



## Zenas Macomber

# A072978

**Service:** Private/Patriotic Service, MA

**Residence:** Plymouth, Plymouth Co., MA

**Birth:** 30 Dec 1756, CT

**Married:** 1<sup>st</sup> Jane Kiser 17 Apr 1780

2<sup>nd</sup> Hannah Hough

**Death:** 2 Jun 1831, York Co., PA

**Burial:** Slate Ridge Cemetery, Delta, York Co., PA

**Proven children:** Zenas Jr., Hannah, Nancy, John Kirk,  
Jonathan

Zenas Macomber was born in Connecticut and became a physician. He first married Jane Kiser in 1780; she died in 1794; together they had a son Zenas Jr. b. 11 Apr 1792. Zenas married his second wife, Hannah Hough (Huff), date unknown. Hannah was born in 1786 and was residing in York Co., PA, 22 Jun 1843, her death date is unknown.<sup>1</sup> Together Zenas and Hannah had the following children all born in York Co., PA: Hannah b. Dec 1816, d. 23 Nov 1908<sup>2</sup>; Nancy b. 25 Jul 1818, d. 29 Mar 1907;<sup>3</sup> John Kirk b. 1 Mar 1820, d. 15 Feb 1916<sup>4</sup>; and Jonathan b. 1821, d. 13 Feb 1891.<sup>5</sup>

Zenas' profession as a doctor made him an asset with his military service. The following detailed account of his service is taken from "The Commander-In-Chief's Guard, Revolutionary War," written by Carlos E. Godfrey, M.D., unless otherwise noted. Zenas was one of 241 privates in General George Washington's, Commander-in-Chief's Guard; and he was one of thirty-one privates in the Calvary Guard under Captain George Lewis, George Washington's nephew.<sup>6</sup>

He enlisted Plymouth, MA, 20 Apr 1775, as a private for Captain Abraham Hammatt's Company<sup>7</sup> of Minutemen; he marched to Marshfield 20 Apr 1775 in response to the alarm on April 19<sup>th</sup>. He then re-enlisted 1 May 1775 for eight months with Captain Thomas Mayhew's Company, 16<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Continental Infantry, commanded by Colonel Theophilus Cotton. The company returned 7 Oct 1775 yielding him three months and eight days of service.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Carlos E. Godfrey, M.D., *The Commander-In-Chief's Guard, Revolutionary War*, Washington DC: Stevenson-Smith Publishing, 1904, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> Pennsylvania, US, Death Certificates, 1906-1967, # 1057, ancestry.com.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, # 313.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, # 16451.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/196596394/jonathan-macomber>.

<sup>6</sup> Godfrey, *The Commander-In-Chief's Guard, Revolutionary War*, p. 108, 111.

<sup>7</sup> Mass. Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War, Vol 10, p. 124.

<sup>8</sup> Mass. Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War, p. 124.

# A Patriot's Story

Zenas re-enlisted 1 Jan 1776 for one year with Captain Thomas Mayhew's Company, 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Continental Infantry, commanded by Colonel William Bond and then transferred to Cambridge, MA on 12 Mar 1776, to the Commander-in-Chief's Guard, commanded by Captain Caleb Gibbs.

He participated in the battles of White Plains, NY, 28 Oct 1776 and Trenton, NJ, 26 Dec 1776. He was discharged at Newtown, PA, 30 Dec 1776. He re-enlisted 1 May 1777 for three years with Captain George Lewis's Troop, 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, Continental Dragoons, commanded by Colonel George Baylor. He was assigned to the Cavalry of the Commander-in-Chief's Guard, commanded by Captain George Lewis. During this service, he participated in three battles: Brandywine, DE, 11 Sep 1777; Germantown, PA, 4 Oct 1777; and Monmouth, NJ, 28 Jun 1778. He rejoined the regiment 26 Sep 1778. Two days later he was in the skirmish of Tappan, NY, 28 Sep 1778, and became severely wounded and taken prisoner to New York; he was exchanged and then rejoined the regiment. He was discharged at the Schuylkill Barracks, Philadelphia, PA 13 Dec 1779.<sup>9</sup>

He was also a fifer; his account rendered against the United States for amounts paid by the Commonwealth to Major Caleb Gibbs and men in Colonel Washington's Guards and others, by Committee on Claims on behalf of Massachusetts against the United States, 21 Sep 1787.<sup>10</sup>

In 1783, 1786, 1788, 1797, 1800, 1802 Zenas paid a tax in Northampton, Bucks Co., PA.<sup>11</sup> By 1810 he was living in Fawn, York Co., PA<sup>12</sup> which is where he died in 1831. He is buried in Slate Ridge Cemetery, Delta, York Co., PA.<sup>13</sup>

Harrisburg Chapter's Hannah Macomber Hess was a Real Daughter and the first to prove her father, Zenas's service and lineage 24 May 1898 when she was eighty years old. Hannah's sister, Nancy Macomber Hawkins joined the DAR under her father Zenas 2 Apr 1902 at the age of eight-four. As of March 2022, seventeen women globally have proven they are a descendant of Zenas and of that number, the following six are Harrisburg daughters.

Hannah Macomber Hess – REAL DAUGHTER  
Nancy Macomber Hawkins – REAL DAUGHTER  
Frances Leedom Hess  
Maude Sherwood Lady  
Eleanor Desilvey Reese  
Edna Bowers Davenport

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<sup>9</sup> Godfrey, *The Commander-In-Chief's Guard, Revolutionary War*, p. 209.

<sup>10</sup> Mass. Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War, p. 124.

<sup>11</sup> Bucks County, PA US Tax Records, 1782-1860, Northampton, 1783, 1786, 1788, 1797, 1800, 1802, ancestry.com.

<sup>12</sup> 1810 US Census, Fawn, York, PA, Roll 57, image 00186, p. 175.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/32485124/zenas-macomber>.



# A Patriot's Story

## History of The Commander-in-Chief's Guard

The Commander-in-Chief's Guard was organized precisely at the hour of twelve, noon, 12 Mar 1776, pursuant to a general order issued by General Washington the previous day wherein he directed the formation of a corps of sober, intelligent and reliable men, detailed from the various regiments of infantry then assembled at Cambridge, Massachusetts, to be known as the Commander-in-Chief's Guard.

He further specified that the men selected should be between five feet eight inches and five feet ten inches in height, well drilled, and to be handsomely and well built. On the following morning Caleb Gibbs, of Massachusetts, and George Lewis-a nephew of General Washington, of Virginia, were commissioned captain and lieutenant, respectively, of the Guard, to whom were entrusted the details of the organization.

The Commander-in-Chief's Guard, sometimes otherwise officially designated as "His Excellency's Guard" and "The General's Guard," was popularly and synonymously known by the soldiers as "Washington's Life Guard" and "Washington's Body Guard;" by which misnomers they continue today to be erroneously recognized in historical works and in the official military records of many States, notwithstanding Congress resolved as early as 15 Apr 1777 that these appellations were improper, and admonished the officers that these practices must cease.

It is a source of much regret that, after a most thorough and diligent search, the descriptive and other rolls of the Commander-in-Chief's Guard for the year 1776 cannot be found. They were undoubtedly destroyed, among other valuable papers of the Guard, during the fire which occurred at the Charlestown Navy Yard in 1815, where they had been carefully preserved by Major Caleb Gibbs while naval-storekeeper at that station. However, through various returns and claims, it is believed that seventy-five per cent of the men composing the command during that period have been accounted for.

