

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters](#)

Pension Application of James Johnson S36664

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

District of Kentucky, Sct.

On the 20th day of may 1818 before me the subscriber one of the Judges of the Circuit Court for Fayette County for the said district personally appeared James Johnson aged about Fifty Eight years, resident in Shebly [sic] County state of Kentucky – who being by me first duly sworn according to Law doth on his Oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the provisions made by the late Act of Congress enti[tl]ed an Act to provide for certain pers[ons] engaged in the land and naval service of the United States in the Revolutionary War that he the said James Johnson Enlisted in the Spring of 1782 [sic: see endnote] in the State of Virginia to serve one year and Six months in the Company commanded by Lieutenant John Harris of the Virginia Continental line commanded by General [Baron von] Steuben at Point fork on James River [sic: Point of Fork at the confluence of James and Rivanna Rivers] and in the same year he reenlisted in the light Dragoon Service under the Command of Colonel [Anthony Walton] White and that he continued in said service of the United States untill on or about the year 1784 [see endnote] he together with about one hundred more of said Light Dragoon service came away from the State of Georgia with out permission not designing to desert but knowing their times to have Expired according to the terms of their Enlistment and proceeded to Prince Edward County in Virginia at which place they surrendered to General [Daniel] Morgan and was marched from their to Winchester where he received a furlow from Capt. Murrow to return home and remained at home Two or three years and then received a honorable discharge signed by Lieutenant Harris in or about 1786 & he further sayeth that he aduced proof about 1814 and reced. his land warrent for his Revolutionary Services – and that he was in several skirmishes one where Colo. Lawrence [sic: John Laurens] was killed another with General Wayn [sic: Anthony Wayne] against the Creek Indians. And that he is in reduced circumstances and stand in need of the assistance of his Country for support. Sworn to and declared before me the day and year aforesaid –

Benj. Johnson, Circuit Judge

Commonwealth of Kentucky

Shelby County Circuit Court June Term 1820. On this 30th day of June 1820 personally appeared in open Court being a Court of record for the said State, of Common Law and criminal jurisdiction, James Johnston aged Sixty years resident in Shelby County in said State, who being first duly sworn according to Law doth on his oath declare that he served in the revolutionary war as follows. That he entered the service of the U States in the Continental War at Pionteph in Virginia in the regiment & Corps commanded by the Baron De Stuban after which he reenlisted in the Reg't Commanded by Colo White of the Virginia line after which he was transfered to the Corps of Light horse or dragoons commanded by Colo Wm Washington [William Washington] in which service he continued until the Close of the war – in all in the service about three years that on the 20th May 1818 he made application by his decleration for a pension under the Act of Congress of the 18th March 1818 and received his pension Certificate dated six of January 1819 No 5203. And I do solemnly swear that I was a resident Citizen of the United States on the 18th day of March 1818 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 person engaged in the land and naval service of the United States in the Revolutionary War” passed on the 18th day of March 1818 and that I have not nor has any person in trust for me any property or securities contracts or debts due to me nor have I any income other than what is contained in the Schedule hereto annexed and by me subscribed. He also state that he is old and unable to do hard labour being afflicted with rhumatic pains which has

affected one of his arms so as to make it crooked. That he has a Wife and four children living with him one son about twelve years of age and three daughters one about thirty two years of age, one about nineteen years of age who is a cripple in her arm and one about seventeen years old and he has one grand daughter who is an orphan aged about fifteen months who is destitute and friendless that none of his children being with him can aid him to support himself and those who have left him are poore and not able to assist him.

The following is a schedule of his property Towit

Five head of Horses about	125.
2 Cows & four Calves worth	47.
17 Head of Hogs	43.
40 piggs wrth	10.
one table cubbard & Chest	13.
Cubboard furniture chairs & tea Cettle }	
cooking utentials & table furniture &c }	35.50
Farming tools	20.00
1 Washing tubb 50 cts 2 Little wheels }	
1 Large wheel &c &c }	<u>3.50</u>
	\$296.00

He states that on the faith of the above property he had, — to the rest his beads &c he has borrowed the sum of four hundred dollars and given a mortgage on the whole of his property contained in the schedule above dated 4 August 1819 recorded in the Shelby County Clerk’s office, that he was much in debt. That himself and family must have been left entirely destitute and his property would not have paid the debts he owed had it of been sold at sale, nor would it now sell for the debt he owes & which he conceives leaves him worse than nothing and he could not have borrowed the money to pay off his debts only on the faith of his pension &c &c

