

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of William Henson R4910

f19NC

Transcribed and annotated by Will Graves

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[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Where the meaning is not compromised by adhering to the spelling, punctuation or grammar, no change has been made. Corrections or additional notes have been inserted within brackets or footnotes. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. A bracketed question mark indicates that the word or words preceding it represent(s) a guess by me. The word 'illegible' or 'indecipherable' or 'undeciphered' appearing in brackets indicates that at the time I made the transcription, I was unable to decipher the word or phrase in question. Only materials pertinent to the military service of the veteran and to contemporary events have been transcribed. Affidavits that provide additional information on these events are included and genealogical information is abstracted, while standard, 'boilerplate' affidavits and attestations related solely to the application, and later nineteenth and twentieth century research requests for information have been omitted. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading skills fail to catch all misinterpretations. Also, dates or numbers which the software treats as numerals rather than words are not corrected: for example, the software transcribes "the eighth of June one thousand eighty six" as "the 8th of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention. Researchers should not rely solely on the transcripts but should review the originals for themselves. These transcripts are intended as an aid to research, not to be used in lieu thereof.]

State of Indiana County of Martin } SS

On this 27th day of March A.D. 1838, personally appeared in open Court, before the Circuit Court of said County of Martin now sitting, William Henson, a resident of the Township of Mitcheltree in the County aforesaid, in the State of Indiana, aged about Seventy Six 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 7th, 1832:

That he entered the service of the United States, under the following named officers, and served as herein stated.

He was born in Culpepper [Culpeper] County in the State of Virginia, where he lived till he was about eighteen years of age; at which age he removed to Randolph County in North Carolina. He lived in the County last aforesaid, except when in service of the United States, during the continuance of the Revolutionary War. In the year after Lord Cornwallis marched through North & South Carolina, being as this affiant thinks the year A.D. 1780 the State of North Carolina was greatly infested & disturbed by Tories, led principally by a Colonel Fannon [David Fanning], who had been commissioned a Colonel by the British; and whose robberies & outrages of every kind were immense about those times. In the first part of the month of September of the same year, Captain John Rains of said County of Randolph raised a company of volunteers of from forty to fifty men, the object of which was principally to repel the Tory aggressions. The Lieutenant of said Company was Aquilla Jones, and the name of the Ensign was Shubal York. In said Company this declarant volunteered in the first part of the month aforesaid, and remain [remained] a private soldier in the same company in constant service till the last of March immediately following; but the exact days of the month, on which he entered the service, and quit it, he cannot recollect. At the time of his said service, his father Joseph Henson, resided with his family in said County of Randolph. The said Company made the house of said Joseph, a place of rendezvous – a sort of head quarters; from thence they made frequent incursions into the counties of Chatham and Moore, and occasionally into the edge of Montgomery County. These expeditions were always in pursuit of the Tories. In the time of his said service, towards the latter part of the declarant's said service, with his said company, in the lower part of Randolph County, in one of their expeditions, stopped at a farm house to get some dinner. Whilst there a party of Tories came to the back part of the field in which said house was situate, and fired on our Company; the bullets struck in several places near us, but all missed us. We made a charge on the party who fled into the woods, and made their escape. We followed their trail the next day five or six miles to a Creek called Brush Creek, where we found a man

who had just been killed in his own house by the said Tory party. We pursued them a few miles further to a farm belonging to one Isaac Redfern, whose house & barn were just set on fire and were then in flames. This all occurred in Randolph. We had no other skirmish at any other time, but we pursued the Tories frequently, on hearing of their being embodied in those parts; but they uniformly fled, and evaded meeting us and fight contenting themselves with burning houses, killing individuals, and destroying property. We frequently made expeditions across Deep River in Randolph County, & Rocky River in Chatham County. The country in the said for Counties was at that time thickly settled; we never went out of said Counties in the service; and our object & business was during all the time to protect the inhabitants of those Counties from the Tory aggressions – those Counties being the place, at that time, in which Colonel Fannin mostly operated in favor of the British; and in that employment we were constantly engaged, except sometimes, for a few days when we took up quarters at my father's house. The said Company were all mounted men; and I rode a horse of my father's. The Company were called into service by Colonel Dougan,¹ who was a Continental officer (as this deponent thinks), and who lived in the said County of Randolph on Deep River – Said Dougan was understood to have authority for that purpose; for he called a number of companies into service about the same time in those parts; but owing to the practice of the enemy in committing their outrages in small parties in various places, the company so raised by said Dougan, were not embodied into battalions, or regiments, but remained separate guarding the country in the best manner they could – and this declarant's company was never attached to any other. He was always a private during said service. And served constantly in said Company for six months and a half at least. He was personally acquainted with Colonel Dougan. He also knew Colonel Litle, and General Gray, who he believes were regular officers of the North Carolina militia – Besides these he remembers no other regular officers of the revolution of a higher grade than of Captains – But he recollects the names of the following Militia Captains of North Carolina to wit: Captains John Hines – William York – and James Gray. He remained in said Company till it was disbanded; but no written discharge was given him that he remembers. He has no record of his age,² but he is about Seventy Six. His age was recorded in a prayer book which was in the possession of his brother Jesse Henson, and has seen it in that book more than twenty years ago, but the book has long since been lost. He judges of his present age, as he thinks pretty certainly, however, from the fact that he was between 18 & 19 years old when he entered into the service as he recollects distinctly; and he quit the service the last of March next preceding the capture of Cornwallis at

