

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Aaron Cook R2246

PA [NC]

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

On this 26<sup>th</sup> day of April 1843 personally appeared before me the undersigned one of the Circuit Judges in and for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Aaron Cook of the County of Hardin and state of Kentucky aged Eighty two years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed June the 7<sup>th</sup> 1832. That he enlisted in the Army of the United states, eighteen months before the close of the war [see endnote] that he enlisted with Second Lieutenant Underwood, and served in the 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Continental line, under the following named officers. General George Washington, Col. Pervard, (Capt Underwood, Lieutenant Carland in Major Lanears Regiment) That he left the service at the close of the War. That he lived near Philadelphia in Pensylvania when he enlisted. That he was in the battles of Kings Mountain, Sallsbury, Guilford and Hangin Rock, That he traveled from Philadelphia through to South Carolina then to North Carolina, and Virginia That he served the greater part of his time in North Carolina and Virginia. He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and he declares his name is not on the pension roll of any agency in any State. That he received a discharge from the service. that he enlisted for five years. That he had his discharge burnt up in his Fathers house

Aaron hisXmark Cook

Catharine Ferguson states on oath that she lives in the neighborhood of Aaron Cook, that when she first became acquainted with said Cook, which has been about two years, it being about that time he has lived in her neighborhood, he enquired of her about her second husband John Ferguson [John Fergusson, pension application W8808], & stated that he had known her husband in the army of the revolution & spoke of knowing him at the time he was taken prisoner & mentioned circumstances that she had heard her husband mention in his life time, which convinced her that said Cook knew him at the time he mentioned She states that her husband has been dead for near thirty years [28 April 1843]

State of Kentucky/ Hardin County

On this first day of July 1843 personally appeared in the Hardin Circuit Court Aaron Cook of the County and state aforesaid aged 83 years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of congress passed June the 7<sup>th</sup> 1832 In addition to the statement allready made by him and forwarded to the pension office, That he enlisted in the Army of the United States for the term of five years. The precise time of which he does not recollect. That it was eighteen months prior to the termination of the war. That he belonged to the Seventeenth Regiment Commanded by Col. Pervard That his Capt was Underwood and Lieut Carland, that Majr Lanear commanded the batalion in which he served, That he enlisted in the city of Philadelphia, under Wm Sevanson [William Sevanson] That he was first taken from Philadelphia to the City of New York. thence back to Philadelphia. thence through the states of Maryland Virginia & Carolinas, That he was in the battles of Sallsbury Gilford Hanging Rock & Kings Mountain That he received his discharge at Gilford, which he has had destroyed by fire, that Gen'l Washington commanded at Hanging Rock and Kings mountain That he has no record of his age. That he lived in North Carolina when he entered the service, that since he left the service he has resided part of the time in the State of Tennasee and part of the time in Kentucky where he now resides and has resided for about thirty five years past. That he knows the names of some other officers but from his age & want of memory he is not now able to name them

Aaron hisXmark Cook

State of Kentucky Hardin County Sct:

