

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Alexander Spotswood¹ R18089

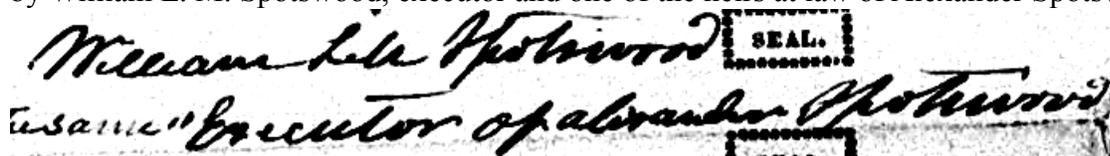
f50VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

4/9/12 rev'd 3/27/15

[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. 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 fails 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 errors or omissions to my attention.]

[f p. 2: Power of attorney executed in Caroline County Virginia and dated April 14, 1834 signed by William L. M. Spotswood, executor and one of the heirs at law of Alexander Spotswood



William L. M. Spotswood
Executor of Alexander Spotswood

[p 4: executive order issued March 28, 1834 directing the issue of a land warrant to the heirs of Alexander Spotswood who served as a Brigadier General in the State line from August 17, 1775 to the end of the War. On the 31st day of March 1834, a land warrant No. 7672 for 6,777 1/2 acres issued to Alexander E Spotswood, George Spotswood, William Spotswood, Ann Taliaferro, Henrietta B Washington and Martha Ann Spotswood heirs of Alexander Spotswood.]

[p 12]

The petition of William L. M. Spotswood and other heirs of Alexander Spotswood deceased respectfully represents that on the 17th of August 1775 the said Alexander Spotswood was appointed a Major in the 2nd Virginia Regiment as will be seen by the Journal of the convention of that date, page 19. That he was promoted to the rank of Colonel for his faithful services in the Continental line, in which he continued until he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General in the State line, and placed in command of the Legions raised for the defense of the State.

In the year 1781 the Legislature passed an act of reducing the Officers in the State line and consolidating the officers & man, but expressly declared "that nothing contained in the act shall be construed to affect the Legions under the command of Brigadier General Spotswood." [Hennings Statutes Vol. 10th, page 449) this act passed after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis.

Your petitioners further this State that on the 11th of November 1782 General Spotswood made a return of the State of the Legions, then under his command (see Journal of the House of Delegates of that date – page 11) And at the same session an act passed authorizing the Executive to disband the Legions provided the soldiers would enlist in the Continental line, and give up their claim to a bounty, pay &c from the State (see 11th volume Statutes at large page 135, and Journal of the Assembly of the 24th of December 1782 the date of the passage of the act.)

It does not appear that the Legions were ever disbanded by the Executive, the journals (of the Executive) having been examined to ascertain the fact. But admitting that the soldiers had

¹ Va. Half Pay and

been disbanded the Officers would be supernumerary and could not be deprived of the promised a bounty. The probability is, that the Soldiers did not agree to the conditions, as the Treaty of peace was known to have been signed, and was a short time after officially promulgated, when all the troops were disbanded.

It thus appears that General Spotswood was in the service either in the Continental or State line, from 17th of August 1775 to 22nd of April 1783 and was entitled to the land bounty promised a Brigadier General for that period.

Your petitioners therefore pray that it may now be granted to them, as his heirs
S/ Wm Lambert, Atty for the Heirs

[p 15: copy of the last will and testament of Alexander Spotswood who describes himself as a resident of Spotsylvania County Virginia and maintenance the following children: son William Lawrence McCarty Spotswood; daughter Henrietta B Washington; daughter Martha A. Spotswood (to whom he also bequeathed a slave named Rachel daughter of George and Delphia); son George W Spotswood; son Alexander E Spotswood; daughter Ann Taliaferro. The will is dated October 3, 1818 and was probated February one, 1819.]

[p 39]

State of Tennessee Knox County: before me J. S. Mabry an acting Justice of the Peace duly commissioned to administer oaths for said State and County aforesaid appeared Edward Smith² a citizen of Knox County & State of Tennessee, aged about seventy-eight years and made oath in due form of law, that he was personally acquainted with Alexander Spotswood, deceased and that he was a Brigadier General in the State Line of Virginia on the Revolutionary War, that he knew him in actual service as a Brigadier General in the year 1780 at my and in and in and Father's House in Culpeper County after which time I myself joined the Army and remained in actual service until the close of the War – and the said Brigadier General Alexander Spotswood commanded the Virginia State line until the close of the Revolutionary of War of my own personal knowledge. The said General Alexander Spotswood was a citizen of Spotsylvania County of the State of Virginia. Witness my hand and seal this 9th day of January 1833

S/ Edward Smith, X his mark

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State of Kentucky Cumberland County: Sct.

