

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

Pension Application of William Buckner R17

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

House of Delegates Saturday 23rd November 1782

Also a petition of William Buckner; setting forth that being in service at York Town, in the year 1781 under the Command of Barron Steuben, he was detached to carry despaches by water, and act as Pilot to a fleet then in the Bay, supposed to be French; by which it proving an enemy's he was captured and sent to England where he suffered a long and painful imprisonment from which he is lately liberated and praying to be made compensation for the time of his imprisonment.

“Resolved. That it is the opinion of this Committee, that the petition of William Buckner, setting forth, that in the year 1781, he was engaged by Baron Steuben, as well to carry some despaches from the Marquis de la Fayette [Lafayette] to the commanding officer of a presumed French Fleet, which had anchored in the Bay of Chesapeake, as to act as a Pilot on board the same. That he accordingly took charge of the said despaches, and joined the said fleet, when to his great mortification, he found them to be British, and commanded by Admiral Arbuthnot. That he was carried to England, and remained in jail nearly twelve months. And praying relief is reasonable – and that the petitioner ought to be allowed 6/- per day to commence the 16th March 1781 the day that he was captured, ‘till the 7th of March 1782, the day that he returned home – and that the same ought to be charged in account with the United States.”

I certify that the above is a true copy form the Journal of 1782 on file in my office.

Given under my hand this 31st day of January 1846.

George W. Munford, C.H.D. [Clerk of the House of Delegates of Virginia]

Virginia Mathews County to wit

I hereby Certify that I am a pensioner of the United States and am in my Eighty Sixth year of my age and that I lived a near neighbour to William Buckner who was a Master in the Virginia Navy to the end of the revolution. That the report to the Legislature in November 1782 copied above does not lessen my confidence in the fact – as he probably claimed the pay of a Pilot because the Pilots pay being equal to a Liutenants, was greater than that of Master and as he was taken prisoner while acting as a Pilot, he might well regard himself as entitled to that higher pay while in captivity. But he was in service as a Master at the time he was directed to act as the Pilot & I am confident he never resigned his Commission but remained Master in the Navy to the end of the War.

Given under my hand this 24th day of November 1847

[signed] Josiah Pugh [pension application W5586]

These are to Certify that William Ballard [sic] served in the Navy of this State under my Command as Pilot from the 23rd January 1776 to the last of February 1779 his pay and prize money was the same as a Lieutenant in the Navy. Given under my hand this first day of October 1783

James Barron Commo. S. N. [Commodore of the State Navy]

A Copy H. Randolph

I hereby Certify that the following Officers belonging to the State Line and Navy, when they settled their depreciation pay account received Certificates for the amount opposite each of their names. I further certify that each and all of them received Land Bounty for a service of three years. [Pension applications in brackets.]

John Archer [W5348]

Lieut Navy 39. 1.2

Samuel Tinsley [S6243]	Canot State	26.13.0
Thomas Bonnewell [R10]	Master Navy	57. 9.3
George Catlett [W2524]	Lieut State	32.19.8
James Kemp [R15581]	Ens "	57. 0.0
Robert Millener	Lieut Navy	21.13.0
John Moore [R78]	Master "	92. 4.6
Martin Norris	Lt. Artt'y State	40. 5.4

Given under my hand at the Auditors Office Richmond this 15th day of January 1848.

Jas. E. Heath 1st Aud'r.

NOTE:

On 14 Oct 1834 a court certified that William Buckner of Mathews County VA had been a Sailing Master in the Virginia Navy, that he died on 13 Feb 1804, and that his heirs had received bounty land. The surviving children of William Buckner were as follows: Mary Norman, wife of Thomas Norman of Baltimore; Elizabeth Armistead, wife of Francis Armistead of Mathews County; Dorothy Gayle, wife of Dr. Bartlett Gayle of Mathews County; and Susan Beazeley, wife of Ephraim Beasely of Mathews County. In addition, Alexander, William, Matthew, and Joshua Gayle were listed as heirs.

The file includes a voluminous correspondence regarding whether Buckner was a Pilot or a Sailing Master and whether he served to the end of the war.