

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Gideon Johnston (Johnson) S38089

VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 28 June 2020.

Fauquier County State and District of Virginia

On this 16th day of April 1818 before me the subscriber presiding and the Judges of the Superior Court of law of Fauquier County State and District of Virginia personally appeared Gideon Johnston of the County and State aforesaid aged sixty nine years and resident in the said County who being by me first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration, in order to obtain the provision made by the late act of Congress entitled an act to provide for certain persons engaged in the land and naval service of the United States in the revolutionary war– that in the year 1775 or 1776 he enlisted as a private soldier in the company commanded by Richard K Meade [VAS624] deceased of the 2nd Virginia Regiment on continental establishment that when this and the first Virginia Regiment on continental establishment were complete, a company of Artillery commanded by Captain Arundel who was killed at Gwyns Island, Virginia [Dohickey Arundel VAS2967 killed at Gwynn Island by an exploding mortar, 8 Jul 1776], was chosen from them and that he the said Gideon Johnston was selected as one of the company that he served in this company until a Regiment of Artillery on continental establishment commanded by Col Charles Harrison [VAS1411] and Lieut. Col. Edward Carrington [W6635], both of whom are deceased, was raised which he was attached That sometime after he had been attached to this Regiment, he was appointed as Lieutenant in it. that he served three years in the abovementioned companies and Regiment either as a soldier or Lieutenant. That at the end of this time a Regiment of Artillery commanded by Col. Thomas Marshall [VAS494] and Lieut. Col. Elias Edmonds [VAS2004] of Fauquier County and State of Virginia was raised, in which Regiment he shortly, being a Lieut when he entered it received the commission of a Captain and served in it until Gates' Defeat [Battle of Camden SC where Gen. Horatio Gates was defeated, 16 Aug 1780]. That in addition to the commission of a Captain he received the appointment of Brigade Quarter Master, the duties of which he also performed until the same period. that in Gates Defeat he lost his Trunk containing his commission and all his papers proving this grade and station in the Army. that at this defeat he and many other officers became supernumeraries, that although he had no actual command he attended the American Army at York, Virginia, and did not consider himself discharged until the surrender of Cornwallis [19 Oct 1781] when he and all who had no actual command were discharged verbally. That he was in the Battle which terminated in the defeat of General Gates and witnessed the more memorable surrender of Cornwallis, that he is in reduced circumstances and stands in need of his country for support, and that he has no evidence of his said services none in his power except the annexed affidavit of Wilson C. Selden [Wilson Cary Selden S4815], Thaddeus Norris, William Horner and John Kemper Sworn to before me the day and year above written. Robt. White [Robert White S7893 ]

Loudoun County St.

This day came before me Wilson Cary Selden of the said county & made oath that he served as a Surgeon in the Regiment of Artillery, commanded by Col Elias Edmonds of the County of Fauquier, in the state of Virginia during the Revolutionary War with Great Britain, and that he was well acquainted with Gedian Johnson who was a Captain in same Regiment & who he beleives continued as such untill the close of the war.

Given under my had and seal April 11th 1818

John McCormick

Fauquier County State and District of Virginia

On this 29th August 1820 personally appeared in open Court being a Court of Record so made by the Laws of Virginia invested with Jurisdiction unlimited in point of amount and with the power of

