



**On this day—January 5, 1835—Jacob Banks died in Goochland County, Virginia.**

**Jacob Banks (S8056, August 1754 – January 5, 1835)** was a free man of color from Goochland County, Virginia, who served with distinction in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. Born in August 1754, he spent his entire life in Goochland, maintaining family and community ties that endured long after the war.

From roughly January 1779 to February 1781, Banks served as a wagoner at Albemarle Barracks, transporting supplies and managing wagons. His duties included carrying food, clothing, and military materials critical to the maintenance and humane treatment of British and German prisoners of the Convention Army, captured at Saratoga. Some supplies originated from Thomas Jefferson's Elk Hill and Elk Island properties.

Banks's service lasted longer than many militia tours, and concluded without formal discharge papers. His service was verified by Robert Mims, a fellow wagoner and white veteran also from Goochland, who personally witnessed Banks's duties and confirmed his entire period of service.

Banks successfully applied for a pension under the Act of Congress of June 7, 1832. Though the pension was approved only shortly before his death, arrears were paid posthumously to three of his four children, preserving the federal recognition of his service and providing material support to his

family. Later testimony notes that Banks had become an invalid due to a broken arm, likely limiting his ability to work in later life.

Jacob Banks’s life and service illustrate the vital support roles played by African American soldiers in the Continental Army and their early recognition by the federal government and fellow compatriots.

\*See accompanying profile of Robert Mims and his relationship to Jacob Banks.

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