¹ Both James Dougan and Thomas Dougan of Randolph County NC served as Lt. Cols. under Col. John Collier in the NC militia

² Here the veteran begins his responses to the seven interrogatories prescribed by the War Department to be put to every applicant for a pension from the federal government under the 1832 Pension Act. Those seven questions were as follows:

1st Where and in what year were you born?

2nd Have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

3rd Where were you living when called into service: where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live?

4th How were you called into service; were you drafted; did you volunteer or were you a substitute, and if a substitute, for whom?

5th State the names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops where you served, such Continental and militia regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service.

6th Did you ever receive a discharge from the service, and if so, by whom was it given and what has become of it?

7th State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighborhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief in your services as a soldier in the revolution.

Yorktown [October 19, 1780]– He continued to reside in said County of Randolph until about 24 years ago; at which time he removed into Harrison County in the then territory of Indiana, where he lived about four years, and then removed into said County of Martin where he has ever since resided, and still resides. He knows of no other person by whom he can prove his said services except his said brother Jesse who is about a year and a half younger than he, and knows of his service. He can prove by Thomas Payne and Eli B Echerson [?] -- who can testify as to his character for veracity, their belief of his services as a Revolutionary Soldier, and to whom he is known, and who reside in his present neighborhood – He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present; and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state.

This declarant states further that by reason of age and consequent loss of memory, he cannot profess to state the dates & years with perfect accuracy, but from his perfect recollection of the month in which she entered the service and quit it; and from the fact he recollects distinctly that his age was between 18 & 19 when he entered the service, and also from his distinct recollection that he served as aforesaid in the winter & spring, before the capture of Cornwallis, and it's commencement in the September a year before that event, he is certain that his said term of service commenced the first of September 1780 and ended the last of March 1781, and he calculates his age from these events, and issuer he served six months and a half. This declarant states further that the reason why he did not sooner applied for a pension is that till recently, he was in good circumstances, and chaired nothing about it; and that late misfortunes have rendered it necessary for his support, in his old age.

S/ William Henson, X his mark

And on the same date first aforesaid, to wit the 27th day of March A.D. 1838, comes Jesse Henson aged about seventy-four, and in open Court, before the said Martin Circuit Court now sitting, and being duly sworn according to law makes oath that he is a younger brother of William Henson who has just subscribed and sworn to the foregoing declaration – that the year after Lord Cornwallis marched northward from Charlestown South Carolina (as he believes) and before his capture at Yorktown, to wit in September 1780, said William volunteered in the Company of Captain John Rains, as is stated in the foregoing declaration – that at that time, said William and this affiant were living at their father's in the County of Randolph, North Carolina – that said Captain commanded and kept said Company together constantly from the forepart of September 1780, till the latter part of March 1781 – that the company often took up quarters at his father's house – that said William served constantly in said company for more than six months – that the business of said company was to keep under the Tories, & repel their attacks in the Counties of Randolph, Chatham, Moore & Montgomery – that this affiant was not one of said Company, but saw them often, and knows therefore that said William did serve as herein stated – that said William is about a year and a half older than this affiant – that the record of your age this affiant hand in a prayer book, which was destroyed about 20 years ago – that said William is at least 76 years old – that he has ever since lived with him in the same neighborhood and knows that he always sustained the character of a Revolutionary Soldier – and that his Lieutenant Jones, & Ensign York were officers of said company, and were personally known to this affiant.

S/ Jesse Henson,³ X his mark

³ Although there are discrepancies in the ages and other facts set forth above, I believe this affiant to be the same as [Jesse Henson R4906](#).

[p 17: Thomas Payne and Eli B. Echerson gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[p 2]

State of Indiana Harrison County: SS: In the Circuit Court of Harrison County at its April Term 1840

Be it remembered that on this 14th day of April in the year 1840 personally appeared in open Court before the Honorable the Judges of the Circuit Court of Harrison County William Henson an applicant for a pension and the following questions being propounded to him according to the directions of the War Department answers as follows

1st Interrogatory Where and in what year were you born

Answer – I was born in Culpeper County Virginia in 1757 or 58 as near as I am able to state

2nd Interrogatory – Have you any record of your age and if so where is it

Answer I have no record of my age, I left it in North Carolina

3rd Interrogatory – Where were you living when you were called into service where have you lived since the revolutionary war, and where do you now live –

Answer When called into service I lived in Randolph County North Carolina I removed from that County to Indiana where I have resided in Hancock & Martin County ever since

4th How were you called into service, were you drafted, did you volunteer or were you a substitute and if a substitute for home

Ansr. I volunteered

5. State the names of some of the Regular officers who were with the troops where you served: such Continental and militia regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service.

