

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of William Martin W9937              Jane Martin        NJ  
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Virginia        }  
Harrison county towit:    }

On this 21<sup>st</sup> day of August 1832 personally appeared before William A. Rogers, John Reynolds, Benjamin Bazzell and Joseph Johnson the court of the said county of Harrison, William Martin resident on Elk creek in the said county aged sixty eight years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions made by the act of congress passed June 7, 1832: That in the Spring of the year 1779 he was called upon by Charles Stewart commissary general of issues in the army of the united states to join the army then lying on the banks of the Raritan River in the neighbourhood of Middlebrook New Jersey, to aid and assist in the commissary department for issuing rations to the continental troops; that he accordingly joined the army in April or May 1779 and was associated as assistant commissary to Capt. McKnight (whose christian name is not recollected) the issuing commissary of rations; that he marched with the army from the banks of the Raritan river towards West Point by the way of Smiths cove [sic: Smiths Clove] near New Windsor on the Hudson river; that the army was encamped at Smith's cove in part or in the whole, at the time Gen'l. Wayne took Stoney Point [Anthony Wayne, Stony Point, 16 Jul 1779]; that the army afterwards marched from thence to West Point where he continued in the commissary department until some time in the latter part of the fall following; at which time by the order of Col. Stewart (the commissary general) he went to Pittstown, New Jersey, to serve as assistant to James Johnson commissary of issues in that place; that he remained in that place in the commissary department until he again received orders from Col. Stewart to repair to Raritan landing near New Brunswick to assist John Bray [pension application W12026] commissary of issues in that place; and that he remained in that place until the close of the war. He thinks that Bray retired from the commissary department some months before the close of the war.

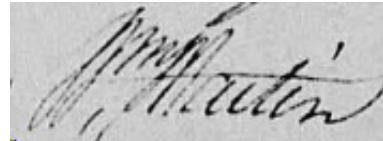
That after the close of the war Col. Stewart the commissary general called upon him and directed him to make out his account against the government, stating that he was going on to Philadelphia to settle with government and that he would have his account allowed and draw his pay for him; that before he had completed his account Col. Stewart set off, so that his account was never forwarded; and that he has never received from said Stewart or from the Government one cent, directly or indirectly, for his services, as finding that his wages were scarcely worth seeking at the close of the war by reason of the great depreciation of paper money, he abandoned the pursuit.

That he entered the service as before stated in the spring of 1779 and remained in it as already detailed until the close of the war or a short time previously; that he was living on the South branch of the river Raritan in Lebanon township county of Somerset, New Jersey, at the time he entered the service, and that he removed from New Jersey to Harrison county Virginia in the month of November 1786, in which he has ever since resided.

That he knows no one whose testimony he thinks he can obtain, who can of his own personal knowledge testify to the services herein detailed; Col. Stewart, and Capt. Johnson are dead what has become of McKnight he knows not; Bray he thinks it probable is still living some where in the state of New Jersey; and thinks that he can obtain his certificate to the purport of this declaration if it shall be deemed indispensible. He has however annexed hereto the affidavit of the Rev'd John Davis [W8654] himself a soldier of the revolution, and who has seen this applicant in active service in the commissary department as he has detailed.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or an annuity except the present and he declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any agency in any state.

Sworn to and subscribed the day & year aforesaid

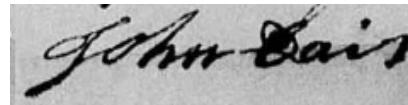


[Daniel Kincheloe and George S. Davisson certified Martin's character for veracity and his reputation as a soldier of the Revolution. David Davisson certified as Clerk of Harrison County.]

