

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

Virginia documents pertaining to James Cunningham VAS3222
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

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

To His Excellency John Rutherford Esq'r Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia
Dear Sir I beg leave to bring to the notice of the Executive the claim of William E. Cunningham and others heirs at law of the late James Cunningham who was a Lieutenant in the State Navy of Virginia during the War of the Revolution, for the land Bounty due for his services, and which has never been received.

The facts are founded principally on the affidavit of his relation Commodore James Barron [W12264], who at the time referred to, was a Midshipman in the Naval service of Virginia; who states that the said Lieutenant James Cunningham perished at Sea in the year (1779) one thousand Seven Hundred & Seventy nine, and I beg leave to refer to certain testimony filed in the cases of Doct Harris [Simon Harris VAS12] and of Capt John Cooper [sic: John Cowper VAS1568], the latter Capt Cooper was the commander of the vessel. The claims of the heirs of Doct Harris and Capt Cooper, for land bounty were recently allowed by the Executive. And in addition I beg leave to submit the affidavit of Sarah Tucker establishing the same facts.

I cannot doubt for a moment, but that this claim will be allowed, as it depends on the same testimony, which established the claims of Capt Cooper and Doct Harris. As a personal favour, I most respectfully solicit, your early consideration of this claim; and be pleased to communicate to me the result. I am anxious to visit the City of Richmond on business, but will defer it, until I hear from you

Yours Respectfully/ James Murdaugh/ [undeciphered word] Nov'r 27th 1841.

To His Excellency John Rutherford Esq'r Governor of Virginia
Your Petitioner William E. Cunningham in behalf of himself and the other heirs of James Cunningham dec'd who was a Lieutenant in the State Navy of Virginia during the War of the Revolution, beg leave to represent that from what they have learnt, that the said James Cunningham was lost at Sea in the year 1779, and he believes the statement made in the foregoing letter of James Murdaugh contains the facts as he believes, that the said James Murdaugh has been appointed the attorney to prosecute, their claim to Bounty Land, due for the services of the said Lieut. James Cunningham, and prays that the Executive would allow the claim for Bounty Land due for the services of the said Cunningham.

Wm E. Cunningham/ for himself & other heirs

Sally Tucker being first duly sworn deposeth and saith, that she knew James Cunningham, who was in the Navy during the War of the Revolution, that he was lost at sea, during the War, as she understood that he never was married, and that he died leaving two brothers William Cunningham and Samuel B. Cunningham; that William Cunningham was the oldest of the three brothers, and died about the year 1795, leaving the following children, viz. James, Mary, Ann, William, Elizabeth and Robert B. Cunningham that James Cunningham (son of William Cunningham deceased) died leaving two children viz William E. Cunningham and Mary L. Brooks That Mary Cunningham married Alexander Wilson and died leaving two children viz. Helen Wilson and Elizabeth Starke

That Ann Cunningham married Thomas Gatewood and died leaving three children viz. Philemon, William and Elizabeth; that Elizabeth Gatewood daughter of Ann as aforesaid married Gabriel Williamson and died leaving two children viz Thomas and Elizabeth Williamson

That William Cunningham (daughter of William Cunningham Sen'r. deceased) married Richard Gatewood, is now living, and that Robert B. Cunningham is also living

[8 Nov 1841]

[signed] Sarah Tucker

At a Court held for Norfolk County the 20th day of November 1841.

The Court doth certify upon satisfactory evidence produced before it, that James Cunningham who was a Lieutenant in the Virginia state navy during the war of the revolution and who was lost at sea, that the said James Cunningham died without having married and without issue leaving William Cunningham his heir at Law. That the said William Cunningham died about the year 1795 leaving the following children viz: James, Mary, Ann, William, Elizabeth and Robert B. Cunningham his heirs at Law. That James Cunningham (son of William) died leaving two children viz. William E. Cunningham and Mary L. Brooks his heirs at Law. That Mary Cunningham married Thomas Gatewood and died leaving three children viz: Philemon, William and Elizabeth her heirs at Law; that Elizabeth Gatewood daughter of Ann as aforesaid married Gabriel Williamson and died leaving two children viz: Thomas and Elizabeth Williamson her heirs at law, That William Cunningham (son of William Cunningham died died without having married and without issue leaving his sisters Mary, Ann and Elizabeth, and his brothers James and Robert B. Cunningham his heirs at Law. That Elizabeth Cunningham (daughter of William Cunningham Sen'r deceased) married Richard Gatewood and is now living and that Robert B Cunningham is also living
Copy Teste Arthur Emmerson jr 1 DYCC[?]

NOTE: According to *The History of Virginia's Navy of the Revolution* by Robert Armistead Stewart, Lt. James Cunningham was aboard the boat *Dolphin* when she perished with all hands on board. E. M. Sanchez-Saavedra, *A Guide to Virginia Military Organizations in the American Revolution* states that the *Dolphin* sank off Cape Henry after a fight with three British tenders. For additional detail, see the endnote to my transcription of the bounty-land application for John Cowper VAS1568, who was captain of the *Dolphin*.