

## Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Joshua Mersereau S7224 <sup>1</sup>

Transcribed by Will Graves

f172NY/VA

1/21/09: rev'd 4/7/17

[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 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

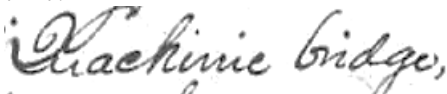
[p 12]

State of New York County of Steuben

On this fifth day of June in the year while Lord 1840, personally appeared in open Court, before the Court of Common Pleas of said County of Steuben now sitting, Joshua Mersereau a resident of the Town of Lindley in the County of Steuben and State of New York aged Eighty 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 under the following named Officers and served as herein stated. That he entered the service of the United States in the month of August 1775 as a recruiting Officer with the uniform of an Ensign, to enlist men for the New York State Troops for Capt. Jacob Cheeseman's Company under General Montgomery, and served until sometime in the month of November then following, as such recruiting officer as aforesaid. In December of the same year I served as a volunteer under Lord Stirling [sic, William Alexander, Lord Stirling] in an expedition to disarm the Tories on Long Island, about 8 or 10 days. In April 1776, I became a volunteer in a Corps of Virginia Rifle men stationed on his Staten Island commanded by Major Stevens [Edward Stevens] Capt. Otho Williams, and Lieut. Abraham Shepard, in May of the same year, he Corps above mentioned took 8 prisoners from a tender of the *Asia* Man of war which had approached the shore, from the time I left the Corps on Staten Island, on the first July in the same year, I was employed by General Washington in company with my Father and Brother in obtaining information of the intended movements of the enemy, ~~until~~ and served in that capacity until the defense of Quackinie Bridge [sic, ?],<sup>2</sup> joined General Washington's Army at New York and retreated to Brunswick, about the first of December we retreated to Princeton and thence to Trenton, and crossed the Delaware [River], after crossing the Delaware, I was ordered with my Father to examine the River and bring all the boats from the Jersey shore to prevent the British from pursuing & was engaged in that capacity for some days. I was at the taking of the Hessians in December 1776 and at the battle of Princeton in January 1777. I was engaged the remainder of the winter after the battle of Princeton in purchasing horses for teams in light horse for General Mifflin [sic, Thomas Mifflin] I also purchased some for General

---

<sup>1</sup> BLWt3792-160-55: On the cover sheet someone has noted "Son of Joshua & brother of John L. [Merereau] S7217."

<sup>2</sup> 

Lafayette. In May 1777, I repaired to the camp of General Washington. I was engaged under Lord Stirling in defense of his baggage which was attempted to be cut off, by an attack of General Howe on Lord Stirling's division -- In October 1777, I took charge of some public stores to be conveyed to Rutland and Boston, by order of General Mifflin who I think was then Quarter Master General. I continued in assistant commissary until April 1779, about this time I repaired to Elizabeth town, New Jersey and made arrangements for obtaining the Royal Gazette from New York for General Washington and Mr. Gerard the French Minister at Philadelphia & succeeded in obtaining said Gazette. In the winter of 1780 I was in the Lord Stirling's expedition to Staten Island and was appointed a Guide to Col. Hazens [Moses Hazen's] division, on a circuitous route to take position on the East and South of the Fort on Staten Island then called Fort Richmond. I was engaged in the attack on the blockhouse in which about 50 prisoners were taken. In February following I was one of about 20 soldiers who captured Col. Jones and some 4 or 5 of his guard. In the summer following the capture of Col. Jones, that he is in the summer of 1780, I was engaged under the command of Capt. John Story in attempt to capture a British Colonel stationed on the South side of Staten Island. I was a volunteer in this affair has also in the capture of Col. Jones, under the command of Capt. James Patton. In the fall of 1780 I was engaged on the lines near Elizabethtown in getting information, and was confined by sickness some months. In the summer of 1781 I was engaged in the defense of Brunswick which was attacked by the enemy. In the spring of 1781 I was engaged in the defense of Rahway under the command of Col. Marsh. In May 1782, the ship *South Carolina* having arrived at Philadelphia from Holland under Commodore Gilland [sic, Alexander Gillon], John Joiner [sic, John Joyner] Capt., I was engaged as a carpenter on board of this ship at the time above stated & performed the duties of such stationed until she was repaired, which was in December of the same year. I was one of the crew of the ship when she sailed which was on or about the 21st of December same year, we were chased by 3 British Ships, the *Diomede*, the *Aystrich* [sic, *Astrea*] and the *Québec*, we were captured, and in the battle I received a wound in my leg which has never since healed, I was conveyed with the rest of the crew of the *South Carolina*, to New York, and put on board of the *Scorpion* prison Ship. On or about the last of January I was permitted to retire on parole and remained a prisoner in that situation until peace was ratified by treaty in 1784.

