

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Caleb Mason S1917

NC

Transcribed and annotated by Pat Mason Harris and C. Leon Harris. Revised 15 Oct 2014.

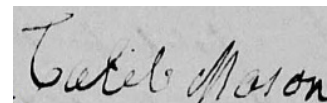
State of Tennessee } Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions
Wilson County } February Term 1821. viz.

On this 8th day of February 1821, personally appeared in open Court, (being a Court of record, for the County aforesaid, made so by act of assembly), Caleb Mason, aged Sixty Seven years, who being first duly sworn, according to law, doth on his oath, make the following declaration, in order to obtain the provision, made by the act of Congress of the 18th of March 1818, and the 1st of May 1820. that he the said Caleb Mason enlisted for the term of Six months in the fall of 1775, in the State of North Carolina, in the company commanded by Capt Hardy Murfree, in the regiment commanded by Colonel Robert Howe in the line of the State of North Carolina on the Continental establishment, that he continued to serve in the said Corps until the Six months had expired, when he was honorably discharged from said service in Edington [sic: Edenton], in the State of North Carolina. Declarant, states that while under Capt Murfry [sic], he was in the battle of the great bridge [in VA, 9 Dec 1775], that he then marched to Norfolk, and continued there until Gen How burnt the Town [2 Jan 1776; see endnote] that he was then marched to Suffolk, and from thence to Edington. Declarant states, that after his discharge at Edington, he enlisted for the term of two years in the spring of 1776 in the State of North Carolina, in the company commanded by Capt James Anderson, in the regiment commanded by Colonel [Selby] Harney, of which Col Charles Garr was paymaster, in the line of the State of North Carolina, on the continental establishment [sic: Ocracoke Independent Company of militia] that he continued to serve in said Corps nearly two years; Declarant states that about three weeks after the last enlistment, he was made a Lieutenant in said Company – that he served on the sea board during this time, and about the expiration of it, petitioned to the Governor and Council against the Captain for Cowardice, and occasioned the Company and three others to which it was attached to be broke up – That during the time he was attached to Capt Anderson’s Company he was in no engagement, but saw some service in repelling Privateers & Gallies off the Coast, that he afterwards served under Gen Green [sic: Nathanael Greene], as a Capt for Six months [in the Hyde County Militia], and that he has no other evidence now in his power, of the said services except, William Perkins and Benjamin Gibbs affidavits annexed.

And in pursuance of the act of the 1st of May 1820. I do solemnly swear that I was a resident Citizen of the United States, on the 18th day of March, one thousand eight hundred and Eighteen, and that I have not since that time by Gift, sale, or in any manner disposed of my property, or any part thereof, with intent thereby so to diminish it, as to bring myself within the provisions of an act of Congress entitled “an act to provide for certain persons engaged in the land or naval service of the United States, in the revolutionary war” passed on the 18th day of March, one thousand, eight hundred and Eighteen; and that I have not, nor has any person in trust for me, any property, or Securities, contracts or debts, due to me, other than what is contained in the Schedule hereto annexed, and by me subscribed, one basket which I owe for, worth 75 cents.

My occupation is that of a manufacturer of tobacco – I have no family – living with me – am lame and infirm – I can procure but little to do in any line – and am almost entirely disabled from working at any trade, by the Rheumatist, and old age

Sworn to in open Court



[The above claim was rejected, because Caleb Mason's name could not be found on the Continental Rolls, and the acts of 1818 and 1820 covered only veterans who served at least nine months in the Continental Line. The first part of the following appears to have been written before the above application was made, possibly by Caleb Mason.]

