

Edward Newman, Private, North Carolina Continental Line Donna Newman, CG

Edward Newman served with the North Carolina Continental Line for seven years¹ and died about 1783,² but little additional information is available. This is an attempt to gain a better understanding of his story by piecing together what is known about the North Carolina Continental Line in general and Edward Newman's service in particular.

North Carolina Continental Line

In June 1775 the Continental Congress passed a resolution to raise a continental army of fifteen thousand men.³ At the North Carolina Provincial Congress that convened on 21 August 1775, delegates authorized the establishment of the First and Second Regiments totalling a thousand men.⁴ These regiments were placed on Continental pay by the Continental Congress on 28 November 1775.⁵

An estimated 8800 men served with the North Carolina Continental Line between 1775 and 1783. They participated in 37 known battles and skirmishes, only seven of which took place in North Carolina: eighteen were in South Carolina, four in Georgia, two in Virginia, two in Pennsylvania, three in New York and one in New Jersey.⁶

Records for North Carolina's Revolutionary War soldiers are incomplete and they contain errors. As an example of the latter, during the settling of accounts at the close of the war, North Carolina sent its muster and pay rolls to the federal government, requesting that a copy of the information from these rolls be made for North Carolina, as the state would need this to determine eligibility for military bounty land. The copy made by the clerks appears as *The Register of the North Carolina Line* in *The State Records of North Carolina, Volume XVI*. Unfortunately, the clerks inexplicably assigned thirty companies to the 10th North Carolina Regiment that had served with one of the other nine regiments, and the original pay and muster rolls were lost when the British burned Washington, D.C. in 1814.⁷

¹ "Roster of soldiers from North Carolina in the American Revolution," database, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : 2005); Military Land Warrants, Continental Line, No. 3848, The heirs of Edward Newman.

² Sarah Newman applied for letters of administration on his estate in January 1784 (see Note 12).

³ Hugh F. Rankin, *The North Carolina Continentals* (1971; reprint, Chapel Hill, N.C.: The Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2005), 16.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶ J.D. Lewis, *NC Patriots, 1775-1783: Their Own Words* (Little River, S.C.: J.D. Lewis, 2012), viii.

⁷ "North Carolina's Revolutionary War Pay Records of Primary Interest to Genealogists," *Archives Information Circular* (AIC) Number 13 (1975), Revised March 2002, p. 5, *North Carolina State Archives* (<http://archives.ncdcr.gov/Public>); path: Start> For the Public> Digital Collections and Publications> Publications, Circulars, Guides. A transcription of the register can be found at *Documenting the American South*, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.html/document/csr16-0699>.

Edward's service

Edward Newman appears on *The Register of the North Carolina Line* in Capt. Mills' Company and the 10th Regiment but the regiment assignment is obviously open to question given the above. According to another source, Edward Newman, aka Edward Newsom, was a private in the 1st Regiment under Capt. James Mills as of 4 February 1782 and presumably he remained with that company when it transferred to the 4th Regiment two days later.⁸

He was shown on the Revolutionary Army Accounts for Wilmington District for the period 16 October 1781 to August 1783 and there is a corresponding pay voucher in the amount of £12.10.0.⁹ Some of the Revolutionary Army Account ledgers were compiled during the war, but most were compiled between 1788 and 1793 "to explain and detail North Carolina's Revolutionary War expenditures when the state's military accounts with the Federal Government were being settled."¹⁰

Edward's heirs were entitled to 640 acres of bounty land based on his 84 months' service as a private with North Carolina's Continental Line.¹¹

Edward's death

Sarah Newman was granted letters of administration on Edward's estate in Duplin County on 20 January 1784. In 1791, in Sampson County, she sold Edward's final settlement certificate to James Carraway.¹² Final settlements were "outstanding debts owed to soldiers of the Continental Line (for deficits in pay, subsistence, or clothing)."¹³ The 1791 transaction was conducted before William Odom, J.P., and recorded on the back of the 1784 letters of administration. The whole was given to Carraway, who submitted it to the state's Comptroller several weeks later, a fortunate circumstance since the first record might not otherwise have survived.

Edward's meager Revolutionary War record consists of a single statement from "H^[2] Holmes, Lieut. in the late Cont^l Army," possibly what his heirs used to prove eligibility for his bounty land: "Edward Newman a twelve months soldier died in the Continental Army in camp at Asheley Hill in the State of South Carolina."¹⁴

⁸ Lewis, *NC Patriots, 1775-1783*, 529.

⁹ Revolutionary Army Accounts, Reel S.115348, Vol. W-1, pg. 7, Wilmington District, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh; No. 406, Edward Newman.

