

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

Transcription of the Revolutionary War Pension Application File for Ambrose Brewer
by Foy Varner, Jr.

Source document: Series M805, Roll 118, File R1182 at the
National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C.

[Transcriber's note: This is my transcription of the Revolutionary War Pension Application of Ambrose Brewer (born ca 1753). Ambrose was born in Virginia. At the start of the War, he lived in Cumberland County, NC in the area that later became Moore County, and most of his service was in that area. After 1810 he moved to the area that became Hancock County, Tennessee, and his application was submitted from there in 1854-1855.

I requested a copy of the file from NARA many years ago and did not know at the time that I received only a portion. Chris Chester of the Brewer Surname Project with Family Tree DNA obtained photocopies of the file from Ancestry.com and placed them on the internet at <http://brouwergenealogy.blogspot.com/2015/06/the-revolutionary-war-pension-file-of.html> . The pictures do not contain all of the pages of the application, but below the pictures is a link to a pdf copy that appears to include all of the file. The various documents are not in chronological order in the file. I also received a partial transcription that was done in 2010 by Will Graves, and it helped me to interpret some areas that were confusing. There are some errors in his version, and there might be some in mine. The various handwriting is sometimes hard to interpret. There is a lot of phonetic spelling, and punctuation is often missing. There are unreadable places where the original documents or microfilm copies were damaged. Some writers mixed lower and upper case letters in places that we would not, and it is sometimes hard to tell which case was intended. There are many extraneous marks on the documents that I assume were unintended. Some were apparently caused by the writer touching the page with his pen, some are the result of ink blotches, and some are the result of bleedthrough from other pages. Thus, it is not always easy to identify punctuation, so I inserted comments in parentheses for clarification. Otherwise, I tried to transcribe the documents exactly as written, and I arranged them approximately in chronological order for better continuity. I separated individual documents by lines of asterisks, and I added some comments after some of the documents.

The application and supporting documents were filed with the state of North Carolina in November 1854 and January 1855 when Ambrose was reportedly about 101 years old. It appears to have been rejected for some unstated reason, but the rejection stamp was apparently placed on the file after 1864, many years after Ambrose had died, so it is likely that the application was not processed until after his death. I will discuss that further below when I describe the file's back cover.

Comments are certainly welcome.

July 2015

Foy Varner, Jr. (descendant of Ambrose Brewer, born ca 1753)

Email: foy@hawaii.edu]

(cover)

What appears to be the file cover has three columns, one for the state in which the veteran served and to which he applied for pension, one for the veteran's name, and one for the file number. Handwritten in those columns are:

"NC Brewer, Ambrose R1182"

State of Tennessee }

County of Hancock }

Be it known that before me George Odom a justice of the peace in and for the County and State aforesaid personally appeared Ambrose Brewer age 101 years (105 with the 5 overwritten by a heavy 1), and made oath in due form of law that he was a soldier in the Revolutionary War. he (sic; no upper case) served under Capt. Tabb, Capt. Maburn, Capt. Thurogood, and Commanded by Col. Litrell and by Major Lewis. he dose (sic) not remember the exact length of time he served under the different named Captains. he (sic) entered in the war at its commencement and served at different times altogether two years or more. he (sic) was in servis (sic) until peace was made. The greter (sic) portion of the time he served was in North Carolina and Moore County. He is now a very old man and needs some assistance (implied end of sentence) his property, his little all, was take (sic) by the enemy and destroyed. he (sic) never did received (sic) anything for his services or for the destruction of his property. all (sic) that he claims from the government now in his feeble days is for this two years services under the act of Congress of 1832.

his
Ambrose x Brewer (Seal)
mark

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 27th day of October 1854. George Odom JP
for Hancock Co

(Note: The service would have been in Cumberland County, because Moore County was formed from Cumberland County in 1784.)

State of Tennessee &

Hancock County } I Richard Mitchell clk (clerk) of the county court of said county do certify that George Odom before whom the within declaration was filed is and was at the time of signing the same an acting justice of the peace for said county duly commissioned and qualified and that his signature is genuine and full credit should be given in his official acts.