In the yare of 1775 in the Fall I Listed in the united states servis under Captin Hardey Murgree and serd in verginney at the grate Bridge Battel then went To norfolk and Continued thar Tell general how Burnt the Town then Marcht To Suffolk then Marcht To Edentown in north Carolina and was DisChrgd then I served under Capt James andersn Liuetennent & adgedent 18 Montes Thar was Four Cumpnes on the See Bord as gardes for the See Port in 1776 and Continued Tell Late in the Fall in 1777 Then I Pertishind To govner Richard Cawell against the Conduck of the of the Captin and the govener and Council Brooke the four Coumpneys. – Then I served in the Soth Sate and north Carolina six Montes as Capt under the Comand of General Green when Talten was Defeeted at The Cowpens and at the gilford Battel that I served My Cuntry Two yars and Six Montes Faithful in the old Revelushenery War and I am a Lame man and 67 yare of age in Feburey next without hous or home or property Except My waring aparrel

State of Tennessee } we the Subscribers Do Certefy that we have kowen the said Mason upperds of
Wilson County } 40 yares and we Beleve that said Mason has Bin a faithful solder for his Cuntry
in the olde ware and that he is a Lame Man and we Beleve that has knowe propertey Exept his warin a
parrel and standes in need of supoport of his Cuntry Abner Spring/ John o neel/ Thomas Broocks/
Samuel Henery Senr/ John Spring/ Robert oneel

State of N Carolina }
Halifax County }

This day came before me Wm. Perkins of good report and made oath that Calebe Mason from information he believes served in the Old contenel Service two years Viz Served six months under Capt Hardy Murphrey and discharg'd then listed under Capt. James Anderson and served eighteen months and discharg'd and that of his own knowledge that the s'd Mason is in very low Circumstances and stands in need of the assistance of your Country for support

Given under my hand & seal this 21st day of Feb'y 1820

Benj. Harris J.P.

State of Tennessee } This Day Came Bengamin Gibbs before me and made oath that Callob Mason
White County } Sarved in the old revolutionary woar under Cpt Jeames Anderson as adgent I the
s'd Gibbs inlisted in the same Company 1776 and found the sd Mason theare in servis and I the sd Gibbs
was Discharged in 1777 and Left the sd Mason theare in service {and by information says that the sd
Mason served at the grate bridge battel and at Norfolk in the State of Virgina in the yare of 1775} and in
78 and in 79 that the sd Mason served six months in the southerd [southward] as Capt under general
Green and that the sd Mason is a Lame man and in Lowe surcumstance and stands in need of seport of
hiw Country Sworn to and subscribed this 29 Day of November 1820

J Templeton/ Justice of the peace

County of Henry & State of Tennessee

On this 4th day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred & twenty seven, personally appeared in open Court (it being a Court of record for the reason as that it was expressly made so by the acts of the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee; and because it has been solemnly adjudged by tribunals of the State of Tennessee to be so, and because it has the power to fine and imprison) for the County of Henry and state of Tennessee – Cleb Mason resident in said County aged about seventy four years old, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the provision made by the Acts of Congress of the 18th of March 1818, and the first of May 1820. That he the said Caleb Mason enlisted and served for the Term of six months, some time in

the year 1775 in the state of North Carolina, in the Company Commanded by Captain Hardy Murfree, in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Robert Howe, in the line of the State of North Carolina on the Continental establishment, that he continued to served in said company until he was promoted to the rank of second lieutenant in the company commanded by Captain James Anderson, and that he continued to serve in said company as second lieutenant for about the term of two years, when he was again promoted to the rank of Captain, and that he continued to serve as Captain in the regular army for the term of three months, when he was again promoted to the office of adjutant in Colonel Browns Regiment, and that he continued to serve as adjutant in said regiment, for about the Term of three months, when he was honorably discharged from the service of the united states in the Town of Kingston in the State of North Carolina – and that he hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension, except the present – that his name is not on the roll of any state, except the state of North Carolina, and that the following are the reasons for not making an earlier application for a pension. That some years since he applied to the War department or pension agent, through one of the representatives in Congress from the State of Tennessee Colonel Robert Allen for a pension, and for some cause unknown to this applicant, he has never as yet obtained a pension.

