

# A Guide to the Petersburg (Va.) Declarations for Revolutionary War Pensions, 1820-1835

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A Collection in the Library of Virginia  
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## History

**Processed by:** M. Long

## Title Statement

A Guide to the Petersburg (Va.) Declarations for Revolutionary War Pensions, 1820-1835

**Subtitle:** Petersburg (Va.) Declarations for Revolutionary War Pensions

**Author:** McKenzie Long

## Publication Statement

**Date:** © 2024 By The Library of Virginia. All Rights Reserved.

**Publisher:** Library of Virginia

## Profile Description

**Creation:** Machine-readable finding aid derived from being created directly into EAD, created by McKenzie Long, 8 November 2024

**Language Usage:** Description is in English

## Descriptive Summary

### Language

English

### Collector

Petersburg (Va.) Circuit Court

### Extent

.23 cu. ft. (1 box)

### Location

Library of Virginia

### Repository

The Library of Virginia

## Administrative Information

### Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

### Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

## Acquisition Information

These items came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from the city of Petersburg.

## Processing Information

Declarations for Revolutionary War Pensions, 1820-1835, were removed from a collection of Petersburg military and pension records and processed and indexed as a distinct unit by M. Long.

Encoded by M. Long: November 2024.

## Preferred Citation

Petersburg (Va.) Declarations for Revolutionary War Pensions, 1820-1835. Local government records collection, Petersburg (City) Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

# Adjunct Descriptive Data

## Related Material

See also: [Petersburg \(Va.\) Military and Pension Records, 1807-1902; undated](#) at the Library of Virginia.

Additional Petersburg Court Records can be found on microfilm at The Library of Virginia. Consult "[A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm.](#)"

## Historical Information

**Context for Record Type:** In 1818, Congress passed the first of three major Revolutionary War pension acts. The act granted lifetime pensions to all men who had served as regular army soldiers in the Continental Line and who could demonstrate financial need. Prior to the passage of this act, pensions had been restricted to former soldiers who were no longer able to support themselves due to injuries sustained while in service. The second act, passed by Congress in 1820, required applicants to provide more concrete evidence of this financial need in the form of a certified inventory of his property and income. They also had to include an account of all members of the applicant's family, including their health and ability to contribute to household income. In 1832, the third act extended pension benefits to include soldiers who had served in the state troops or militia. Congress also passed a related act in 1836 granting pensions to the widows and orphans of Revolutionary War veterans.

**Locality History:** Petersburg was formed from parts of Dinwiddie, Prince George, and Chesterfield Counties. A garrison and fur trading post called Fort Henry was established there in 1645 on the site of the Indian town Appamattuck. The present name, suggested in 1733 by William Byrd (1674-1744), honors Peter Jones, Byrd's companion on expeditions into the Virginia backcountry. Petersburg was established in 1748 and incorporated as a town in 1784. In the latter year the towns of Blandford, Pocahontas, and Ravenscroft were added to Petersburg.

## Scope and Content

Petersburg (Va.) Declarations for Revolutionary War Pensions, 1820-1835, primarily record the declarations of individuals seeking to obtain Revolutionary War pensions provided by various acts of Congress. The applicants present detailed testimony of their time of service during the Revolutionary War. Information found in the declarations include date and location applicants entered into service, names of military companies they served in, names of military commanders they served under, names of fellow soldiers they served with, length of service, their age, and their place of birth. The predominant portion of the declarations are narratives of their tours of duty during the Revolutionary War with emphasis on battles they fought. The declarations also include affidavits from witnesses who could verify information provided by applicants.

Applicants in this series reported to have served in various military units, including the 5th Virginia Regiment; 5th Virginia Regiment, Infantry; 15th Virginia Regiment; 21st Virginia Regiment, Cavalry; Chesterfield Barracks; Petersburg militia; and the general Virginia State Line.

Applicants also gave accounts of being present during several military engagements, including the Battle of Augusta, Battle of Charleston, Battle of Monmouth, Battle of Wilmington, Siege of Yorktown, and the southern front in general.

Significant materials in this collection include the pension declarations of two free Black soldiers, Thomas Lively and John Harris.

## Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:

- **Series I: Declarations for Revolutionary War Pensions, 1820-1835**, arranged chronologically.

## Contents List

### **Series I: Declarations for Revolutionary War Pensions, 1820-1835**

#### **Extent**

.23 cubic feet (1 box)

#### **Arrangement**

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**Barcode number 0007896608: Declarations for Revolutionary War Pensions, 1820-1835**

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