Given under my hand and (words missing; hole) seal of said county at office in Sneedville the (possible words missing because of hole) 2nd day of November 1854 for Richard Mitchell clk

By A. Campbell Dpt clk

State of Tennessee }
County of Hancock }

On the 30th day of October 1854 Personally appeared John R Smith age 91 years old and made oath in due form of law that he is personally acquainted with Ambrose Brewer who was a Soldier in the Revolutionary War (implied end of sentence) he (sic) was acquainted with him at the time that he was engaged in said war. he (sic) is fully satisfied that he served two years or more. He further states that Ambrose Brewer is now 101 (105 with the 5 overwritten by a heavy 1) years of age and is very feeble on the account of age. there (sic) is no Soldier of the Revolution that needs the assistance from the Government more than said Ambrose Brewer and there is no person that served his Country with more zeal than he did.

his
John R + Smith (Seal)
mark

Sworn to and subscribed before me the day and year above written
Ambrose Brewer Justice of Peace

(Note: The Justice of the Peace Ambrose Brewer signed his name and must have been a younger Ambrose Brewer than the veteran. He was probably the man listed in the 1850 Federal Census of Hancock County as age 32, and he was probably a grandson or nephew of the veteran.)

(letter)

Washington (sic) Nov. 10. 1854

Hon L P Walds
Com of Pensions

Sir

Enclose (sic) you will find the application of Ambrose Brewer who was a soldier in the Revolutionary war. he (sic) states that has (sic) never received anything for his servises (sic) in said war. (sic; obvious period) and is entitled to a pension under the act of 1832. please (sic) examine the enclosed papers and report to me

Im Sir yours
Resply
R L Smallwood

(Note: The position of R. L. Smallwood is not evident from this letter. I assume that he was an official with whom the application was filed and that he in turn had forwarded it to the United States Commissioner of Pensions. He obviously received feedback from the Commissioner as proven by a letter of 25 Jan 1855 below when he submitted further supporting documents.)

State of Tennessee }
County of Hancock } SS

On this the 15th day of January 1855 personally appeared before me an acting Justice of the peace for the County and State affore said (sic) Ambrose Brewer a resident of Hancock County in the State of Tennessee, aged about 101 years who being first duly sworn according to Law, dothe on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed on the 7th day of June 1832 (end of sentence) he (sic) entered the serves (sic) of the United States under the following named officers and served as is here in stated. he (sic) was at one time under the command of Captain Tabb also Captain Maburn also Captain Thuragood also Colonel Litrell and Major Lewis (end of sentence) the (sic) latter named Colonel (the word "Major" is crossed out and "Colonel" is written over it) was killed in a skirmish with the Enemy. he (sic) does not recollect how long he served under each of the above named officers, but he was with the scouting parties from the commencement of the war untill (sic) peace was declared. He was never attached to the main boddy (sic) of the army but was in several scurmishes (sic) with the enemy as a ranger, in which capacity he acted during the War, and his position was most of the time in Moore County North Carolina. He volunteered for a ranger or scout, and so engaged hence he never was in any regular engagement. He is not aware that he ever drew any pay for his serves (sic), though he received moneys (sic) several times, but he does not recollect for what it was paid him. He has no documentary evidence of his service never having received a discharge as he is aware, but can prove his serves (sic) by one or more witnesses. He here by (sic) relinquishes (sic) every claim to a pension or anuity (sic) except the present, and declairs (sic) that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state.

Sworn to and subscribed before } his
me the year and date afforesaid (sic) } Ambrose X Brewer (Seal)
James D Green JP mark

(Note: The service would have been in Cumberland County, because Moore County was formed from Cumberland County in 1784. Be aware that a DAR application reportedly said that Ambrose served under Colonel Cleveland at the Battle of Kings Mountain on 7 Oct 1780, according to "A History of the Hamblen and Allied Families", published in 1940 by or in "Franklin". That participation is suspect without proof, and there is no mention of that engagement in Ambrose's pension application.)

State of Tennessee }
County of Hancock } SS

On this the 15th day of January 1855 personally appeared John R. Smith aged about 90 years before me James D Green an acting Justice of the peace in said County, and makes oath in due form of Law that he is personally acquainted with Ambrose Brewer who was

a Soldier in the Revolutionary War, and that he was acquainted with him when engaged in the servese (sic) of said War in a Company Commanded by Captain [Tabb] (sic; the brackets appear to be part of the original script) who halted in Command of his Company at the Residence of his Fathers (not clear whose father) in Moore County North Carolina when in persuit (sic) of the enemy. and (sic) he John R Smith further states that he believes this was in the Summer of 1777 and that he saw him at another time engaged in the servises (sic) of the aboved (sic) mentioned War under Capt Thurogood in Moore County North Carolina which was in the Spring of 1778 but he has no recollection of seeing said Brewer from this time on untill (sic) after peace was made, since which time he further states he has bin (sic) personally acquainted with said Ambrose Brewer who is reputed by him and all who knws (sic) him as a Soldier of the Revolution War, and a truthful upright though poore (sic) Citizen.

his
John R xv Smith (Seal)
mark

Sworn to and Subscribed to }
before me on the day and date }
above written }
James D Green JP

(Note: The service would have been in Cumberland County, because Moore County was formed from Cumberland County in 1784.)