Before me Alfred King a Justice of the Peace in & for said County and State, duly empowered to administer oaths in the State and County aforesaid, appeared John Emerson³ a citizen of the Town of Burkesville State & County aforesaid aged eighty-two years, and made oath that he personally knew & was well acquainted with Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Spotswood of the Continental Army of the Virginia State establishment in the year 1777 and 78 – after which time he was made a Brigadier General in the State line of Virginia. I verily believe that said Spotswood remained in the Army until the final termination of the war, having frequently heard of his being in the service [indecipherable word or words] after I saw him.

And said John Emerson further made oath that he is the same identical John Emerson now on the pension of the United States, as a Lieutenant of the revolutionary war, on Continental establishment.

² [Edward Smith S3934](#)

³ [John Emerson W8694](#)

Given under my hand this 25th day of December 1832
S/ John Emerson {Seal}



The [Virginia State Library](#) online digital collection includes the following document in addition to the Executor's petition set forth above in the federal file:

Petition for additional land the Heirs of Brigadier General Alexander Spotswood
The facts in this case are – Alexander Spotswood was Commission Major in the 2nd Virginia Regiment, August 17, 1775 = and was in Continental service, in different grades, of Colonel in the Continental line, & Brigadier General in the State line, down to the end of the war – April 22 – 1783. He may have been supernumerary, a few months before the end of the war; but that does not appear. He was Brigadier General at the close of the war, and, it is believed, in actual service. The documents referred to by the Council for the heirs, afford proof of the above facts. The officer received 6000 acres of land, as a Continental officer. His heirs seem to be entitled to the additional bounty he asked.

If your Excellency allows the claim I presume it should be from August 17, 1775 to the end of the war, as Brigadier General, deducting the quantity of land already received.

To his Excellency Governor Floyd

Respectfully submitted March 20th 1834

John H Smith, Cousl. &c.

[From [Digital Library of Virginia](#)] Spotsylvania County Legislative Petitions

To the Hon. the Speaker and Members of the House of delegates –

The Petition of Alexander Spotswood sheweth – that he entered into the service of his Country as Major to the 2nd Virginia Regiment in the Months of July or August 1775 in October therein he was ordered down to Norfolk under the command of Col. Woodford [William Woodford] where he served a very severe Campaign – in which your petitioner was appointed to the Rank of Lt. Col. to the same Regiment – in January 1777 he was ordered to the northward – where he was appointed Col. to the said Regiment, and remained as such until 10 days after the action at Germin Town [Germantown, October 4, 1777], when he quitted the service – not on account of his being tired of it – but on account of a determination of Rank given against him in June 1777 by which a number of officers who came into service long after your petitioner, was put above him.

In 1780 your petitioner served a short campaign in the Militia under the command of General Muhlenberg [Peter Muhlenberg] – for which services he did not nor does he not intend to Charge a shilling – your petitioner begs that he may be now allowed the bounty in land which is allowed to every full Col. in the Continental Army – for which your petitioner will be in duty bound to pray

[Reverse]

Spotswoods Petition

November 12th, 1783
Referred to Propositions

To the Hon. the Speaker & Gt. [Gentleman] of the House of Delegates – The petition of
Alex^r Spotswood [Alexander Spotswood]

Setteth Forth, that he entered into the service of his Country in June or July 1775, as
Major to the 2nd Virginia Regiment, in April 1776 he was appointed Lieut. Col. to the said
Regiment & in February 1777 – he was appointed Colonel to the same Regiment and continued
in service until the close of the Campaign; ¹⁷⁷⁷ when an unfortunate circumstance relating to
Ranke [rank] forced him much Agt [against] his inclination to quit the service – your Petitioner
begs leave to inform the Hon. House, that from the first raising of this Regiment it was
Constantly in actual service until he quitted it – and since his absence from the Service he has
Always given his services to the State without fee or reward & your petitioner hopes, that when
the Hon. House considers his readiness to enter the list in defense of the rights of his country, at a
time when we were destitute of Arms, Ammunition & Alliance, that they will allow him a grant
in bounty in land as any fall Colonel in the Continental line is allowed or as much as in their
Wisdom they shall think proper – for which your petitioner is in duty bound to pray

your petitioner begs leave to inform that last year he put in a similar petition but being totally
ignorant of the mode of doing business by the House he neglected to attend the Committee –
which he supposes was the reason he was not allowed his land last year

[Reverse]

Spotswood Petition
December 1st 1784
Referred to Props [propositions]