fine and imprisonment and keeping a record of its proceedings for the County of Fauquier in the State of Virginia Gideon Johnston aged seventy one years resident in the said County who being first duly sworn according to Law doth on his oath declare that he served in the revolutionary war with Great Britain first as a volunteer under Capt Richard K Meade of Virginia that soon after the second Virginia Regiment on continental establishment was raised in which he enlisted as a regular soldier under Capt Richard K Mead the officer first named that he was afterwards transfered to a Company of Artillery commanded by Capt Arundel who was killed on Gwinn Island in York River Virginia that thence a Regiment of Artillery was raised by order of Congress to which the company he belonged was attached that this Regiment was commanded by Col Charles Harrison that he received the Commission of Lieut. in this Reg't. and served as such at Norfolk and Portsmouth two or three years and was there employed in the erection of forts and other military works that he then received the Commission of a Captain in a Reg't. of Artillery commanded by Col Thomas Marshall and Lieut Col Elias Edmonds and was employed in active service untill Gates defeat that upon the reduction of this Regiment he as a Junior Captain became a supernumerary that he remained with the Army untill the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at York Town Virginia that in the siege of York Town he lost his house by the Batteries of the enemy and the American army it being exposed to both and that all his other property was destroyed by the enemy, that the loss of his house is proved by the annexed affidavit of Corbin Griffin and Louis Gibbons that the said Gideon Johnston has he thinks received a pension under the Act of Congress of the 18th March 1818 that the annexed is his certificate of pension numbered 232 that the date of his original declaration he can only ascertain by a reference to the pension office in Washington the Judge the Hon Robert White or the Clerk of his Court having preserved no record of the declaration with the affidavits thereto annexed and the proceeding held there on – I Gideon Johnston do solemnly swear that I was a resident citizen of the united States on the 18th 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 persons engaged in the Land and naval service of the united States in the Revolutionary war passed on the 18th 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 that is to say one negro woman age eighty three years two walnut tables one walnut side board and Bureau one Domestic Carpet one flax wheel one cotton wheel one Pine table one spade one shovel and a few old tubs and barrels and sundry small articles in his shop that the debts due from me exceed the debts due to me that the former consists of unsatisfied Judgements and Bonds the latter with the exception of a small sum of open accounts of which I have no evidence but my own personal knowledge that I have two children Elizabeth and William that the latter lives in a store and by that means supports himself that the former is married is the wife of William Thompson in whose House I board he being keeper of a public House that I am by trade a Tailor that from defect of his sight the consequences of age I am unable to pursue it that I am supported partly by the business of a Huxter – that without the pension which I have received for two years past the profits of my business would be inadequate to my support

Gideon Johnson

[The following are from [rejected claims in the Library of Virginia](#) in two files.]

Camp near Essex May 5 1780

Rec'd of Colo. Porterfield [Charles Porterfield BLWt1145-450] one thousand five hundred and eighty pound fourteen shillings for defraying Forage & other contingent expenses of the Detachment of State troops ordered into Continental service, under the command of Colo. Porterfield for which I have signed duplicate receipts.

1580.14

G. Johnson B. Q. M.

I hereby certify the foregoing to be truly copied from a paper which appears to be original, found in a roll of papers containing vouchers for money expended by Colo Porterfield in the year 1780 for the use of a detachment then under his command. Receipts by G. Johnston signed BQM dated 27 May 1780 is also found in the same roll, there is also a receipt signed G. Johnston Capt & QM dated 3 May 1780 and a General abstract of pay &c for the months of April & May in which Guedion Johnston is embraced as Quar'r M. at /16 per month. Given under my hand at the Auditors Office 28 January 1850

Jas E Heath Aud Va.

I Gideon Johnston of the County of Fauquier & Commonwealth of Virginia, do declare, that I in the last of the Spring, or the first of the Summer of 1776 at Petersburg in the said State, enlisted as a private Soldier to Serve two years in Captain Richard K Meads Company belonging to the Second Virginia Regiment on Continental [illegible] – that I was marched to Williamsburg, [illegible] to the Great Bridge & I was in that battle [9 Dec 1775]. I was then marched to Norfolk, that I Continued in that Company for some time, & until there was a Company of artillery to be raised on Continental establishment, & to belong to the Virginia Continental line, which was to be commanded by Capt. D. A Randal [sic], & who had authority to select from each company then in service the men, & selected me as one of the men out of the said Captain Meads Company – that I was transfered to the said artillery Company & served in the same untill there was a Regiment of artillery to be raised on Continental Establishment, to be commanded by Colo Charles Harrison, the said Captain Randols Company was then turned into that Regiment – I was immediately appointed & Commissioned a Lieutenant in the same, and served as such untill some time in the Summer of 1780, when I resigned my Commission in the Continental [one or more lines missing and two words undeciphered] Regiment of State artillery, and was soon promoted to a Captain in the same regiment, and served as such untill the close of the war in 1783 – that I served in the Virginia Line on Continental establishment from the aforesaid time in the year 1776 untill some time in the Summer 1780, as before stated – that a number of years since, I received from the State of Virginia a Bounty Land Warrant for my services as a captain for three years in the Virginia State Line, but have never received any bounty Land Warrant for my Services as a Lieutenant in the Continental line for four years.  
[27 June 1820]

Fauquier County Court. June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1849.