State of Tennessee }
County of Hancock }

I James D Green an acting Justice of the peace in and for the County and State aforesaid do Certify that I am personally acquainted with the said John R Smith who having subscribed to the above declaration is a man of Credibility his statement is entitled to Credit.

Given under my hand and seal } James D Green (Seal)
this the 15th day of January 1855

State of Tennessee Hancock County
January the 18th 1855

personaly (sic) a pard (sic) before me the undersigned a Justice of the pace (sic) in and for the County afore said (sic) Ambrose Brewer who being duly sworn deposeh and sayth that by reason of old age and the consequenth (sic) loss of memory he cannot swear positivly (sic) as to the presise (sic) Length of his servis (sic) but according to the best of his recollection he seved (sic) not less than the periods mentioned below and in the following grade (no punctuation, but implied end of sentence) for Eight monthes (sic) for __ (sic) days I served as a private (implied comma) for ten month (sic) and __ (sic) days I served as a privat (sic) and for six months and __ (sic) days served as a privat (sic) and for such servis (sic) I claim a pension (implied end of

sentence) he further certifys (sic) that he was born in the State of Virginia and that (a dark spot that probably obscures the word "he") has no record of his age and was living in the State of North carolina (sic) when called into servis (sic) (implied end of sentence) after he retired from servis (sic) he resided in North carolina (implied end of sentence) he dos (sic) not recollect how long (implied end of sentence) he moved from thare (sic) to the State of Tennessee whar (sic) he has resided ever since.

Sworn to and subscribed befor (sic) me the day and date above writin (sic)

his

Ambros x Brewer

James D Green JP

mark (Seal)

State of Tennessee } Jan the 18th 1855

County Hancock }

wee (sic) James Murrell (sic) and Joshua Odom citizens of Hancock County do certify that we ar (sic) well acquainted with Ambrose Brewer who has subscribed and sworn to the within declaration (no comma) that wee (sic) believe him to be 101 years of age and, (sic) that he is and ever has bin (sic) reputed and believed in the Neighborhood where he resides to hav (sic) bin (sic) a Soldier of the Revolution, and of good integrity and wee (sic) do not hesitate in concurring with the same opinion.

Sworn to and Subscribed }

James Merrel (sic) (Seal)

in the day and year affore said (sic) }

his

Joshua X Odum (Seal)

James D Green JP

mark

State of Tennessee }

County of Hancock }

I, James D. Green a Justice of the peace within and for the County and State aforesaid do Certify that from the greate (sic) age and bodily infirmities of Ambrose Brewer he cannot possibly at anny (sic) ordinary expence (sic) and trouble get to the Court House of Said County. I hesitate not in Concurring (sic) with the above Certifficate (sic) of James Merrel (sic) and Joshua Odom.

Given under my hand and seal this the 18th of Jan 1855

James D Green (Seal)

State of Tennessee }

County of Hancock } I James D Green an acting Justice of the peace in and for the county and

state afore said do certify that James Murrell (sic) and Joshua Odom who has (sic) assigned the above certificate is (sic) men of credibility and ther (sic) state ment (sic) is Entitled to credit.

Given under my hand and Seal this 18th day of January 1855.

James D Green (Seal)

State of Tennessee }
County of Hancock } I Richard Mitchell Clerk of the County Court of said county do certify that James D Green before whom the within business was excicuted (sic) is and was at the time of excicuting (sic) the same an acting Justis (sic) of the Pease (sic) duly commissioned and qualified and that his official acts as such is intitled (sic) to credit and that his signature appears in his own proper hand wrighting (sic) and is thereforef ginueine (sic).

in (sic) testimony thereof I have hereunto set my hand and afixed (sic) the seal of my County at office in Sneedville this 19 day of January 1855.

Richard Mitchell Clerk
By A. Campbell Dept Clk

(letter)

Washington. Jan. 25. 1855

Hon L P Waldo
Com of Pensions

In addition to the declaration that was filed not long since in case of Ambrose Brewer I herewith inclose (sic) others papers proveing (sic) his servesces (sic) and credibility. I wrote according to your instructions to the Comptroller of North Carolina inquiring if any servesces (sic) of said Ambrose Brewer could be found but as yet no answer ("has as yet" is marked out) has been received. Please examine his papers and report to me at your convenience.

