

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Abijah Hunt S23271

f34NJ/SC

Transcribed by Will Graves

1/23/09 rev'd 1/13/16

[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' 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.]

[p 25]

State of New York, County of Cayuga

On this 23rd day of January 1833 personally appeared in open Court before Joseph L. Richardson first Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Cayuga County and the Other associate Judges of said Court now in Session Abijah Hunt of the town of Sterling in the County of Cayuga and State of New York, aged 70 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, 1832. That he entered the Service of the United States, and served as herein Stated. That he was born in the town Newton, County of Sussex & State of New Jersey on the 17th March 1762. That in the year 1776 he enlisted as a volunteer in Capt. Brittain's Company & Col. Spencer's Regiment in the Service of the United States & marched from Chatham to a place called Connecticut farms, to the number of about 250 men, and had a skirmish at that place with a foraging party of the enemy, in which the Americans beat them & made prisoners of about 80 Hessians and a small number of British horse; that upon the British evacuating Elizabethtown, the Americans took possession of it; and this declarer having been stationed there with the Regiment continued to do duty there until his enlistment had Expired, and then was discharged and returned home; that a brother of the declarer who had also enlisted into the same Company was likewise in the aforesaid Skirmish; and immediately thereafter, enlisted in Col. Spencer's, or the 5th Jersey, Regiment for 3 years during the war.

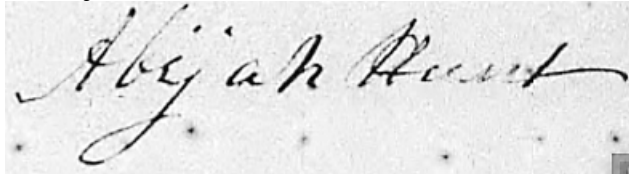
In the winter of 1776/7, when General Washington was with the Army at Valley Forge, this Declarer volunteered and served in the place of his said Brother (who was sick) for 3 months; and upon his recovery, was relieved by him, after the Expiration thereof. -- That in the fall of 1779, this declarer, in company with his Brother James Hunt shipped on board the *Luzerne* Letter of Marque, at Philadelphia, Carrying 18 Guns, commanded by Capt. Thomas Bell; that sometime in the ensuing spring, the *Luzerne*, being then on her homeward bound voyage from France, was captured by an English Frigate of 32 Guns; that he this declarer with the rest of the Crew of the *Luzerne*, was landed at Limerick in Ireland, and after being there about 3 weeks were sent to the Cove of Cork, and there put on board of the *Lenox* an English 74 gun Ship, and there remained a prisoner, until he landed at Plymouth in England, and was then Confined in the Mill prison for alleged piracy and high treason, there to remain until the King should be pleased to order them for trial; That this declarer was thus Confined for one year lacking 15 days; when after the capture of Lord Cornwallis and his Army, the Declare with the other American prisoners were suffered to be exchanged, and sailed in a Cartill [sic, cartel], and

arrived at Philadelphia after an absence of one year and 9 months. -- That Soon, or within a few weeks thereafter, he the Declarer shipped himself on board the Frigate *South Carolina*¹ of 40 guns & 783 men Commanded by Capt. John Joiner as a midshipman of the first Class Capable of Navigating a vessel of the first Class into any port, and lay at the port of Philadelphia, and in the River, about 2 months and then put to sea on a cruise, and after being out about 20 hours, the *South Carolina* was captured by a 56 gun Ship and 2 British frigates, and sent into the port of New York, -- where the prisoners were put on board the Prison Ship and there confined, until paroled, and continued on parole until peace was declared. That this declarer's pay on board the *South Carolina* was \$30 as he understood per month; and that the length of his Service on board her and Prisoner was 15 months and upwards. -- That at the time he served in the militia as before mentioned, his place of residence was at Morristown in New Jersey; Since which he has resided in the city of Albany for 30 years and now resides in Sterling in the County of Cayuga -- and that he has no Record of his age nor documentary Evidence of his Services.

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.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid

S/ Abijah Hunt

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Abijah Hunt". The ink is dark and the paper appears slightly aged or off-white.