Ansr. – Colonel Sawyer was the highest officer I knew whether he was a regular officer or not I do not recollect for other particulars in answer to this interrogatory I refer to my declaration

6. Did you ever receive a discharge from the service

Answer. I never received a written discharge – I was verbally discharged by Captain Rains

7. State the names of persons to whom you are known &c

Answer. Elijah Burton, Sherrod Burton, Adam Sears and John Rankin

[p 12]

State of Indiana Harrison County } SS

On this fourteenth day of April in the year 1840 personally appeared in open Court before the Honorable the Judges of the Circuit Court of Harrison County in the second Judicial Circuit of the State of Indiana now sitting at the Court House in Corydon in said County William Henson a resident of said County aged about eighty one 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 Acts of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated:

That he William Henson was born as near as he can recollect in the year 1758 or 1759 in Culpeper County Virginia – he has now no record of his age having lost the book in which it was contained. That his parents removed with him while he was yet quite a small boy to Randolph County in North Carolina. That he continued to live in said Randolph County until called into service. That he volunteered during the revolutionary war as a private soldier in a Regiment of militia commanded by Colonel Thomas Dugan [sic, Lt. Col. Thomas Dugan] in a company of

light horse under the immediate command of Captain John Rains who was the Captain of the Company to which he belonged. That he served a tour of duty in said Company for a period of 6 months commencing the early part of the month of September and ending in the early part of the month of March following. That he cannot recollect whether the tour of duty commenced and ended on the precise first day of these months respectively, and that he cannot now remember the precise years but that it was towards the end of the war. The company was made up chiefly of the persons living in his neighborhood in said Randolph County. The Lieutenant's name was Acquilla Jones. The first Sergeant's name was Fulton [James Fulton] – he states his Christian name was James. Among the privates who served in the same company he remembers the names of Thomas Garner, William Wright, John Hines, Evans Wright, John Stephens, Robert Stephens, Shubel or Terry York, Anthony Rains⁴ (who was some relation but not a brother to the Captain), Robert Duncan and Charles Duncan (or Dungan). That the company mustered at the house of Joseph Henson (his father) in said Randolph County – which said house of Joseph Henson continued to be there occasional place of rendezvous during his period of service. That it was the duty of his Company to make excursions in various directions through the Counties of Randolph, Chatham and more to protect the Country from the British troops & Tories. That he was constantly employed in this service with his Company during the whole of the period of service before mentioned viz. from the early part of September until March following, and was not engaged in any other business or pursuit during any part of that time. That his company performed important services in keeping the Counties in which it operated clear of the enemy but was not engaged in any actions with them. Some of the other companies under Colonel Dugan's command had several actions with the Tories during this period and whilst engaged in the same kind of service one of which was at the house of one Needham in the lower part of Randolph County and another at Herman Cox's Mill on Deep River in Randolph County some officers of the regular Army visited his Company occasionally whose names he cannot now remember, but he thinks one was Littrel [possibly a reference to John Luttrell, a militia officer in Chatham County North Carolina] was with his company sometimes. That the company was discharged in March at said Joseph Henson's house – that the men received no written discharge and that he never received any pay or compensation for his services. That he continued to live in Randolph County North Carolina until about the year 1809 when he removed to Indiana and has ever since lived in Martin and Harrison Counties in said State. The only persons he now knows of who could testify to his services as aforesaid of their own personal knowledge are William Wright⁵ who served in the same Company with him, and who he thinks is now receiving a pension and Jesse Henson his brother. The mentions as names of persons living in his neighborhood who can testify to his character for veracity and their belief of his services in the revolution the following Elijah Burton, John Rankin.

He further states that his recollection is now much impaired by age, and that he has not made earlier application for a pension in consequence of his removal to a great distance from the place where he served and his ignorance of the provision made by law for such cases as he is. He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or an annuity except the present and he declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any agency of any State. He further states that the term of service for which he engaged for 6 months and that he continued to perform military service during the whole of said term.

Sworn & subscribed the day and year aforesaid

⁴ [Anthony Rains \(Raines\) W1481](#)

⁵ [William Wright S16301](#)

S/ H. W. Heth, Clk

S/ William Henson, X his mark

[p 14]

I the undersigned Jesse Henson upon my solemn oath do certify that the above named William Henson who has subscribed and sworn to the above Declaration did served for the term of six months as a private in the Revolutionary war against the British and Tories in the State of North Carolina in the company commanded by Captain John Rains in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Thomas Dugan. The undersigned being a brother to the said William Henson knows of his own personal knowledge many of the circumstances that occurred during the Revolutionary war – and hearing the above declaration read leaves it to be true and correct as far as he can recollect. Deponent is aged between 70 & 80 years.

S/ Jesse Henson, X his mark

[Adam Sears, a clergyman, Elijah Benton and Sherrod Benton gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[p 11: A note in the file indicates that this application was rejected because the applicant "did not serve in a regularly organized Corps called out by competent authority."]