State of Virginia      }  
Harrison County towit }

On this 17<sup>th</sup> day of July 1832, personally appeared in open court before William Davis, James Fleming, Joseph Johnson, Caleb Boggiss the court of the said county of Harrison, now sitting, John Davis, a resident of the said county, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth certify that he well knew William Martin whose declaration is hereto annexed in the war of the war of the revolution; that he well knows that he served in the said war in character of assistant commissary to John Bray, commissary of issues, stationed at Raritan Landing near new Brunswick in the state of New Jersey. And the said John Davis doth further certify that he is seventy seven years of age, was himself a soldier of the revolution, and is now a minister of the Gospel.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

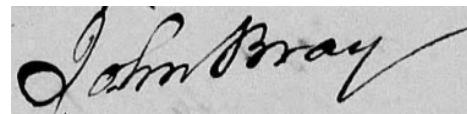


Middlesex County Ss

Personally appeared before me one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said County John Bray who being duly sworn deposeth and saith that Colo. William Martin now a resident in Harrison County in the State of Virginia was an Assistant to him in the commissary of Issues department at Raritan Landing in said County of Middlesex in the State of New Jersey from the month of December seventeen hundred & seventy nine till near the close of the Revolutionary War in the year seventeen hundred & eighty three that he cannot ascertain with precision the exact time of his service but thinks it was not less than three years, as to his other services this deponent professes to have no particular knowledge but from his character for veracity has no doubt of the correctness of his statement

Sworn & subscribed before me the 31 day of May 1833.

Thos Hance



[The file contains a letter from James Parker, Member of Congress, dated 28 Jan 1835, certifying the handwriting in the above letter and stating that Bray died in 1834.]

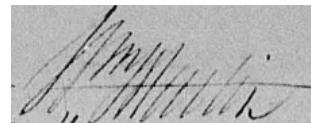
Virginia Harrison County Ss} Oct 8<sup>th</sup> 1833

This day Colo William Martin the annexed applicant for a pension personally appeared before me one of the acting justices of the peace in and for said County of Harrison, and after first being sworn according to Law, doth on his oath make the following amended declaration

States that Ch's Stewart Commissary General of issues who was vested with full power to appoint Commissaries of issues, appointed him as assistant Commissary in the rmy, under which appointment he continued to act as stated in his annexed Declaration, – That he was not employed under private contract, but that he was actually an acting assistant Commissary. That he was not employed on civil contract, nor as a clerk to a Commissary or Commissaries, but that he received authority from the above Com'is Gen'r'l to act as an assostant Com'is in the ary of the united states

That he was not privately employed but employed by authority of the Government vested in said

Com'a Gen'rl and served as an assistant Commissary in the servise of United States, and did actually belong to the Continental Line, – October 8<sup>th</sup> 1833  
Sworn to signed sealed and delivered before  
me as a justice as a above stated  
John [illegible] JP



Virginia Harrison County Ss.

On this 26<sup>th</sup> day of October 1833 personally appeared before me a justice of the peace in and for said County, John Wilson Jr. Esqr. and after being duly sworn according to Law deposeth, and saith, that he has been acquainted with John Bray whose affidavit is herewith annexed, for a number of years, and that the said John Bray is a man of veracity and integrity, and that any statement made by him (Bray) is entitled to full faith and credit. [signed] J Wilson Jr

Sworn and and subscribed the 26<sup>th</sup> day of October 1833 before me, W P Goff J.P.H.C.

[On 5 Nov 1833 William Martin was issued a certificate for a pension for service as Assistant Commissary at the rate of \$80 per year, which was actually the rate for a Private. The pension was subsequently increased to \$480 per year.]

[The following report is by US District Attorney Washington G. Singleton who investigated hundreds of pension applications from present West Virginia. For details see my appendix to the pension application of David W. Sleeth S6111.]

Col. William Martin draws \$480—

on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 1834 Col Martin gave the following narrative of his age and revolutionary services to wit – is a native of New Jersey, was born 1763.