[David Currie, a clergyman, and John McFadden gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[p 7]

State of New York Cayuga County

Personally appeared before me the undersigned a Justice of the Peace a resident of the Town of Sterling in said County, Abijah Hunt of the town of Sterling aforesaid who being first 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 nor can he recollect the particular dates or the Periods when he Enlisted or when he was discharged, but according to the best of his recollection, he served not less than the periods mentioned below and in the following Grades. He enlisted and served as a private in Capt. Britten's Company in Col. Spencer's Regiment afterwards called the 5th New Jersey Regiment for 3 months and actually served the 3 months, was discharged at Elizabethtown whether the said 3 months services was in the year 1776 or 7 or a part of both years this declarant cannot now recollect, and after his discharge returned to Morristown and remained there at his father's residence and after the Army Went into winter quarters Josiah Hunt (the Brother of this deponent) came home on furlough and sometime after his return home was taken sick and remained sick at his father's residence until his furlough had expired. This deponent volunteered and took the place of the sick Brother and served 3 months in his stead. That this last 3 months Service was during the time the American Army they at Valley Forge. Cannot recollect whether in the winter and Spring of 77 or 78, that he served as a private the last mentioned 3 months and that in the fall of 1779 he shipped on board the *Luzerne*

¹ See, James A. Lewis, *Neptune's Militia: The Frigate South Carolina during the American Revolution*, Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 1999

Letter of Marke [marque] of Philadelphia Commanded by Capt. Thomas Bell and sailed for Loreneon [?] France and on their homeward bound passage the *Luzerne* was captured by the Enemy and this declarer together with the Crew was carried into Limerick and the crew landed and was sent to Cork and kept prisoners for piracy for 17 months having been out 4 months before she was captured, making the term of one year and 9 months Services and captivity. This declarer further deposes and saith that on or about the first of July in the year 1782 he shipped himself on Board the Frigate *South Carolina* of 40 Guns Commanded by Capt. John Joiner as a midshipman of the first Class capable of navigating a ship of the first-class then lying in the River at Philadelphia fitting out for a Voyage or cruise, that the *South Carolina* sailed in the latter part of September or first of October and having put to sea was captured by a 56-Gun ship and carried into New York and the crew put on board the Prison ship at the Wallabout [Wallabout Bay]-- and continued about a month and the prisoners were then paroled, does not recollect the date of his parole, thinks he received nothing but a pass to carry him through the British lines into New Jersey, that the Jersey agent Mr. Rorison made the arrangements for paroling and releasing the prisoners from the Prison Ship on which he was confined and by his parole, was bound not to take up arms against Great Britain until Exchanged or the Definitive treaty signed and Ratified. --

He further saith that he understood that the number of men on board the *South Carolina* was 783, that the Marines were divided into 37 messes 6 privates to a mess making 222, exclusive of Marine officers that there Marines were Hessians who were captured at Saratoga with General Burgoyne and cannot positively say he had so many men only by Reputation, he was so informed and so believes.

This declarer further saith that he knows of no other witnesses to prove his services than his 2 Brothers James and Josiah Hunt who now reside in the City of New York and to whom he has made Application to make such proof which will be forwarded if obtained. To the Interrogatories required by the War Department the deponent gives the following answers. To the first, Answer in the year 1762 on the 17th day of March. 2nd Answer, he has no Record of his age, has been informed so by his Parents. 3rd Answer, When he entered the Service -- Resided at Morristown New Jersey and Elizabethtown then went to sea, then in the City of New York, then Resided in the City of Albany 30 years, thence to Sterling where he now resides. 4th Answer, When he first went into the Service he Enlisted for 3 months, then volunteered 3 months as a Substitute for his Brother Josiah who was taken sick when home on furlough. Served for the last mentioned time before his Brother was able to relieve him, then shipped on board the *Luzerne*, Letter of Marque, then on board of the Frigate *South Carolina* and remained to the end of the War.

5th Answer, he served under Col. Spencer General Wines at Elizabethtown at Valley Forge saw General Washington, the Marquis Lafayette and Col. Alexander Hamilton who acted as Aid de camp to General Washington and Col. Barber of the New Jersey troops General Wines Commanded the New Jersey militia.

6th Answer for the first term of Service under Capt. Britton he received no discharge. Informed he might go home for his 2nd tour as Substitute for Josiah Hunt, he was Received as such by Capt. Britton and at roll call answered to the name of Josiah Hunt, and at the Expiration of the 3 months was relieved by said Josiah Hunt and then went home to his father's in New Jersey.

7th Answer: the Rev. David Currie, and John McFadden has given such Testimony which will appear on my first Declaration. John W. McFadden, Isaac Turner, Seth Turner, William Wyman, Benjamin Lyons, Thomas Brown, William McCoy, George Cooper, William Graham, George C.

McFadden, John W. Stewart, Alexander Proudfit, Abiram Shoels, Selah Divine, Ernest C. Sahryder, Amos Hutchings, Timothy Austin all in Stirlings and a number of others in the city of Albany might have been mentioned where he formally Resided.

And this deponent further saith that he cannot give a statement of his said services in terms more different than what he has set forth in the foregoing affidavit and that he should not have been able to have stated definitively his first term if his enlistment had not been for 3 months, and for the 2nd term when a Substitute for his Brother Josiah, that the time was 3 months, and further saith not.