¹⁰"North Carolina's Revolutionary War Pay Records," *Archives Information Circular* (AIC) Number 1 (1973), Revised February 2002, *North Carolina State Archives*, 4.

¹¹ "Roster of soldiers from North Carolina in the American Revolution."

¹² Treasurer's & Comptroller's Papers, Military Papers, 1776-1792, Service Records and Settlements, N-P, Box 20, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh; Sarah Newman, Letters of Administration for estate of Edward Newman, Duplin County, North Carolina, 20 January 1784; [verso] Sarah Newman, sale of Edward's Final Settlement Certificate to James Carraway, Sampson County, North Carolina, 7 July 1791.

¹³ "North Carolina's Revolutionary War Pay Records."

¹⁴ Secretary of State, Revolutionary Military Papers, File No. 791.1, SS XVII, Box 30, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh; "Edward Newman, Sampson County," 22 July 1795, certification of "H^[2] Holmes, Lieut. in the late Cont^l Army."

The given name of the certifying officer looks like H[~] and was transcribed as H^u by state archives staff but there is good reason to believe this was Hardy Holmes, a 2nd Lieutenant with the 1st North Carolina Regiment as of November 1776 who became a 1st Lieutenant the following year and served through the close of the war.¹⁵ He is the likeliest candidate (the only one whose given name starts with an *H*) among North Carolina's Continental officers named in available sources, including those cited here. Further, a Hardy Holmes is buried in Sampson County, where the Newmans lived, with a military headstone inscribed "LIEUT. 1 N.C. REGT. REV. WAR."¹⁶ On the application for this headstone, staff at the Old Records Division confirmed that Hardy Holmes was a 1st Lieutenant with the 1st North Carolina Regiment and that he was in service in 1782 and 1783.¹⁷ All of these records likely belong to the Hardy Holmes who was elected Sheriff of Sampson County in June 1784¹⁸ and served as the Clerk of Court beginning about 1791.¹⁹

Edward Newman's son, William, sold the bounty land warrant on 3 June 1795 to Duncan Stewart of Bladen County, identifying himself as "heir of Edward Newman, a Continental soldier who died in the Continental service in the state of South Carolina."²⁰ As the oldest son, William had inherited Edward's real property²¹ according to the laws of inheritance that were in effect when Edward died; primogeniture was abolished in North Carolina the following year.²² I have been unable to find an authoritative source on the question of whether Edward's military bounty land would have been subject to the same laws of inheritance, but the fact that William was the sole signatory on this land warrant suggests that it was.

¹⁵ F.B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the Officers of the Continental Army During the War of the Revolution – April 1775 to December 1783* (Washington, D.C.: W.H. Lowdermilk & Co., 1893), 479; also, Lewis, *NC Patriots, 1775-1783*, 434; and "Roster of soldiers from North Carolina in the American Revolution," database, *Ancestry.com*.

¹⁶ *Findagrave.com*, photograph, gravestone for Hardy Holmes, # 101721412, Thompson-Moore Family Cemetery, Turkey, Sampson, North Carolina.

¹⁷ "U.S., Headstone Applications for Military Veterans, 1925-1963," database with images, *Ancestry.com* : 2012. The application was made on 6 February 1939 by Claude H. Moore, Turkey, N.C.

¹⁸ Oscar M. and Virginia L. Bizzell, *Sampson County Court Minutes, 1784-1800* (Clinton, N.C.: Sampson County Historical Society, 1976), 1.

¹⁹ Max R. Peterson Jr., *Abstracts of Sampson-Duplin and Sampson County Deeds, Books 7-9* (Buies Creek, N.C.: Max R. Peterson Jr., 1985), 175.

²⁰ "North Carolina and Tennessee, Revolutionary War Land Warrants 1783-1843," digital images, *Ancestry.com* : 2013; Edward Newman, No. 3849, Survey order, 1795, transferred by Duncan Stewart to Jonathan F. Robertson and John Davis in December 1795. Edward's bounty land warrant is numbered 3849 in this record but it appears as 3848 in the "Roster of soldiers from North Carolina in the American Revolution" record (Note 1). The warrant numbers in the first record (i.e., the "Roster of soldiers") appear to be off, by one, for two other names searched: Jordan Ammon, No. 3849 in the first, appears as Jordan Ammons, No. 3850 in the second; Archibald McDonald was No. 3842 in the first and No. 3843 in the second. The "Roster of soldiers" was compiled from a variety of sources (p. viii) while the "Revolutionary War Land Warrants" record is a digitized copy of original documents and should be considered the more authoritative of the two.