And in pursuance of the act of the first of May 1820 [oath similar to that in the first application follows] With respect to the schedule of my property I do most solemnly assert that I do not own one dollars worth of real or personal property upon the face of the globe. Caleb Mason

I am by profession a farmer, but from extreme old age and bodily infirmity consequent upon old age, I am wholly unable to labour for a subsistence Caleb Mason

He would further state, that his family for many years has bee scattered through various sections of the country, and that he has no person to look to for a support but himself, that he has for many years been living from house to house upon the charity of the good people of his county, that he is wholly unable from infirmity and old age to labour for his subsistence, he would also state that no change has been effected in his property since the 18th of March 1818, that he was at that time & has continued to be until the present moment in extreme indigent circumstances. Caleb Mason

on this 8th day of July 1823 the schedule and declaration of Caleb Mason was produced in open court (it being a court of record haveing the power of fine and imprisonment for the county and state aforesaid) and on motion was ordred to be entred at full length on the records of said court in the words following towit.

Original Claim

Schedule of the property of Caleb Mason

one pocket knife and about eighteen dollars due to be paid in some trade and pant money.

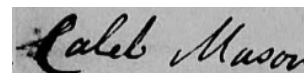
Caleb Mason

State of Tennessee }

Dickson County }

on this 8th day of July 1823, while in session being a court of record haveing the power of fine and imprisonment, in and for the county and state aforesaid; Caleb Mason aged seventy years (no family) who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the provisions made by the act of Congress of the 18th of March 1818 and the 1st of May 1820, that he the said Caleb Mason enlisted for the term of six months, in the year 1775 and served the said term of six months, at the expiration of which time he was discharged. Then he the said Caleb Mason enlisted for the term of two years, in the year 1776 in the state of North Carolina in the company commanded by Captain James Anderson, in the regiment commanded by Colonal Harney (his given name not recollected) in the line of the state of North Carolina, on the Continental establishment, that he continued to serve in the said corps as a Lieutenant untill some time in the year 1778 when he was discharged from the said service at ocrocock barr in said state of North Carolina that he was in two skermages in takeing two British Rogallies [sic: row gallies]. Shotly after his discharge from the said two years service he received a commission from the Governor of North Carolina as a Captain and sent to the southward in

order to recruit a company for another expedition, after he had recruited what he could conveniently, he returned the said recruits to some other officer – after he had given up his recruits he returned back to the County of Hyde by orders of the Governor to hurry out delinquents after the defeat of General Gates [defeat of Gen. Horatio Gates at the Battle of Camden SC, 16 Aug 1780], then he volunteered as a Captain, and served under General Green and was in the battle at Guilford, after which he was permitted to return, and that he has no other evidence now in his power of his said services, except the evidence of William Perkins and Benjamin Gibbs, which was heretofore forwarded to the war department. And in pursuance of the act [oath similar to the above follows] and now in such indigent circumstances that he needs the assistance of his country for support – Sworn to and subscribed on this 8th day of July 1823, in open court before me Field Farrar Clerk of said court.



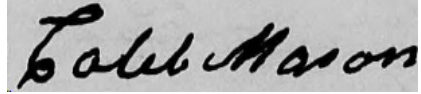
State of Tennessee. }
 Weakly [sic: Weakley] County }

On this 11th day of October in the year of our Lord 1832.