On this the 15<sup>th</sup> day of July A.D. 1850, personally appeared in open Court, before the County Court for the County & State aforesaid, now sitting, Aaron Cook, a resident of the County and state aforesaid, aged ninety years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7<sup>th</sup> 1832: That he was born in Henry County Virginia [formed in 1776 from Pittsylvania County, which was formed in 1766 from Halifax County] on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of June 1760. That his fathers name was William Cook and his mothers maiden name was Elizabeth Clifton. That at the age of about one year, as he has been informed by his father & mother, he was removed by them from Henry County Virginia to Wake County North Carolina, on the Waters of Dan River; and at the age of about thirteen, he removed with his fathers family to the County of Surry, in the State of North Carolina. Here he aided his father for the space of six or seven years in the cultivation of his farm. About the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 1780, the American Troops were passing his fathers house on their way to Philadelphia. He saw first the Light Horse Companies, and was pleased with their military appearance, and he then resolved to join the army. A day or two after the passing of the troops above refered to, some seven or eight Companies of Infantry made their appearance marching in the direction of Philadelphia. He was at the time, at work in the field He left his work, fell into the ranks, and marched with them to Philadelphia. Here he enlisted for the term of five years in Captain James Underwoods Company, 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment United States Infantry, Commanded by Col. Pervard alias Brevard. He remembers the names also of Major Johnson and Lieutenant Johnson who belonged to his said Regiment. The date of his enlistment as well as his memory now served him was early in the month of June 1780. Immediately after he enlisted he went to the Barracks at Phil'a. and drew his musket bayonet &c. They first marched to Charlestown, Maryland, thence to Sundusky S. Carolina, thence to Columbia Georgia, thence back to N. Carolina to Surry County, at Rockford, thence to Hillsboro in Wake County, thence to Raleigh, thence back to Henry County Va thence to Hanging Rock in North Carolina where they had an engagement with the British; and in that battle he received a wound by a buck shot in his left hip, which brought him to his knees, but he immediately raised again and fought till the battle was over. He states that the wound is still visible and that the ball has never been extracted, but still remains in his body. At this engagement the British were defeated. They then marched to Kings Mountain in North Carolina where they had another engagement with the British in which the americans were victorious. He recollects the names of Col. Shelby and Col. Campbell in command of the American forces on that occasion. The next battle in which he was engaged was at Sallsbury, and lastly at Guilford Court House. In the tow last engagements General Green was in command of the American forces. They then marched to Columbia Georgia, thence to Sundusky in South Carolina, & finally to Raleigh North Carolina where he was discharged after serving out the full term of his enlistment, five years [sic]. He received an Honorable discharge, and took it home with him to his fathers house in the County of Surry North Carolina, on the waters of the Yadkin. About one year after he returned to his fathers house, the house was destroyed by fire, and his discharge was burned up with it. He was about eighteen months in active service that is to say, the war closed about 18 months after his enlistment, and during the balance of his term of enlistment he was in the standing army at different points but mostly at Sheralds Ford and Raleigh North Carolina. While he was at Sheralds Ford, there was a battle at Ramsowers alias Ramsays Mill. A part of his Regiment were in said engagement, and he remembers the name of two persons who were killed towit John Adams & Andrew Horn. Horn was son in law to Adams. He could distinctly hear the firing of arms though it was several miles from Sheralds Ford. This was after the battle of Guilford. He remembers that William Clifton [possibly pension application W3945] his uncle was in the same company and Rejiment, and also David Clifton, the son of the said William. William Clifton after he quit the service settled in East Tennessee where he died. David Clifton settled in North Carolina. He remembers also that William Johnson was one of his company. He knew him before he joined the army. He had lived neighbor to his, Cook's father, in Wake County North Carolina. He remembers that whilst in the service they were encamped and were Cooking Something to eat. Johnson was sitting down looking a little drowsy; one of the soldiers went up to him and hit him a sleight tap on his breast in fun and Johnson died immediately

without any previous symptoms of sickness From this singular circumstance the name of Johnson was strongly impressed upon his mind. He also remembers one John Ferguson who belonged to his Regiment, but not to his Company. Said Ferguson was taken prisoner by the British at Georgetown. He Cook proved this fact by his deposition for Catharine Ferguson of Hardin County Ky (now dec'd) who was the widow of said John Ferguson, and she received a Pension from the United States for the services of her said husband. He remembers that Uriah Hand [R4558] was one of his company, and some years ago lived in Spencer Co. Ky.

He states that he has no record evidence of his services, and knows of no living witness by whom he can prove his services

He states that in consequence of his extreme old age, great infirmity of both mind and body, and consequent loss of memory, he can not now recollect distinctly all the events through which he passed, and may sometimes be wrong in his statements especially as to dates But he is enabled to state and does state positively that he is not mistaken in the substance of his declaration. He states positively that he did enlist at Philadelphia in Captain James Underwoods Company, for the term of five years That he was in the battle of Hanging Rock & was wounded in the hip. That he was at the battle of Kings Mountain. That he was at a fight at Sallsbury; that he was at the battle of Guilford. That he served out his full term of five years, & was honorably discharged at Raleigh North Carolina, and that he has never been pensioned under any law of the United States for his Revolutionary Services. That in some of his statements he may sometimes be in error through the weakness of his memory, now much impaired by age. But he relies greatly on the Records at the Department to bear him out in all the material facts

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a Pension or annuity except the present; and he declares that his name is not on the Pension Roll of any agency in any state in the United States.