²¹ Sampson County, North Carolina Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, Minutes, 1794-1868, FHL microfilm 553,522; 10 February 1795, John Crumpler was given leave to build a grist mill on his own land and the land of William Newman, "a minor child of Edward Newman, decd." William would come of age in June of that year, according to a deposition he gave in April 1845.

²² Walter Clark, compiler and editor, *The State Records of North Carolina, Vol. XXIV, Laws 1777-1788* (Goldsboro, N.C.: Nash Brothers, 1905), 572-577, April 1784 legislative session, Chapter XXII, "An Act to regulate the descent of Real Estates, to do away Entails, to make provision for Widows, and prevent frauds in the Execution of last Wills and Testaments."

Ashley Hill, South Carolina

Ashley Hill was a plantation outside of Charleston, South Carolina, along Ashley River Road. Nathanael Greene, commanding general of the Southern Department,²³ established encampments along the road and at the plantation²⁴ as both sides waited out treaty negotiations and the British continued to occupy Charleston. Ashley Hill Plantation²⁵ was owned at the time by Commodore Alexander Gillon and it "adjoined" Middleton Place, where there were encampments as well.²⁶

Greene wrote a letter to Brig. Gen. Jethro Sumner from "Head Quarters, Ashley Hill" on 11 November 1782,²⁷ but he established himself in Charleston once the British evacuated it in December 1782, with most of the army encamped on James Island.²⁸

With a provisional peace treaty in place and in accordance with a Continental Congress resolve that "only those men enlisted for three years or the duration of the war should remain in the field," Greene furloughed all of the North Carolina Continentals at the end of 1782 except for a reconstituted First Regiment.²⁹ Those furloughed were still considered to be on active duty and subject to recall should the need arise, but they were able to go home "with no pay, no clothing issue, and no ration allowance."³⁰

All of the remaining North Carolina Continentals were furloughed by the end of July 1783.³¹

Conclusions and need for further research

Edward Newman died in service at Ashley Hill, South Carolina sometime before the last North Carolina Continentals were furloughed in about July 1783.

According to one source, bounty land for North Carolina Continentals was based on service from 1776 to 1783.³² This suggests that Edward died in 1783, which would be

²³ Rankin, *The North Carolina Continentals*, 259.

²⁴ "Ashley River Road, Dorchester County," *National Register Properties in South Carolina* (<http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/dorchester/S10817718010/>; accessed 5 June 2016).

²⁵ "Ashley Hill Plantation," *South Carolina Plantations* (<http://south-carolina-plantations.com/charleston/ashley-hill.html>; 2016).

²⁶ Harriott St. Julien Ravenel, *Charleston: The Place and the People* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1906), 166-168, 333. More on Middleton Place can be found here: <http://south-carolina-plantations.com/dorchester/middleton-place.html>. Ashley Hill is in Dorchester County and is described as "south of Middleton Place" which is situated in Charleston County.

²⁷ "Letter from Nathanael Greene to Jethro Sumner," *Documenting the American South* <http://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.html/document/csr16-0462>; last updated 24 March 2010), citing *The State Records of North Carolina, Vol. XVI*, pp. 666-667.

²⁸ Rankin, *The North Carolina Continentals*, 387.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 388.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, 390.

³² Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck, *Revolutionary War Bounty Land Grants Awarded by State Governments* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1996), xviii.

consistent with his widow's January 1784 application for letters of administration on his estate.

However, some unanswered questions remain:

1. Most of Greene's remaining army was camped on James Island beginning in January 1783. Did the encampments continue at Ashley Hill after this date?
2. In the summer of 1782 there was an epidemic of malaria and other fevers in the Ashley Hill encampments: "[O]f the 305 North Carolinians in camp in mid-September, 107 were ill and between 20 and 30 had died."³³ Could Edward have been a casualty of this epidemic?
3. Records requests have yielded no pension or bounty land application records from state and national archives,³⁴ and only Lt. Holmes's statement from state archives. *The Register of the North Carolina Line* provides little insight into Edward's service. In sum, these records show only that Edward Newman, private, appeared in the October 1781-August 1783 army accounts and that he died at Ashley Hill. So, on what basis did the state of North Carolina determine that Edward had been in Continental service for seven years, entitling his heirs to 640 acres of bounty land?

FAMILY

TREE

³³ Rankin, *The North Carolina Continentals*, 381.

³⁴ National Archives Records Administration, response to request by author for bounty land application records on Edward Newman, dated 28 May 2015; North Carolina State Archives, request by author for search of records related to Edward Newman's military land warrant, including the Register of Military Land Warrants and Revolutionary Military Papers in the Secretary of State Records, dated 1 July 2015.