personally appeared before the County Court now sitting of Weakly County State of Tennessee, it being a Court of record, it having a Clerk and proceeding according to the Course of the Common Law } Caleb Mason a resident of said County of Weakly & state of Tennessee aged Seventy nine 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 was born in Currituck County North Carolina on the 15th day of February 1754. That sometime in the year 1775. he enlisted in the army of the United States at Murfreesborough [Murfreesboro in Hertford County] in North Carolina under Capt. Hardy Murphry [sic]. William Gardner was our first Lieutenant but I do not remember who was our second Lieutenant and ensign. from Murfreesborough we marched to Edenton in N. Carolina where we joined our regiment under Colo. Robert Howe first-Colonel & Colo White second-Colonel. he does not now remember the No. of the regiment but thinks it was the first or second [2nd North Carolina Continental Regiment]. We remained a short time at Edenton when we were marched in the state of Virginia and fought at the great bridge battle when Captain Fordise [sic: Charles Fordyce] of the British Grenadiers was killed. When we got to the great bridge we made breastworks and entrenched ourselves behind them. Fordise was in a Fort in an open Savanna. he got orders from Governor Dunmore to drive us from the breastworks. Just at the break of day {the date not recollected} Capt Fordise appeared on the bridge at the head of his men with his sword in one hand and a torch in the other to burn our breastworks he called to his men to follow him that the way was theirs. Just as he spoke those words he was shot down. seven balls having passed through his body a considerable slaughter of the enemy ensued and four or five Clubbed their must [clubbed their muskets?] and run to us and after enlisted in our service. the Virginia troops fought with us in this battle but I do not now remember who was their commander. a few days after this we got a reinforcement of fifteen hundred men & marched to Norfolk and took up our winter quarters there. early in the Spring [sic: 1 Jan 1776] the British fleet commenced a firing on Norfolk and tried to Land their men under cover of their cannon but we killed every man as fast as they Landed. a drummer & fifer swam ashore from the british fleet about this time & Joined us. the drummers name was Scott & I think the fiver [sic] was named Tiack. I understood that Scott was killed in the battle of Brandywine [11 Sep 1777] Governor Dunmore was on board and I believe commanded the fleet during the time here spoken of. the british fleet still remained opposite Norfolk. We were ordered to leave Norfolk & to march to Suffolk in Virginia We burnt Norfolk before we left it to prevent the british from harbouring in it. We then marched to Suffolk and were placed under the command of Colo Scott [Charles Scott of Virginia] & Maj'r. Parker. Our Colo. Howe went to Williamsburgh [sic: Williamsburg] and was made a General [1 Mar 1776] & Capt. Benjamin Williams [sic: Benjamin Williams] was his aide camp when Howe returned he marched us to Edenton in North Carolina where we were discharged thus ended this term of service this declarant having been Six months in actual service during this campaign– Just after this term of service was ended Governor [Richard] Caswell the then Governor of North

Carolina ordered four companies to be raised to guard the sea coast to prevent the British galleys from coming into the inlets. one company was stationed at Old Currituck inlet. one at Ocracoke [sic: Ocracoke] bar. one at Old Topsail inlet [in Pender County]. & the other at White Oak inlet [in Carteret County]. I enlisted in one of these companies the one commanded by Capt James Anderson & which was stationed at Ocracoke bar. Benjamin Bonner [sic: Benjamin Bonner] & James Wharhob [sic: James Wahob] were my Lieutenants. Capt James Harney commanded the company at Old Topsail. Cpt. Dosier commanded at Old Currituck inlet I do not now remember who commanded the company at White Oak inlet. These were called independent companies. there were none of them that knew any thing of discipline but myself & James Wharhob the second Lieutenant resigned his commission and I was appointed in his place. and I served upwards of eighteen months in this capacity of second Lieutenant. John Brag [sic: John Bragg] was ensign & should have taken the place of second Lieutenant but as he knew nothing of discipline he recommended me— during the time I was stationed at Ocracoke bar we had several skirmishes to keep the galleys from landing their men. My Capt. managed badly & was a coward and I told Ben Bonner my first Lieutenant that we were doing no good for our Country and we went to the Governor and impeached our Capt. with bad conduct and cowardice. The Governor then dismissed the whole four companies and said I had saved the Country upwards of thirty thousand dollars by my informing him of that bad management. Thus ended my second time of service being upwards of eighteen months in actual service during this enlistment In the latter part of the year 1779 or the first part of the year 1780 there was a draught for men to serve nine months. I then resided in Hyde [sic: Hyde] County North Carolina Henry Gibbs was draughted and I became a substitute for him the men thus draughted all marched to Kingston in North Carolina [more likely Kinston in Lenoir County NC] we were not officered the Governor then gave me a Captains Commission on the recommendation of Colo Abraham Jones. Colo Palmelin the Colo in Hyde County sent by me when I marched to Kingston his resignation to present to the Governor which I did but the Governor would not accept it because war was then raging & he said it was no time for resigning. many of them who were draughted at this time refused to march to Kingston and I was employed by the Governor to bring them to Kingston & to enlist men. some I placed under Capt. Reuben Roundtree & some I placed under Capt Eburn [sic: John Eborne]. my commission as captain ended in about three months. When I had collected the deserters & enlisted a sufficient no. of men I then returned to Hyde County and in 1780. or 1781. I substituted for Thomas Gibbs who was the uncle of Henry Gibbs. I then went to Fayetteville North Carolina and joined the regiment under Colo. [Thomas] Brown. William Dennis was our first Major. I was then made adjutant of the Regiment we were under General Linnington [sic: John Alexander Lillington]. We were ordered by General Green [sic: Nathanael Greene] to march to Hiewassy river to a certain Ford to build a Fort to keep the enemy from crossing this was at the time that General Morgan defeated Tarlton at the Cowpens [sic: Gen. Daniel Morgan defeated Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton at the Cowpens in South Carolina, 17 Jan 1781] the ford where we were stationed was twelve miles from the Cowpens where this battle was fought [see endnote]. after the defeat of Tarlton General Green ordered us to haw river [in North Carolina] to head Cornwallis to keep him from going into Virginia but owing to the cowardice or treachery of General Linnington we did not head Cornwallis altho it was in his power We were then ordered to Wilmington and General Linnington left us and took protection under the enemy [see endnote] Major Dennis remained & we marched the men to Kingston where we were discharged. this ends my service as above stated it being in all Two years & six months. after this I volunteered as a Captain against the Tories and served in this way about three months. He states that he received a discharge signed by Capt Hardy Murphy at the end of his first campaign but that he got upset in a boat in Albermarle sound [sic: Albemarle Sound NC] and lost this paper as also his Lieutenants commission. He kept for many years his commission as Captain & until it got worn out in his pocket. both Commissions were signed by General Caswell he has no documentary evidence of his service and knows of no person now living by whom he can prove his service He once proved his service by Benjamin Gibbs & Wm Perkins both of whom are now dead. he left there testimony to be sent to the pension office in the hands of the Lawyer who drew his declaration but he cannot now get this testimony as the Lawyer does not know what he had done with it. he states that he is