It was this day proved to the satisfaction of this Court, that Gideon Johnston of Warrenton Virginia died about the year 1826, that he was a pensioner of the United States at the time of his death on account of service in the Revolutionary Army, that he died intestate leaving one daughter Elizabeth Thompson and two grand sons, Augustine Jennings and William H. Jennings, that Elizabeth died some years since intestate leaving one child only, to wit Frances Ann who has intermarried with a Mr Bossier[?] now living in Louisiana, and that the said Frances Ann Bossier and Augustine and William H. Jennings are the only heirs at law of the said Gideon Johnston.

To the Executive of Virginia

The heirs of Gideon Johnston respectfully sheweth that their ancestor was a private & Lieutenant for three year in the Virginia continental Line, See his declaration marked F. See also Judge Robert White's certificate on s'd paper, The Judge himself was an officer of the [undeciphered word] Capt Johnston was pensioned upon this declaration, See paper A and altho he drew 4000 Acres in his life time for his services as Capt. State Line we think it does not deprive [undeciphered word] of his right to the bounty due to him as a Lieutenant of the Continental Line for three years service therein, Judge White certifies to the war Department that this fact was proven to his satisfaction, & Judge Brooke [Francis T. Brooke S8093] was allowed additional bounty Land upon his sworn statement made [undeciphered word] the sole [undeciphered word] of getting the additional bounty his additional allowance was made by Governor Campbell. Paper B will show that as early as 1783 two bounties were allowed to the same

officer for service in two capacities.

Paper C. will show who are the heirs of Gideon Johnston We respectfully claim that we have an unconditional title to the bounty due to a Lieutenant for three years service above [undeciphered] of our grandfather the said Gideon Johnston

We also respectfully ask for the bounty due to said Johnston as Quarter Master deducting the 4000 acres he received as captain at the close of the war, it was for that kind of service that Judge Brooke was allowed the bounty of a Major, we respectfully refer the Executive to the [undeciphered word] in Judge Brooke's case, which was we think in april 1838 Our Grandfather was a Brigade Quartermaster of artiller, see paper D, & E and paper G will show that [undeciphered word] rec'd. halfpay for his services as Quarter Master from the General Government thus showing that his service is acknowledged by the United States as Quarter Master. We respectfully ask for such bounty as may be due to us.

Augustine Jennings      Wm. H. Jennings      Frances Ann Bussiers[?]  
By Wm Helm their agent

Advice. Johnston has received his full bounty as Captain, which [several undeciphered words] his services as Lieutenant. As to a claim as Quarter master, we know no law which gives rank to this office higher than that he held in the line, and do not consider him entitled to additional bounty on this account.

Rejected/ [Gov] J B Floyd  
1850 Sept 18 Rejected

Commonwealth of Virginia/ Fauquier County to wit

Gideon Johnston this day personally appeared before the subscriber a Justice of the peace for the County aforesaid and made Oath as follows, by way of explanation to the annexed memorial. This Affiant having been advised, that the grounds of objection to the prayer of the memorial aforesaid was owing to a resignation of the Commission of Lieutenant in continental service in the summer of 1780, This affiant does not now think nor never did think it could be considered a resignation of his commission altho' it is so expressed in the memorial aforesaid. the circumstances were these: Colonel Harrison's Regiment of Artillery to which this affiant was attached as Lieutenant in the Summer of 1780, was ordered to the North, and that Colo Thomas Marshall's Regiment of Artillery remained about Norfolk, Hampton & York, at which latter place this affiant's family resided, he being a married man. to this latter Regiment was attached Lieutenant Robert Dandridge [possibly VAS3260] a single man who was anxious to join the expedition aforesaid to the North, and this affiant preferred remaining in the State convenient to his family, whereupon, by consent, and after due consultation with the commanding officers of the Regiments aforesaid, an exchange of Commissions were made between the said Lieutenant Dandridge and this affiant; and this affiant lost no time as to service and concludes that such an exchange ought not to be construed to amount to a resignation.