In the Spring of 1779 he joined the army as an assistant commissary under the direction of Charles Stewart of New Jersey, Commissary General of issues – he Martin was not commissioned as assistant commissary, but in the service as before stated under the direction of Charles Stewart. – he received no pay. although he remained in service in the capacity before stated during the war – at the end of the war Charles Stewart called on him to make out his account saying that he was going on to settle his own – and whilst there would settle his (Martins) Stewart went off without gitting his (Martins) account and the matter has rested unsettled to the present day – and he has never received a cent for his services directly or indirectly, either from Stewart, or the Genl. Goverment – he made no contract with Stewart for his service. At the age of fifteen and a few months, being expert at figures and with the pen, Stewart being a neighbour of his Fathers – requested him (Martin) to join the army as before stated – & he done so – he joined Washingtons army when it lay on the Banks of Raratan River, in the neighbourhood of Middlebrook and Barn brook [sic: Bound Brook], and was attached to Capt. McKnight a nother assistant commissary – from there in the next succeeding spring the army moved to Smiths Coves, State of New York – & there lay when Gen'l. Wayne took Stoney Point – after remaining at Smiths Coves for some time he was transfered to James Johnson a nother assistant Commissary of issues at Pitts town New Jersey – here remained for some few months and was then transfered to the Raratan landing in the neighborhood of New brunswick to assist John May a nother assistant Commissary of Issues at that place & continued with him to the end of the war

In testimony that the forgoing statement contains the truth, I hereto subscribe my name July 21, 1834  
Wm. Martin

Note – there is surely something wrong in this case – it is manifest from the statement here given that Col. Martin was not even considered an officer by himself or any body else, whilst he was in servis – through out his whole statement he shews conclusively, that he was aiding assistant commissaries in keeping their accounts and collecting provisions – in other words – he was employed by these assistant commissaries as a clerk – it will be remarked that he does not pretend that he served under Gen'l. Charles Stewart—

W. G Singleton/ Nov. 20, 1834

Clarksburg Harrison Co Va March 25th 1836

Mr J L. Edwards [James L. Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions] sir: I have been informed that William Martin of this county is now drawing \$480 per year for services rendered to the U States dureing the Revolutionary war as commissary &c. It was with astonishment that I learned the fact, as I had been informed that Mr Singleton had made an unfavourable report upon his case, and that he had been stricken from the pension roll; but after enquiring into the matter I found that he had been stricken from the pension roll; but has since been reenstated upon the recommendation &c of John Wilson (who is his son-in-law,) W P. Goff, (who assisted in drawing his declaration) J. J. Allen (then member of congress, and courting popular favour) E S Duncan, and John Davis the latter of whome has made a deposition which gows to substantiate Martins claim; – Now sir it is a remarkable fact that there is not a Man in this section of the country who is acquainted with Mr Martin, who believe that he is entitled to a pension the above named persons excepted – in the first place he is too young to have performed any valuable service to the U States [see endnote]. In the second place he was a bound boy living with an uncle of his by the name of Bray, who was a Commissary in the Revolution, and who drew a pension for the same: – When the pension law of March 7 1832 [sic] passed, Mr Martin was asked by a number of his neighbours if he was not entitled to a pension under that law, he said that he was not, – that he had never performed any Revolutionary services – that he was too young and was a boung boy; indentured to his uncle Bray; But these acknowledgments were mad at a time when he did not expect, or anticipate a pension, (these facts can be prooven). The onely testimony as I am informed that Mr Martin has to substantiate his claim is a Mr John Davis, who (by examining your records) you will see has made different statements relative to his own services and that he has since been stricken from the pension roll (as I am informed) [see endnote] – If the war Department wishes any testimony which will throw any light upon Mr Martin's claim; and will furnish me with a copy of his Declaration, togather with a copy of the statements made to the department by John Wilson, W P Goff, J J Allen, E S Duncan and John Davis I will freely furnish it to them. It is at the same time due to the goverment to suspend Mr Martins pension (at least) untill his claim to it can be fairly investigated, at which time I have no hesitancy in saying that he will be stricken from the pension roll – and receive the animadversion of the goverment for having practised a fraud upon it; as well as to refund the money improperly drawn from the treasury. Perhaps it may be due to Mr Martin to state that he may have been induced to make application for a pension through the solicitation of John Wilson Jr who is his son-in-law, and who has made use of all his money; and who, by the by, is considered a very “artful” man; –

For the truth of any thing which I have stated please call upon Joseph Johnson, Member of Congress from this place.