James Johnson

Commonwealth of Kentuck Shelby
Sct. June Term Circuit Court 1823

On this 3^d day of July 1823 personally appeared in open Court being a Court of record of common Law of the said state of criminal Jurisdiction James Johnston aged sixty three years resident in said county of Shelby 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 the 18th of March 1818, the first of May 1820 and the first of march 1823. That he entered the service of the United States in the continental Army at Point Fork in Virginia in the Regiment or corps commanded by Colo White of the Virginia line after which he was transferred to the Corps of Lt Horse or Draggons commanded by Colo Washington in which service he continued a private until the close of the war. He served as a private – and ultimately received a discharge from Lieutenant Harris which discharge he has lost, that at the close of the war he was under Captain Watts [probably John Watts] in whose company said Harris was Lieutenant, that Captains Green and Hughs [sic: John Hughes] were acting officers in this division of the Army. That just before he left the Army he came from the south to Prince Edward Courthouse Virginia, thence marched under Captain Muner to Winchester where they were all furloughed and sent home, and this war having ended we were not again called on. That he obtained the discharge some time after from said Lieutenant Harris in the State of Virginia — And I do solemnly swear that I was a resident Citizen of the United States on the 18th day of March 1818 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 person engaged in the land and naval service of the United States in the Revolutionary War” passed on the 18th day of March 1818 and that I have not nor has any person in trust for me any property or securities contracts or debts due to me nor have I any

income other than what is contained in the Schedule hereto annexed and by me subscribed, towit. six old chairs \$1.00 one chest \$2.00 one small spinning wheel \$2.00 one large spinning wheel 56 cents, Two old sadelles \$7.00, one small Looking Glass 12½ cents, Two smothing Irons 50¢, one tea kettle \$1.50¢, one pair of Stilliards [steelyards] \$1.50, one mortar and pestle 37½¢ One bake oven 50¢ one skillett 25¢ Three Iron Potts \$3.00¢ one churn 37½¢, four piggons \$1.00¢ one tub 25¢ one Bible \$4.00 three ploughs \$5.50¢ three axes \$5.50 five hogs \$5.00 one yearling heiffer \$2.25¢ one Iron wedge 25, twenty three shoats \$23.00 six piggs \$1.50¢ one hogshhead of Tobacco \$12.00 In all amounting \$80.73½ and I owe by contract to John Sheperd \$85.00 for rent and James Williams owes me \$19.00 by notes James Johnson

That since the exhibition of my first schedule the following changes have been made in my property, towit By virtue of a decree rendered in this Court (Shelby Circuit Court) at the September Term 1822 upon a bill in Chancery filed by William Johnson against said James Johnston to foreclose a mortgage bearing date the 4th of August 1819 William E Wilson was appointed commissioner to sell and dispose of at Public Sale on a credit of three months, the property named in said mortgage, which property is contained in my former schedule made out on the 30th day of June 1820 in this Court and said mortgage in said schedule is referred to, and said William E Wilson as commissioner did sell in obedience to said decree, and report to his court as follows Towit, Names of persons to whom sold } Time of Sale

William Johnson} 13th March 1823,

amount of money or description of property received in return applied to the payment of the debt in the decree mentioned, and nothing else received therefor, that is, The said William Johnson at this said sale did purchase all the property sold by said commissioner, which property was contained in my former schedule, and is of the description following towit,

one Ball faced Horse	for	\$30.00
one Bay Mare	"	80.00
one dark Bay Colt	"	76.00
one Bay Mare	"	76.00
one Red Cow	"	26.00
one white back Cow and Calf	"	27.00
one Brindle Cow and Calf	"	24.50
one Black and white Cow	"	20.00
one Black Yearling	"	10.00
One Cupboard and Cupboard furniture	"	12.25
One foal ding leaf table	"	<u>10.00</u>
Total Amount		\$391.75

Said decree is for \$400.00¢ with interest from the 4th of August 1819 until paid and said William Johnson accepted the above property in full thereof. The other one horse mentioned in the former schedule I sold being a colt to Boston Baker for Twenty dollars in commonwealths paper which I received and have used. The Hogs in the former schedule have been killed & used in the Family

James Johnson The said James Johnson further states, and declaris that he by profession a farmer, that he is infirm & unable to pursue his profession, except only to Labour, a little, from necessity, being afflicted with rhumatic pains, so as to make his right arm crooked, that he has a wife about fifty nine years old, and four children towit One daughter named Mary 22 years old, one daughter named Sarah 35 years old, one daughter named Nancy 19 years old, and one son named Able 15 years old, and one Grand daughter named Lucy Johnson 4 years old. That all his said children and grand child are verry poor and have no property, and have not other means of support but by their labour, and that said daughter Mary is a cripple in one of her arms. He further states on the 20th of May 1818 he made application by declaration for a pension under the Act of Congress the 18th of March 1818 and received his pension certificate dated 6th January 1819, and he afterwards received a certification dated on the 6th of August 1821, by which he was stricken from the pension List No. 5203, dated at the war department Pension

