NOTES:

Virginia provided bounty land to soldiers who were in active service or supernumerary to the end of the war in 1783.

According to F. B. Heitman's *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army During the War of the Revolution*, William Blackwell resigned on 10 Jan 1778. Muster rolls of the combined 11th

and 15th Regiments for June 1778 and afterward do not list William Blackwell. Nor is he found on muster rolls of the 7th Regiment in Sep 1778 and afterward. William Blackwell is not listed among the officers made supernumerary at the White Plains Arrangement of 14 Sep 1778 (<http://revwarapps.org/b138.pdf>).