Please to consseder this, and give me the result of your deliberations.

I remain with respect yours &c

W. K. Shinn

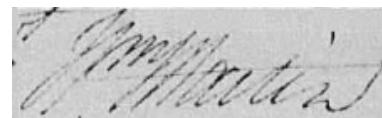
Clarksburgh October 30<sup>th</sup> 1836

Sir [Edwards] The Messrs Werninger & Co this day handed me your letter of Oct'r 11, 1836 I am much surprised at learning that my pension has been stoped in consequence of information rec'd at the office since the suspension in Jan'y 1835 If I have been correctly informed the matter was on that occasion refered to the Hon'ble L. Cass Secretary of War and that Gentleman after hearing the Objections directed the pension to be paid. I learn from Mr Allen at that time Representative in Congress that the secretary considered the claim to depend entirely on the evidence of the late Judge Bray of New Jersey and to have determined that if Judge Bray was entitled to credit there was no room for doubt the Affidavit of Judge Bray was proved to have been written by himself and his high standing and the credit to which he was entitled was established by the certificate of the Hon'ble Mr Parker and others of the New Jersey delegation They bore testimony to his character and vigour of intellect which satisfied the department, and it was to have been passed that after the matter had been thus deliberately investigated and the decisive opinion of the secretary of war obtained no further difficulty woud have occured and that the claim would not have been suspended upon information communicated I fear by some malicious

enemy that such information would not have outweighed the evidence of a distinguished gentleman whose character was above reproach putting out of view my own declaration verified by oath the declaration filed gives my age correctly I was born in October the 10<sup>th</sup> 1763 and was appointed an assistant commissary in the spring of 1779 these facts were before the secretary and commented on as I am informed when the subject was brought to his notice he did not deem them of such a character as to affect my claim on the contrary it is understood he remarked that men entered into the service at an early age and the question was not whether I was too young to perform the duties well but whether I was appointed to perform them and did so that to this point the evidence of Judge Bray was full and the only question was whether it was entitled to credit. I learn from your letter that the information communicated is that I was too young from which I infer that the information received is that I was younger than I set forth in the declaration and that the declaration in this particular was false for I take it for granted if the declaration on this particular is rec'd as true there should have been no difficulty. There is no person in this Country who lived in the place of my nativity that I know of who was deposed to the time of my birth & I cannot imagine that evidence can have been procured from this quarter that my declaration as to my age is untrue Will you do me the favour to send me on a copy of the letters of my assailants If not much mistaken it will be in my power on being furnished with their names and charges to shew you that credit has been given to individuals totally unworthy of it I can furnish evidence that I came to Harrison County V.A. in the year 1786 that I was then a man of full age and to all appearance as old as I represented my self I had a family record kept by my father shewing the births of his Children this is not now in my possession I hope some of my children have it. If so I can procure it. If you will do me the favour to point out what additional testimony is required I will try and furnish it, but it does seem hard that after a [paper damaged] has been so fully investigated and my right under the law established to the entire satisfaction of the head of the department that my pension upon which I supposed I had a right to rely for my support should be suspended upon the ex parte and secret information of malicious and designing men

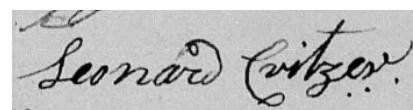
I have mention this matter to Judge Allen the former Representative he observed that perhaps in the multiplicity of your business it is not improbable you may have forgotten what occurred before the Secretary of War, but that I have correctly stated what did occur as communicated by him to me on his return and as now recollect by him