Office and signed J. L. Edwards. He further says he is in such indigent circumstances as to be unable to support himself without the assistance of his Country, and without its interposition he must be and remain an object of private and Public Charity

James Johnson

Shelby County
25th Octo 1825

Sir I enclose to you a certificate or statement from a number of my neighbours [not transcribed here] shewing, that I am without property and stand in need of my pension as much as any person – I have to rent land to make a support I have a wife and five children four of whom are females which makes it very weighty on me to support, I am now in debt for my rent and such has been the severe drought that it is out of my power to pay my rent and I must be striped of all the little household convenience which I possess to pay my rent. The mortgage which was on my property has been foreclosed has taken it all to satisfy the Debt for which it was made – My papers was all sent to us while my agent and [was?] our member of Congress – you will find all my papers I suppose in the war office you are authorized to attend to my pension and draw the same and account to me for the same very respectfully

[signed] James Johnson

after he was cut off he made application the second time last June two years. He is satisfied to receive it from that time

Department of War,
Regulations for the heirs of Officers & Soldiers of the Revolutionary Army who were slain by the enemy, or who have died since the war and have not received land from the United States.

By an act of Congress of the 16th September 1776 it is provided that the officers and soldiers who engaged for and Continued to serve during the war or until discharged by Congress, and the heirs of such officers and soldiers as shall be slain by the enemy shall receive land in proportion to their rank.

N.B. Those who engaged for three years or for any other period than during the war, or who died of Sickness, fatigue or casualty are not entitled to land from the United States. The following declaration & enclosed blank form of heirship must be filled up and signed by the proper authorities

State of Kentucky }
County of [blank] }

I James Johnson do upon oath, testify and declare that I enlisted in the war of the revolution for the term of during the war and served as a private in the Regiment No. not recollected under the command of Colonel William Washington of the Virginia line; and that I continued in the service aforesaid until the end and termination of the war aforesaid

I further declare that I have never received a Warrant to the best of my recollection for the bounty land promised to me on the part of the United States; nor have I transfered my claim to it in any manner whatsoever; therefore [power of attorney follows] [signed 22 Mar 1833] James Johnson

State of Kentucky }
Franklin County Sct }

[23 Aug 1833] I James Johnson a citizen now resident of Shelby county Kentucky do upon my oath testify and declare that, in 1779 this affiant enlisted as a private soldier in the war of the revolution for & during the war whilst a citizen of the state of Virginia with Col White's, that I was placed in Col William Washington's Rigmnt, in a company of which John Harris was the Lieutenant the name of the Captain not recollected; Capt John Hughs & Capt Greene occasionally commaned this affiant's company – that in said Rigmnt Major Polson [possibly John Poulson] was the acting major, that he continued in said Rigmnt untill the close of the war for which he enlisted, which took place in June 1783 – that he is now a citazin of Shelby County Ky – that he has resided in said County for 15 or 20 years – that on the 6th day of

January 1819 he was placed on the pension roll of the United States, under the act of Congress of 1818 as a private, at \$8 per month, that some time after he was struck off of the roll, that on the 23^d of Dec 1825 he was placed on said roll again which took effect from Nov 1824 which appears from the papers now in my possession, this affiant states that this is a declaration amendatory in order to get his bounty land from U.S. I have allways rec'd my pension money at Lexington Ky

I therefore swear I never have rec'd from the United States, my bounty land promised me, nor have I ever transfered the same [Power of attorney follows]

NOTES:

Comparison of Johnson's 1818 declaration with the following chronology shows that he was mistaken about the time of his service:

1780

spring Col. Anthony Walton White to Virginia recruiting, leaving Lt. Col. William Washington in command of Dragoons in Carolinas

1781

28 May Gen. Baron von Steuben arrives at Point of Fork

6 Jun Steuben abandons Point of Fork

8 Sep William Washington captured at Eutaw Springs SC

1782

20 May Wayne and White skirmish with Creek Indians at Ogeechee Ferry GA

27 Aug Col. John Laurens mortally wounded at Combahee River SC

Oct Wayne mustered out of service

1783

15 Apr Revolutionary War officially ends; all troops discharged by general order

On 31 Oct 1837 Johnson applied to transfer his pension to Clarke County IN where he had moved for the following reason: "His children have most of them gone to Indiana & he wishes to be near them, that he may receive the assistance of his children in his present aged & Infirm Condition." On 2 Jan 1843 Johnson was living in Ripley County IN.

James Johnson is the subject of Charles F. Price's historical novel *Nor the Battle to the Strong* (Savannah: Frederic C. Beil, 2008).

Note that there was a second James Johnson of Shelby County KY who also applied for a pension (S35471) under the acts of 1818 and 1820.