

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of David Swain S30143

f27Mass [Navy]

Transcribed and annotated by Will Graves

9/29/23

[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.]

[p 14]

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

County of Nantucket – On this sixth day of December in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred & Thirty Two personally appeared in open Court before the Honorable Judge of the Court of Probate in and for said County, David Swain a resident of Nantucket in said County, aged Seventy 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 –

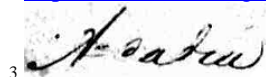
That he was born at Nantucket in the County and State aforesaid on the 27th day of September A.D. 1762 – that he was in the United States service from the first part of ~~September~~^{November} 1779 to the first of July 1780, as a Seaman, in the Marine service – He further says, that he entered on board the *Boston*¹ frigate, then lying in Nantucket Roads – commanded by Samuel Tucker.² The first Lieutenant was named Devol – He was a Nova Scotian from [undeciphered word]³ – the second Lieutenant was named Welsh [sic Hezekiah Welch] and the third Gardner – We were fitted out to take Bermuda – There were four vessels Composing our Squadron – The *Boston*, the *Providence*,⁴ Commodore Whipple [Abraham Whipple],⁵ the *Queen of France*⁶ and the *Ranger*⁷ –

We sailed from Nantucket-Roads on the 7th of November 1779 – Went to Bermuda, and off Bermuda took a pilot to carry us in – But seeing an English frigate that appeared too heavy for us, we thought it best to run off. We took a gale of wind, sprung our masts, and were obliged to put into Charleston to refit –

While we were here, the English laid Siege to Charleston, which continued six weeks: The American ships had their guns taken out, and we were put into the line with the troops – Finally Gen. Lincoln [Benjamin Lincoln] gave up the defence of Charleston &

¹ https://threedecks.org/index.php?display_type=show_ship&id=2391

² https://threedecks.org/index.php?display_type=show_crewman&id=678

³ 

⁴ https://threedecks.org/index.php?display_type=show_ship&id=2421

⁵ <http://gaspee.org/AbrahamWhipple.html> &

https://threedecks.org/index.php?display_type=show_crewman&id=687

⁶ https://threedecks.org/index.php?display_type=show_ship&id=13720

⁷ https://threedecks.org/index.php?display_type=show_ship&id=2531

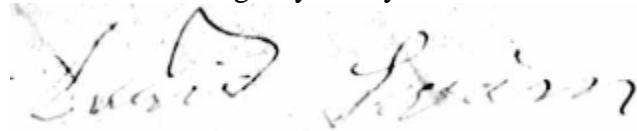
surrendered⁸ – We were made prisoners & put on board the *King George* After that we were transferred to the *Amherst Providence*, & from her to a flag of truce and brought to Philadelphia, where we were discharged about the first of July 1780

I then shipped on board the *Black Prince*, a letter of mark Brig of fourteen guns, bound to Amsterdam –

My name is on the books at the Navy Department as a Seaman on board the *Boston* frigate – And in 1784 by the aid of Peleg Coffin⁹ then member of Congress from this district, I obtain my wages, at the rate of Ten Dollars a month –

The whole time of my service in the Continental Ship was from November 1st 1779 to July 1, 1780 –

I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present, and declare that my name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any State.



Sworn & subscribed to come the day & year first aforesaid

[David Allen & George Wirth gave a standard supporting affidavit as to the character and reputation of the applicant.]

[Seth F Swift also gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

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I, David Worth of Nantucket in the County of Nantucket master mariner make oath, that I have known David Swain, an applicant for a pension under the act of Congress passed June 7, 1832 during the last fifty years – He has sustained a fair moral character during that time, and any statement made by him can be depended upon –

I know that it has always been a matter of current reputation that he served in the United States service during the war of the Revolution –

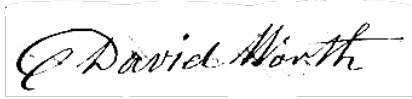
I have also frequently heard conversations between David Swain the petitioner & Prince Coleman, a gentleman of respectability now deceased – in relation to their service & adventures on board the *Boston* frigate where Coleman served at the same time with David Swain – as, for example, in regard to their leaving Boston in the *Boston* frigate, for the purpose of taking Bermuda – of their having fallen in with an English frigate off Bermuda, & of the *Boston* having sprung her main mast, in running from British vessel – & of having put into Charleston to repair; & of that city having, at the time they were there, then blockaded by an English Squadron by sea, & invested by an English army by land – of their having been drafted from their ship into the American line – And of their having been quartered with other Seaman from Nantucket to a 32 pounder during the Siege – I recollected having heard in their conversations of a bomb having been thrown into the Marquis of General Lincoln and destroyed it, without doing any injury to a

⁸ May 12, 1780 Battle of Charleston <http://www.myrevolutionarywar.com/battles/800401-charleston/> & <https://allthingsliberty.com/2020/10/britains-last-throw-of-the-dice-begins-the-charlestown-campaign-of-1780/>

⁹ COFFIN, Peleg, Jr., a Representative from Massachusetts; born in Nantucket, Mass., November 3, 1756; completed academic studies; president of the New England Marine Insurance Co.; member of the State house of representatives in 1783, 1784, and 1789; served in the State senate in 1785, 1786, 1790-1792, 1795, 1796, and 1802; elected as a Pro-Administration candidate to the Third Congress (March 4, 1793-March 3, 1795); State treasurer 1797-1802; died in Boston, Mass., March 6, 1805; interment probably in Friends Burial Grounds; reinterment in Mount Auburn Cemetery in 1833. <https://bioguide.congress.gov/search/bio/C000591>

Negro who was sleeping there – These & other incidents have during the last 30 or 40 years been frequent subjects of conversation between the deceased Prince Coleman & Mr. Swain the applicant.

David Worth

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Worth". The signature is enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

[Veteran was pension at the rate of \$32 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, full service as a seaman on board the Frigate Boston for 8 months.]