I am respectfully your obt servt



Harrison County and Commonwealth of Virginia  
personally appeared before me John B Lowe a Justice of the peace in said County Leonard Critzer [S9251] of said County and made oath that he was Born in the State of new Jersey and moved from s'd state to virginia that in his youthfull days he was well acquainted with Wm Martin who Claims a pention for his services as Isuing Commissary in the revolutionary war I am now in my seventy ninth year and have always considered said Martin five or six years younger than myself I was well acquainted with Charles Stewart Commissary General of issues and knew that William Martin was assistant Commissary under him that during my servise in the continental army I at sundry times drew provision and forage from said martin Comisary of issues that I have lived in Harrison County forty Eight years and have had frequent Conversation with said Martin about our servises in the united states army and further the deponent sayeth not  
teste/ John B. Lowe

the 21 December 1836



Col William martin

December the 26<sup>th</sup> 1836

Der Sir

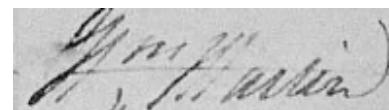
Wilson K Shinn Showed me a letter from the pension office conserning your Claim to the benifit of the act of Congress of the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1832 and said he would proseed to have you stricken off of the pension roll as you had taken a actif part a gainst him which I advised him to do nothing in your pension and I avised Shinn to burn his papers as I beleived it was don more through Ill Will then any knowledg he had of fact

Resptfulley/ your obt servent/ Jacob Coplin

Clarksburg Va. December 30<sup>th</sup> 1836

Dr Sir [Edwards] I regret to learn from your letter to me of the 11<sup>th</sup> Ult to that you consider it incompatible with your duty to disclose the name of the person who has been communicating with the department in relation to my case. the rule may be a necessary one, and its convenience may justify its Injustice. A right to a pension I had supposed was acquired under the law and not held at the will of the officers charged with its execution, least of all could I have imagined that in this County the anonymous whispers, of for ought I can tell, some person unworthy of belief would suffice to deprive a person of that which having once been deliberately and on full proof accorded as his due he had every reason to consider as his own. A citizen of this County has forwarded me the enclosed letter. If Mr Shinn was the Informant, the records in your own files would be sufficient to discredit his testimony [see endnote]. He to is a young man, he could have no personal knowledge of what he has stated, and even if he pretended to have any the notorious Infamy of his character ought to deprive his evidence of any weight. It is difficult at this distance of time, and living as I do so remote from the State of New Jersey to procure the evidence required, you have the evidence of Judge Bray, and the certificates as to his character, you have also If my memory does not fail the affidavit of the Rev'd John Davis formerly of this County now of Lewis County va, and I have since been enabled to procure the affidavit of Leonard Critzer of this County a Pensioner and besides a respectable Freeholder whose character Col. Joseph Johnson of the House of Representatives knows to be irreproachable for he is his neighbour & friend. The objections I understand are Two. First I wast too young I have given my age correctly in my own affadavit, and I have proved that I was actually engaged in the service, the same objection was made originally, and was answered satisfactorily. Young men did enter into the service, many at a very early age those who placed me in office supposed me old enough to perform the duties of it. And If I did perform them who has now a right to object. Mr Critzer who is in his 79<sup>th</sup> year says he considered me five or six years younger than himself And In fact I will be seventy four years of age next october and was in my 16<sup>th</sup> year of age [i.e. age 15] in the spring of 1779 when I entered the service. And as to my services what stronger proof can man offer at this distance of time, Judge Bray proves them Davis proves them. And now I am enabled to furnish the affidavit of Mr Critzer. He knew commissary Item[?] he swears that he frequently drew provission & forage from me I being Commissary of Issues. I doubt exceedingly whether there is any pensioner on the rolls whose claim depends upon the proof of witnesses, who has produced stronger evidence than I have Throwing out of view my own affidavit, my services the Capacity in which I acted and the time have all been established by the testimony of men whose characters have never been Impeached I have I may venture to add passed this a life not altogether barren of events I have filled the offices of Col of M'a [Militia] of High Sherriff for several years and of Justice of the peace of the County where I reside for many years and still fill the latter office. And my character for veracity I believe has never been assailed. I cannot but hope that when you deliberately review the case you will not hesitate in coming to the conclusion that a claim so cautiously investigated and so well sustained ought not to be dissallowed on the vague and unfounded surmises of some dark and malicious Informer. In support of my charges against Mr Shinns Character I herewith enclose copy of the records of the Courts of this County