Given under my hand this 1<sup>st</sup> day of April 1824 Thos. A. Jennings

[The following are from [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia.](#)]

I Certify that Capt. Gideon Johnston's Commission as Lt. in the State Artillery was Dated in Septem'r 1777 & that he continued in service until he became a Supernumerary on the 6<sup>th</sup> day Feb'y 1781.  
Certified this 29<sup>th</sup> May 1783.

ES. Edmonds [Elias Edmonds]  
Lt. Colo.  
S.A.



[The following are indexed as Johnson, Gideon.]

To his Excellency Gov. Floyd

Sir At the request of Dr Helm who is the attorney for the heirs of Capt. Gideon Johnson I respectfully ask a rehearing of their application for additional land bounty. I base this request upon the evidence, herewith filed, shewing that other officers occupying a precisely similar condition have received such additional bounty.

The paper marked A is a literal copy of the voucher upon which the present Judge Brooke [Francis T. Brooke S8093] received his land bounty as a Quarter Master. By his own acknowledgement, he had at no time a higher rank in the line than Lieutenant, but holding the office & performing the duties of Quarter Master, under the law and according to established usage, his grade was higher and entitled him to the emoluments pertaining to it. Gideon Johnson's case is precisely similar. He was a Captain in the State line and in addition acted for a length of time at Quarter Master – executing the duties of that office at the time he became supernumerary. I can see no distinction whatever in the two cases. The evidence of Johnson's continued service as Quar. Master is so conclusive that his heirs have recovered at Washington additional half-pay.

The case of Captain & Commissary Thomas Keith [W5119] still further fortifies this position. Paper B is a copy of Gov. Smith's [William Smith's] decision awarding him land in both capacities. The evidence of his rank and service is not so clear as that of either Johnson or Brooke, yet Gov. Smith thought it amply sufficient to sustain his application.

The case of Capt & QM Nathaniel Welch [R18894] settled by your Excellency is equally apposite. He was declared by the Board of Officers which sat in 1782 to be a Supernumerary Captain & there is no evidence to be found that he ever held a higher lineal rank. But he acted as Quarter Master for a length of time and received in consequence the bounty of Major.

I also beg leave to submit that Johnson is entitled to land from the time he entered the service until the close of the war. The principle has been frequently settled both by your predecessors and yourself, that a supernumerary officer was entitled to land to the close of the war. Out of a large number of cases sustaining this assertion, I deem it only necessary to refer you to those of Col Monroe [James Monroe W26271] & Lieut Blackwell [Joseph Blackwell S37781] settled last year. They were both Supernumerary Officers & both received land for the war.

It not being questioned then that Capt Johnson was a quarter master at the time of his becoming supernumerary, I respectfully ask, that according to the law and the precedents already established his heir be allowed land bounty as Captain and Quarter Master (equivalent to Major) from the time of his entering the service to the close of the war – deducting what he has already received.

I have the honor to be yr obedient serv't/ R M Heath  
Richmond 12 Feb 1851

Copy of Gov. Smith's decision granting land bounty to Thos. Keith as Captain & Commissary, to be found in the voucher May 1848

It is plain that Thos Keith entered the recruiting service in Feb'y 1777 and it is also undoubted that he acted many years as Commissary. This Case was fully investigated by the War Department & H of Representatives and those Departments decided that K was Captain & Commissary, and his widow was allowed a pension accordingly. Concurring in these opinions the Register will issue his warrant accordingly to the representations of the said Keith and as a continental officer – that is a Captain and Commissary. WS

Feb'y 27<sup>th</sup> 1851. Advice. Upon the grounds that I have heretofore advised in similar cases – that a staff appointment did not confer higher rank in the line – I advise that this claim be rejected.

According to the principle I have heretofore acted upon I allow this claim as Brigade quarter Master for

three years service in the State line      J B Floyd  
1851 Mar 3 All'd as above

NOTES:

On 30 Aug 1820 it was certified that the articles in Gideon Johnston's shop were worth not more than \$125.

On the pension certificate is a note that Gideon Johnston died 6 Dec 1825.