I'm Sir yours
Resply
R L Smallwood

(cover)

What appears to be the back cover of the file is obviously a form from a much later time that was adapted to enclose Ambrose's application record. At the top right corner is stamped the word "INVALID", which pertains to a disability or invalid pension. Below that and centered is what was probably a title that has been obliterated with ink. Above that and centered is the handwritten number "1182", which is the file number assigned to the application. Below those is a lined-out printed line that lists two "Acts", one of July 1862 and one of March 1864. That indicates that the form is from a much later period. Below that is the handwritten number "1812", which is also lined out. To the right of those items in a vertical orientation is the word "REJECTED", stamped twice, once clearly and once not. Between the two "REJECTED" stamps is what appears to be two or three illegible handwritten letters that are probably initials and are probably an official notation by the person who marked out the items or who stamped the words "REJECTED". Below all of that is the handwritten name "Ambrose Brewer".

(Note: Thus, the application was apparently covered after March 1864 and might not have been processed until that time, which was at least nine years after the application was filed. It appears that Ambrose died in the 1850s after the application was submitted in January 1855. It is not clear to what the number "1812" pertained. It might have pertained to the War of 1812. If Ambrose died before the application was considered, it seems to me that there would have been a notation to that effect. It is possible that he was rejected because he served in the Rangers and was never assigned to a regular unit of the Continental Line. If I understand the original pension law of 1832 correctly, it pertained to members of the Continental Line or state troops and militias, but it seems to me that the Rangers would have been considered as part of those. It might have been rejected because he could not provide documents to prove his service, but it seems that the affidavits of three witnesses would have sufficed. It is also my understanding that approvals were arbitrary and inconsistent by the various authorities, so the rejection might have been inappropriate. The file cover appears to pertain to applications for disability pensions for persons injured in the War, and Ambrose was not applying for a disability pension. We will probably never know the truth.

Three important genealogy-related facts are stated in these documents. One is that Ambrose was born in Virginia. Another is that he was living when the War started in the area that became Moore County, NC. The third is that he served most of the time in that area. If his stated age is approximately correct, he would have been born ca 1753 and would have been only about twenty-three years old when the War started. It is unlikely that he owned land at that age, so he was probably living with some of his family. It is my understanding that men who served as rangers and scouts usually served close to home.

Ambrose's father has not been proven. Family lore reportedly said that Ambrose was a grandson of George and Sarah (nee Lanier) Brewer by one of their sons Howell or Lanier. Records show that the only Brewers living in that area of North Carolina during those years were sons and grandsons of George and Sarah, including their sons Howell and Lanier, and Ambrose later acquired land close to where those men owned land. However, genetic testing has not confirmed that Ambrose was a genetic descendant of George and suggests that Ambrose's genetic father might not have been a Brewer. Thus, it currently appears that Ambrose's familial father was a Brewer but that he or his familial father might have been sired by someone other than a Brewer. The sons of Howell and Lanier have not been proven. It is possible that Ambrose was adopted or that he was a stepson of a Brewer and simply raised as a Brewer.)

Another version:

Pension application of Ambrose Brewer R1182

Transcribed and annotated by Will Graves

f15NC

10/2/10 rev'd 7/28/15

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Where the meaning is not compromised by adhering to the spelling, punctuation or grammar, no change has been made. Corrections or additional notes have been inserted within brackets or footnotes. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. A bracketed question mark indicates that the word or words preceding it represent(s) a guess by me. The word 'illegible' or 'indcipherable' appearing in brackets indicates that at the time I made the transcription, I was unable to decipher the word or phrase in question. Only materials pertinent to the military service of the veteran and to contemporary events have been transcribed. Affidavits that provide additional information on these events are included and genealogical information is abstracted, while standard, 'boilerplate' affidavits and attestations related solely to the application, and later nineteenth and twentieth century research requests for information have been omitted. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading skills fail to catch all misinterpretations. Also, dates or numbers which the software treats as numerals rather than words are not corrected: for example, the software transcribes "the eighth of June one thousand eighty six" as "the 8th of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

State of Tennessee County of Hancock

Be it known that before me George Odom a Justice of the peace in and for the County and State aforesaid personally appeared Ambrose Brewer aged 101 years, and made oath in due form of law that he was a soldier in the Revolutionary War, he served under Captain Tabb [James Augustus Tabb], Captain Maburn [John Mebane], Capt. Thurogood [George Thoroughgood] and Commanded by Colonel Litrell [sic, possibly a reference to John Luttrell] and by Major Lewis, he does not remember the exact length of time he served under the different named captains, he entered in the war at its commencement and served at different times altogether two years or more, he was in service until peace was made, The greater portion of the time he served was in North Carolina and Moore County. He is now a very old man and need some assistance his property, his little all, was taken by the enemy and destroyed, he never did receive anything for his services or for the destruction of his property. All that he claims from the Government now, in his feeble days, is for this two years Services under the act of Congress of 1832.