I entered the service while I resided in Elizabethtown in the State of New Jersey, as a volunteer, and was acquainted with all the Officers mentioned above besides several others, and have a written license from General Washington, to pass all guards &c without prevention. That I was charged in the service of the United States in the various capacities above mentioned, from the time that I entered the service in 1775 until the treaty of Peace, and that I have no documentary evidence of my revolutionary service --

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid (all the racers and interlineations made before signing).

S/ Joshua Mersereau

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joshua Mersereau". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

S/ Wm Hamilton, Clerk Court of Common Pleas of Steuben County

[David Harrower, a clergyman, and Abner Thurber gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

Answers to interrogatories propounded by the Court of Common Pleas of Steuben County to Joshua Mersereau June 5th, 1840

I was born in the town of Northfield in the County of Richmond on Staten Island, and

according to the best of my knowledge & belief on the 8th of June 1761. I have no record of my age.

When called into service I resided in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, and since the revolutionary war I have resided in Staten Island, in Guilford, Chenango County, New York, and I now live in the town of Lindley, Steuben County and State of New York. I entered the service of the United States as a volunteer. I have seen and was acquainted with the following officers viz. General Washington, General Lafayette, General Putnam, General Mifflin, General Heath, General Sullivan, General Dayton, Major Crane, Capt. Cheeseman, Col. Ogden, Major Stevens, Col. Biddle, Col. Marsh and Col. Hazan, and have served under the most of them at various times. I was engaged the greater part of the time, in secret service, by the command of General Washington & other of my Superior Officers, in obtaining and furnishing to our Army necessary information concerning the movements of the British. I have never received a discharge from the service being as stated in the accompanying declaration, captured in the Ship *South Carolina*, and at the time of the end of the war, a prisoner on parole, and necessarily liberated by the final Treaty of Peace. The following persons in the neighborhood where I now reside, can testify to my character, for veracity, and their belief of my services as a Soldier of the Revolution, viz., John W. Fowler, Abner Thurber, Gustavus A. Rogers, Edward Howard, Rev. David Harrower, John Storms, Benjamin Harrower, James Ford, and many others both in a family and in Chenango County where I formerly resided -- one of whom is the Honorable John G. Clark, Member of Congress.

S/ Joshua Mersereau

[p 5, On May 3, 1855, the veteran, then stating that he was 95 years old, filed in Tioga County, Penn., for his bounty land entitlement.]

[p 104]

Affidavit of John L. Mersereau

John L. Mersereau formerly of Guilford County of Chenango in State of New York and now of Tioga Township Tioga County and State of Pennsylvania on his solemn oath doth depose and say that to the best of his knowledge and belief, the British Fleet with Troops came to Sandy Hook in July 1776 as stated in the accompanying declaration of Joshua Mersereau. That deponent retreated with said Joshua, and that said Joshua was during that summer and fall engaged in serious ways in the service of his Country. When the British came to Newark New Jersey said Joshua retreated with the Army in company with said Deponent to New Brunswick. When our Army began their retreat towards the Delaware, we parted said Joshua to continue with the Army and said Deponent for other purposes to remain. In the winter of 1778 said Deponent found said Joshua at Rutland Mt. acting as assistant Commissary [of] Prisoners [sic]. In April said Joshua quit that department and started for New Jersey. In the summer of 1779 deponent saw said Joshua in Philadelphia. Said deponent did not see said Joshua again until April 1783 when said Joshua informed said Deponent that he had been taken prisoner and was then on parole. The meeting was in Elizabethtown in New Jersey, said Joshua also informed said Deponent that said Joshua had been wounded in the leg on board the *South Carolina* and which wound said Deponent knows to have been very troublesome to the said Joshua ever since. And also that said wound has been a calls of lameness to him ever since and further saith not.

Sworn and subscribed before me the 15th day of May A.D. 1840

S/ C. H. Place, JP

S/ J. L. Mersereau

[p 118]

Joshua Mersereau, now 97 years old, being blind, and unable to sign his name, or appeared in Court, gives the following, in addition to his former declaration:

"That he entered upon the duties of Assistant Commissary of Prisoners, and received an appointment as such, on 14 October, 1777, and that he was stationed at Rutland, Massachusetts, and that he was connected with, and remembers the following persons, while so discharging the duties of Assisted Commissary:

Dr. Frink	Selectmen of the Town of Rutland, Mass. Where he was
Zachary Gates	stationed
Col. Davis	
Capt. George	Assistant Commissaries at Rutland
Capt. Dickey	
Robert Pope	Ass. Commissary of Prisoners at Boston, Mass.