Respectfully yours &c



Harrison County court October Term 1836

At a court called and held at the court house of Harrison county on Thursday the 13<sup>th</sup> day of October 1836 for the examination of Wilson K Shinn who stands charged with having on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of June 1836 at Harrison County stolen and fraudulently taken away withdrawn or avoided a certain paper being a parcel of a record in a certain cause therein being a prosecution on behalf the commonwealth against the said Wilson K Shinn. This cause was adjourned until today being a regular term of said court which said court proceeding to the examination of the charge aforesaid the court consisting of Elias Stilwell, Jonathan F Randolph, Benjamin Bassil, Michael D. Gittings, John H Woodford, Wm T Morgan and Jesse Flowers, Gent Justices of the peace the prisoner being set to the bar and duly arraigned pleaded "not guilty" The evidence and arguments of counsel being fully heard the court are of the opinion that the defendant is guilty, and therefore it is considered that he be remanded to the circuit superior court of law and chancery for trial to be had the therein

The defendant then moved the court to admit him to bail Thereupon it is considered by the court that he be admitted to bail by entering into a recognizance in the penalty of One thousand dollars with one or more securities in a like sum of One thousand dollars conditioned for his appearance before the Judges of the circuit superior court of law and chancery &c

Whereupon the said Wilson K Shinn and George Shinn & William A Sandy of Harrison county here in Court acknowledge themselves to owe and be indebted unto Wyndham Robertson lieutenant Governor now acting as Governor of the commonwealth of Virginia in the sum of One thousand dollars and the said George Shinn and the said William A Sandy in a like sum of One thousand dollars of their respective goods and chattles lands and tenements to be levied and to the said lieutenant Governor and to his successors in Office Rendered – Yet upon this condition, that if the said Wilson K Shinn shall personally appear before the Judge of Our circuit Superior court of law and chancery at the next term of said court to answer an indictment to be prefered against him for the offence wherewith he stands charged and shall not depart thence without leave of said court, then this Recognizance to be void

A Copy Test D. Davisson C.H.C.

I Granville G Davisson Clerk pro tempore of the circuit superior court of Law and Chancery for Harrison county do hereby certify that at the Fall Term 1836 of the said court; the Grand Jury then empanelled, presented an Indictment against Wilson K Shinn for Perjury "A true bill" also an Indictment to same for Felony "a true bill"

Given under my hand this 29<sup>th</sup> day of Dec'r 1836

G. G. Davisson

NOTES:

In the federal census for Harrison County William Martin is listed on 23 July 1850 as age 86.

Contrary to Wilson K. Shinn's assertion, John Davis was never stricken from the pension roll. In the pension application of Thomas Smith (S15989) Singleton wrote that Shinn's cases were "all wrong, and one of them manifestly fraudulent."

On 12 Sep 1844 and on 13 July 1850 William Martin assigned power of attorney to obtain an increase in his pension, with back pay. On 19 Aug 1850 James L. Edwards increased the pension from \$480 to \$600 per year.

On 20 July 1853 Jane Martin, 59, applied for a pension stating that she married William Martin on 23 Feb 1815, and he died 25 Aug 1851. She signed a power of attorney witnessed by Luther Martin. James Little certified that William and Jane Martin "raised a considerable family of Sons and Daughters." On 16 Sep 1853 Jane Martin was issued a certificate for a pension of \$600 per year.

On 3 Nov 1873 Jane Martin, 79, successfully applied for bounty land stating that as Jane Chidester she was married to William Martin on 3 Feb 1815 by Phinius Wells, a Baptist preacher. This application was witnessed by Nathan Goff and J. H. Shuttleworth.

The file includes a copy of a bond signed in Harrison County on 22 Feb 1815 by William Martin and Daniel Stringer for the marriage of Martin to Jane Powers.

On 26 Dec 1853 Jane Martin accused Frederick A. Werninger of illegally withholding her pension certificate "for the purpose of exacting and demanding from her a most exorbitant charge." A letter in the file states that Jane Martin died on 29 April 1879.