Aaron hisXmark Cook

#### NOTES:

There are so many errors in Cook's declarations of service that instead of interrupting his narrative with corrections, I will summarize them here.

Cook stated that he enlisted for five years about 18 months before the end of the war. There were no five-year enlistments. Enlistments in the Continental Army were for up to three years or for the duration of the war. It is probable that instead of serving one long tour in the Continental Line, Cook served several tours of a few months each in the militia.

The war formally ended with ratification of the Treaty of Paris on 30 Nov 1783, which would mean that Cook enlisted about the end of May 1782, long after the events he claims to have participated in. Often, however, soldiers considered the war to have ended with the surrender of Cornwallis on 19 Oct 1781, which would date Cook's enlistment to about the middle of April 1780. By this time the focus of the war had shifted to the South, and it is therefore unlikely that Cook joined troops who were marching from North Carolina to Philadelphia. It is possible that Cook had gone to Philadelphia as a militiaman in 1777. He could not have been taken to New York City, however, because it was under British occupation from 16 Nov 1776 until the end of the war.

There was no 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Continental Line. The only known field officers with a name similar to "Prevard" were Lt. Col. Alexander Brevard of the North Carolina State troops and Lt. Col. Hugh Brevard of the Burke County NC Militia. It is likely that Cook was referring to Lt. Col. Hugh Brevard. I could not find a Capt. James Underwood from North Carolina. William Underwood was a Captain, and Thomas Carlin was a Lieutenant, in the Surry County Militia. William Lenior was a Major in the militia of the neighboring county of Wilkes.

The Battle of Kings Mountain SC occurred on 7 Oct 1780 and was fought against Loyalists by American militiamen, including some from Surry County. George Washington was not present.

There was no known battle at Salisbury NC, but there were several skirmishes nearby.

The Battle of Guilford Courthouse NC was on 15 Mar 1781. The Surry County Militia was present.

There was no known engagement at a place called Hanging Rock in North Carolina, but there was a skirmish at Hanging Rock in South Carolina on 30 July 1780, and a battle there on 6 Aug 1780. George Washington was not present at either engagement.

I could not identify a Sundusky in South Carolina. Columbia in Georgia may refer to the present Columbia County, scene of several engagements.

“Sherrals Ford” probably refers to Sherrills Ford across Catawba River 16 mi NE of present Lincolnton. The Battle of Ramseur’s Mill occurred near Lincolnton on 20 Jun 1780 (before, not after the Battle of Guilford Courthouse), and it involved militiamen of Surry and neighboring counties. There was apparently no artillery at the battle, so it is doubtful Cook could have heard the action at Sherrill’s Ford.

John Fergusson (W8808) served in a Maryland Continental regiment, and his pension application does not include a statement by Aaron Cook. Ferguson was captured at the Battle of Camden SC on 16 Aug 1780, not at Georgetown.

Uriah Hand (R4558) stated that he served in the militia of Lincoln County NC.

On 19 July 1850 Samuel Stephen Eliot, a Justice of the Peace, certified that Aaron Cook was a member in good standing of the Baptist Church of Elizabethtown and was honest, although his memory was impaired. On 22 July 1850 Dr. B. R. Young certified that Aaron Cook bore a scar near his left hip joint apparently from a buckshot, and that he was “in a very destitute situation” and “dependent upon the charity of friends.”

The file contains no explanation for the rejection of Aaron Cook’s claim, but it is likely that it was because of the many misstatements in his declarations, and his name not being on the rolls of the Continental Army.