Also recollects Robert Dunn, who served as a Teamster or Waggon Master, and whom he recollected meeting in New York City after the war.

"That his service as Assistant Commissary terminated on the 28th day of April 1779."

He also gives the following List of persons who served with him on board the Continental Ship *South Carolina*, and taken prisoner in 1782.

List of Officers of the Ship *South Carolina* in May, 1782

Commodore Gillon  
Capt. John Joiner  
\_\_ Marston, 1st Lieut.  
Wm White, 2nd do  
\_\_ Fitzgerald, 3d do  
\_\_ Bull, 4th do  
Thos. Aldrich, Sailing Master  
\_\_ Robinson, do Master Mate  
\_\_ Hicks, 1st Mate  
\_\_ Hamilton, 2d do  
Abijah Hunt, Midshipman<sup>3</sup>  
John Laborte, do  
Wm White, do  
\_\_ Dana, do  
\_\_ Langdon, Gunner  
\_\_ Pounder, Boatswain  
\_\_ Marshall, 2nd do  
\_\_ McFarland, 3d Surgeon's Mate.

I certify the foregoing dates and names to be a correct List as detailed by Joshua Mersereau in July 1854, in conversation with him concerning his Commissary service, and also his sea service; having copied them at the time, in pencil mark, the original of which is now in my possession. His extreme age prevents his attendance at the Court in order to make this at addition to his former Declaration.

S/ W. E. Kennaugh

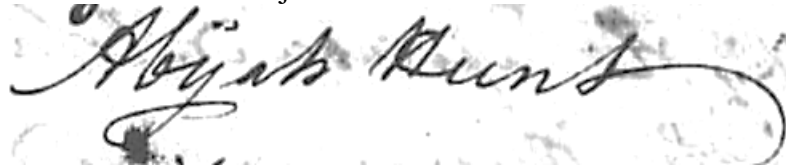
---

<sup>3</sup> [Abijah Hunt S23271](#)

[p 127]

I Abijah Hunt now 70 years of age and rising of State of New York County of Ciuga [sic, Cayuga] and Town of Sterling of said State do certify That I have been personally acquainted with Joshua Mersereau now of the County of Chenango Town of Guilford State of New York for rising 50 years That in the Summer of 1782 I found him on board the ship *South Carolina* of 40 Guns commanded by John Joiner and was Carpenter of said Ship that I was on board of said Ship and made one of his Crew in Capacity of Midshipman of the first Class that we remained in the River Delaware between 2 and 3 months when we put to sea and about 20 hours after leaving the Capes of Delaware was captured by a Ship of 56 Guns and two Frigates belonging to his Britannic Majesty that the said Ships with said *South Carolina* Frigate proceeded to the Port of New York that on our Passage thence having a Head wind for 2 days the *Carolina* being the best Sailor on the wind was nearly out of sight of our convoy it being nasty weather -- at a time when the hands were aloft reefing the top sails I was propositioned by the aforesaid Joshua in Comfort with the other Prisoners on board to attempt the recapture of said Ship he asked me if there was any Arms at my command and whether if we succeeded in our Enterprise whether I would take the Ship into Port to both of which Propositions I replied in the affirmative he requested me to stand ready at the word to hand out the said arms with their bayonets fixed and I so stood by the arms Chest he the said Joshua looked up to see if all was now ready when on a sudden the Companion [way] was dashed down and fastened which ended the Enterprise. The next day we got up to New York we was kept on board after arrival 2 or 3 days and then sent aboard a Guard Ship lying opposite to New York in the Walleboughor [?] Cove of Long Island was detained there some days when we was taken out on our Parole of honor and was allowed to go home to the State of New Jersey and there remained until the Definitive Treaty of Peace took place. I farther certify that the aforesaid Joshua Mersereau I would adjudge by my knowledge of him and by what he now appears to be Seventy one or two years of Age and further saith not.

S/ Abijah Hunt



Sworn to this 3rd day of October 1832 Before me  
S/ Levi Bigelow, A Judge of Chenango Court/Pleas

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$339.50 per annum commencing March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1831, for service as a seamen and Assistant Commissary of Prisoners]