S/ Ambrose Brewer, X his mark

Sworn to and subscribed before made this 27th day of October 1854.

S/ George Odom, JP for Hancock County

State of Tennessee County of Hancock

On this 30th day of October 1854, Personally appeared John R Smith age 91 years old and made oath in due form of law, that he is personally acquainted with Ambrose Brewer, who was a Soldier in the Revolutionary war he was acquainted with him at the time that he was engaged in said war, he is fully satisfied that he served two years or more. He further states that Ambrose Brewer is now 101 years of age, and is very feeble, on the account of age, there is soldier of the Revolution that needs the assistance from the Government more than said Ambrose Brewer, and there is no person that served his Country with more zeal than he did.

S/John R Smith, X his mark

State of Tennessee County of Hancock: SS

On this the 15th day of January 1855 personally appeared before me an acting Justice of the peace for the County for the County and State aforesaid Ambrose Brewer a resident of Hancock County in the State of Tennessee, aged about 101 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 act of Congress passed the 7th day of June 1832. He entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated, – he was at one time under the command of Captain Tabb also Captain Maburn also Captain Thureigood, also Colonel Litrell and Major Lewis, the latter named, Colonel was killed in a skirmish with the Enemy,¹ he does not recollect how long he served, under each of the above named officers, but was with the scouting parties from the commencement of the war until peace was declared, He was never attached to the main body of the Army, but was in several skirmishes with the enemy as a Ranger, in which capacity he acted during the war, and his position was most of the time in Moore County North Carolina, He volunteered for a Ranger or scout, and, so engaged, NC never was in any regular engagement, He is not aware that he ever drew any pay for his services, though he received money several times, but he does not recollect for what it was paid him, He has no documentary evidence of his service, never having received a discharge as he is aware,

¹ Lt. Col. John Luttrell of Chatham County was killed September 13, 1781 at the Battle of Lindley's Mill.
http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_lindleys_mill.html

but can prove his services by one or more witnesses, –

He hereby relinquishes every claim to a pension or annuity except the present, and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the Agency of any State.

Sworn to and subscribed before me the day and year aforesaid

S/ James D Greene, JP

S/ Ambrose Brewer, X his mark

[James Murrell & Joshua Odom gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

State of Tennessee County of Hancock: SS

On this 15th day of January 1855 personally appeared John R Smith aged about 90 years before me James D. Green an acting Justice of the peace in said County, and makes oath in due form of law that he is personally acquainted with Ambrose Brewer, who was a soldier in the Revolutionary War, and that he was acquainted with him when engaged in the service of said War, in a company commanded by Captain (Tabb) who halted [?] in command of his Company at the Residence of his Father's in Moore County North Carolina when in pursuit of the enemy, and he John R Smith further states that he believes this was in the summer of 1777 and that he saw at another time engaged in the services of the above mentioned War under Captain Thurogood in Moore County North Carolina which was in the spring of 1779 but he has no recollection of seeing said Brewer from this time on until after peace was made, since which time he further states he has been personally acquainted with said Ambrose Brewer who is reputed by him and all who knows him as a Soldier of the Revolution War, and a faithful upright though poor Citizen.

S/ John R Smith, X his mark

State of Tennessee Hancock County January the 18th 1855

Personally appeared before me the undersigned a Justice of the Peace in and for the County aforesaid Ambrose Brewer who being duly sworn deposes and saith that by reason of old age and the consequent loss of memory he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his service but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than the periods mentioned below and in the following grades for 8 months for __ days I served as a private for 10 months and __ days I served as a private and for 6 months and __ days served as a private and for such service I claim a pension. He further certifies that he was born in the State of Virginia and that he has no record of his age and was living in the State of North Carolina when called into service after he retired from service he resided in North Carolina he does not recollect how long he moved from there to the State of Tennessee where he has resided ever since. Sworn to and subscribed before me the day and date above written.

S/ James D Green, JP

S/ Ambros Brewer, X his mark