S/ Abijah Hunt

I do hereby Certify that Abijah Hunt to me known personally appeared before me and took and Subscribed the foregoing affidavit, and answered the 7 interrogatories Required by the War Department, as above set forth under oath in due form of law, and that he is a man of Good Moral Character worthy of full Credit as a Witness. Subscribed and duly sworn before me this 19th day of November 1833

S/ Benjamin Clark, JP

[p 29]

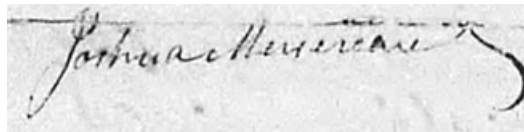
State of New York Chenango County Town of Bainbridge

Joshua Mersereau² of the town County and State aforesaid being duly sworn on his oath says that according to the best of his information and belief he was 71 years old last June & that in the year 1782 some time about the month of June or July Capt. Abijah Hunt came to Philadelphia and to the best of the recollection of this deponent came in company of this deponent's father who introduced him to Commodore Gillard [sic, Alexander Gillon] and recommended him, the said Hunt as a suitable person to fill the office of Midshipman on board the Frigate *South Carolina* commanded by John Joyner, and that Commodore Gillon engaged the said Hunt in that birth or office. This deponent having previously been engaged as Carpenter of said ship and having frequent occasion to call on the Commodore by his special desire, to make reports to him, gave him this deponent an opportunity of free conversation particularly from his kind attention to this deponent, that Capt. Hunt was on board said ship in the River and that on or about the 20th of December they sailed out to sea, and was soon attacked by 3 British ships of war and taken off the Cape of Delaware -- And further that on the 2nd day after we were captured the weather being hazy and one convoy not to be seen a plan was projected by & among the prisoners to raise en masse & retake the ship & fight our way into some port, and that this deponent personally put the question to the said Hunt whether he was capable of navigating the ship if the said prisoners succeeded in retaking her to which he replied he was -- the prisoners already had an arms chest at their command and this deponent requested said Hunt to stand by & take charge of said arms chest and hand out the arms when the word was given to raise, for which purpose this deponent was to go on deck & see if all was clear and give the signal & attack the officer near the companion [way] which would make the way clear for the prisoners to rush on the quarter deck where the contest was to take place, that this deponent was on the quarter deck & supposed the proper time had arrived when another officer came running towards the deponent from the cabin with a pistol in each hand, & threatening to blow him through, ordered him below. He instantly shut the companion leaf [?]. They had by some means discovered the intended attack, the prisoners were instantly ordered into the ward room & to be quiet. The ship soon arrived at New York the prisoners remained several days on board the said

² [Joshua Mersereau S7224](#)

ship in that situation this deponent saw several of his friends by whom he gave information to his father and General Washington of his & the said Hunt's situation who with the rest of the prisoners were transferred on board of the *Scorpion* prison ship Here their sufferings were severe being plundered of their blankets and clothing and without fire and on short allowance of provisions of the poorest quality -- But agreeably to the information that this deponent had given to his friends they procured from the British commissary a parole of honor for this deponent & the said Hunt. They then returned to Jersey and continued on parole until the definitive treaty was approved of which released them from their obligations. And further this deponent says that in the year 1782 the said Hunt, in frequent familiar conversations, then informed this deponent of having been taken prisoner & taken to Ireland & transferred to England as set forth in the declaration of said Hunt and this deponent verily believed at that time & now believes the same to be true. And this deponent further saith that in the year 1800 this deponent being in attendance on the Legislature at Albany as a member thereof and the said Hunt then residing in that City in mercantile business they renewed the former intimacy and from that time to this it has continued by doing business & otherwise -- And this deponent says that from these facts & such intimate acquaintance & from the general character of the said Hunt -- he this deponent has the strongest reasons to believe that he the said Hunt is a man of truth and veracity and that the service stated by him in his declaration both as a soldier and a sailor in the revolution are entitled to full credit, he the said Hunt having frequently repeated the same to this deponent in long gone by & sociable compensation -- And further this deponent saith he verily believes the said Hunt to be rising of 70 years of age, having been acquainted with him more than 50 years. And further this deponent saith not.

S/ Joshua Mersereau

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Joshua Mersereau". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored, slightly textured paper. The letters are connected and fluid, with a prominent flourish at the end of the word "Mersereau".

Sworn to this 30th day of October 1832 before me
S/ Levi Bigelow, a Judge of Chenango County

[On June 14, 1837, Abijah Hunt applied for a replacement for his pension certificate stating that he had lost same recently on a visit to Brooklyn, Long Island.]

[Facts in file: Veteran died March 4, 1852; there is no family data in the file other than the references to his father and brothers set forth in his declarations.]

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$100.50 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service as a private for 3 months in the New Jersey militia and for 15 months as a Midshipman in the Navy.]