known by Wm FitzGerald & the Revr. Thos. Ross to whom he refers.
He hereby relinquishes every claim whatsoever 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 nor never has been

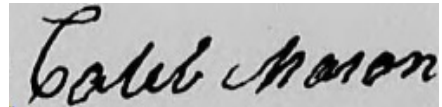


State of Tennessee } Personally appeared before me, the undersigned, a Justice of the peace for said
Weakley County } County, Caleb Mason, who, being duly sworn deposeth and saith, that by reason
of old age, and the consequent loss of memory, he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his
service, but according to the best of his recollection, he served not less than the periods mentioned below,
and in the following grades:

In 1775 I served six months as a cadet, waiting for a commission. In 1776 & 1777 I served as a
Lieutenant Eighteen months and twenty five days at least. In 1778 or 79 agreeable to my best recollection
I substituted for Henry Gibbs, and was commissioned by the Governor immediately after as a Captain, &
served in this grade three months. In 1780 or 1781 I substituted for Thomas Gibbs, and served three
months as Adjutant. In the latter part of the year 1781 to the best of my recollection, I volunteered as a
Militia Captain, and between this period & the taking of Cornwallis at Little York [19 Oct 1781] I served
nine months. And for such services I claim a pension.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 4th day of February 1833

E. D. Dickson a Justice of the Peace



NOTES:

Col. William Woodford of Virginia and Col. Robert Howe of North Carolina (promoted to
General on 10 Apr 1776) shared command at the Battle of Great Bridge and at Norfolk. Norfolk was first
burned by Lord Dunmore on 1 Jan 1776 and then by the Americans on the following day to deny the
British a port.

“Hiwassy river” may be a reference to Hiwassee River in North Carolina, but that is too far
from Cowpens SC to be the site referred to by Mason. A ford 12 miles from Cowpens would probably
have been on the Broad River.

After the Battle of Guilford Courthouse on 15 March 1781, Greene ordered Gen. John Alexander
Lillington to harass Cornwallis on his withdrawal to Wilmington NC. Historical accounts indicate that
Lillington performed effectively in this campaign and for the next five months in fighting Loyalists
around Wilmington, and that he remained a Brigadier General in the NC Militia until the end of the war
in 1783.

A note on Mason’s pension certificate states that he died 1 Aug 1851.