

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Thomas Harper S32304

PA

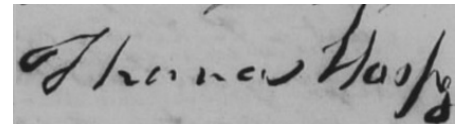
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Alabama } SS On this 10th day of June, AD 1834 personally appeared before George H.
Pickens County } Flournoy Judge of the County Court of Pickens County in open court
Thomas Harper a resident of the county of Pickens in the State of Alabama aged 76 years the 2nd day of
January last past (1834) 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 7th
1832. That he enlisted in the army of the United States in the year 1777 to the best of his recollection on
the first of March, that he enlisted in Birks [sic: Berks] County Pennsylvania under Capt Rees [sic: John
Reese] of the 3rd Pennsylvania Regiment, and joined his (third Penn Reg't) between Birks and
Brandywine, Rees Capt of the company to which affiant belonged, [Thomas] Craig Colonel, Capts
[Thomas] Butler, [James] Christie and Nelson were officers of the 3rd regt. That before he went into any
engagement he marched through Plymouth [sic] & Chester County Penn. to Brandywine, and there met the
British and the first battle which affiant was in was fought at that place between the americans and the
British [11 Sep 1777]. that shortly after the battle of Brandywine, affiant was placed in Captain Moffitt's
company, about this time capt Rees was taken sick and left the army [31 Dec 1777] and the command of
his company devolved on Captain Nelson. From Brandywine he marched to Jermantown [sic:
Germantown] from Jermantown to Philadelphia, and from thence proceeded to Monmouth and there
engaged with the British [28 Jun 1778; see endnote]. After the battle of Monmouth [sic: on 1 Jan 1781]
the American soldiers became disaffected because of a misunderstanding in regard to the term of
enlistment, whether for five [sic: three] years or during the war – many contending that five years had
elapsed since their enlistment, and that their term of service had expired, which he believes to have been
the cause of the march of the army from the last mentioned place to Philadelphia, where some payments
were made to the disaffected, and from that or some other cause but few left the army. From Philadelphia
they passed over to New-jersey and marched to Morristown where the army wintered [1 Dec 1779] – the
3rd Regt being the regiment to which affiant belonged lay in Smith's cove [sic] during the winter alluded
to. From Morristown they proceeded to Princeton from there through several places in New York and
New Jersey & back to Philadelphia. From Philadelphia affiant marched to South Caroliana. affiant was
during this campaigned taken out of ranks and employed in driving the team of a baggage waggon which
carried the baggage of Col. Craig, Col. Butler, Capts Butler, Christie & Nelson, Capt. Rynolds
[Reynolds?] and Moffett and Major Andrews. During this campaign the army march thro' Virginia, North
Carolina into South Carolina; his regiment was engaged in the contest at Camden commonly called Gates'
defeat [defeat of Gen. Horatio Gates, Battle of Camden SC, 16 Aug 1780]. From Camden [sic] they
crossed Santee and marched to the Eutaw Springs and there engaged the British [8 Sep 1781] – from
Eutaw Springs to Granby [Fort Granby on Congaree River] and Columbia from Columbia to Ninety six,
and engaged the British at that place [siege of Ninety Six SC, 22 May - 19 Jun 1781]. From Ninety six to
Salisbury North Carolina and there had a battle [possibly skirmish at Trading Ford, 4 Feb 1781] – the
American Army was routed by the British at this place. the British then proceeded to cross at the Shallow
ford on the Yadkin river [8 Feb 1781] and the Americans at the Island ford below Salisbury [sic] The
British proceeded to Guilford Courthouse by way of the Moravian town [sic], and the Americans having
marched directly to the same place [sic] from the Island ford the two armies met at Guilford Court House,
and had a sharp contest [15 Mar 1781], in which the Americans had the best of the conflict [sic]. From
Guilford the army proceeded to Hamants [?], and there encountered the British from thence proceeded
through Virginia crossing James River near Richmond Virginia and proceeded down the river near to
Washington's residence (Mount Vernon) [sic] From thence to Yorktown where they threw up Breast
works and besieged the British, who here capitulated [19 Oct 1781]. From Yorktown they proceeded to
Philadelphia, At Philadelphia affiant was discharged after having served about six years and six months

[sic]. He feels it be impossible for him to state with precision the length of time which he served but has no hesitation in declaring that he served the time above specified. That he enlisted for five years or during the war, and that his whole term of service was performed under one enlistment That between twenty five and thirty years since, he sent his discharges to Philadelphia by colonel Thos. Carson, Carson acting as affiant's agent to obtain some remuneration for his services – that Carson died before his return home, and that he has never been able to ascertain what said carson done with said discharge. The discharge of affiant was given over the signature of Colonel Craig and Capt Nelson. That at the time of his enlistment he resided in Berk's county Pennsylvania; after the war he removed to Munroe [sic] County N.C. from thence to Lyncoln [sic: Lincoln] county Tennessee, from thence to Munroe [sic: Monroe] County Mississippi from thence to Pickens County Alabama, where he now resides. That he has a record of his age in his family bible, now at home, said bible having been the family bible of affiant's father. that he was born in Lancaster County Pennsylvania on the 2nd day of January AD 1758. That he knows of no one now living by whom he can prove his services.

He here by 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 in any state

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid



NOTE: Many of the events in Harper's narrative are out of sequence, and it is virtually impossible that he participated in some of them, because Pennsylvania troops did not serve in the Carolinas until late in 1781. The following is a correct chronology of events mentioned in or omitted from his declaration.

1777

Mar 1 Date of enlistment claimed by Harper

Sep 11 Battle of Brandywine

Oct 7 Washington's army enters winter quarters at Valley Forge

1778

Jun 28 Battle of Monmouth NJ

1779

summer Part of Washington's army encamped at Smiths Clove NY

Dec 1 Washington's army enters winter quarters at Morristown NJ

1780

Aug 16 Battle of Camden SC. PA troops not present. Americans retreat northward.

1781

Jan 1 Pennsylvania Continentals at Mount Kemble NJ mutiny thinking their three-year terms had expired

Feb 4 Skirmish at Trading Ford near Salisbury NC

Feb 8 British skirmish and cross at Shallow Ford of Yadkin River

Feb 10 Americans pass Guilford Courthouse NC on way to Dan River in VA

Mar 15 Americans nominally defeated at Battle of Guilford Courthouse

May 22 Start of siege of Ninety Six SC. PA troops not present

Jun 19 Siege of Ninety Six raised

Sep 8 Battle of Eutaw Springs SC

Oct 19 Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown VA. PA troops present.