

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Thomas Benson S8066

f28NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

8/26/10: rev'd 7/4/18

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

State of North Carolina Rowan County

On this 20th day of May 1833 personally appeared in open Court, before the Magistrates Judges of the Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions for Rowan County now sitting the same being a Court of Record Thomas Benson a resident of said County aged seventy-eight 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 entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated.

That he volunteered in Rowan County NC as a private soldier in the Militia in Captain David Caldwell's company, Lieutenant James Benson, guarding the frontiers against the Indians in the fall of the year 1777 under the command of Major Joseph McDowell [sic, Joseph McDowell] for the term of three months.

That he again volunteered in Rowan as a private Soldier for five months in the Militia in the Company of Captain Houston [probably William Houston] in the Regiment of Colonel Francis Locke under General Rutherford [Griffith Rutherford], marched to South Carolina near Charleston, thence to Savannah River up the East side of the River to Augusta, thence down the West side of the River to Briar Creek and was engaged in the battle there usually called Ashes defeat on the 1st of March 1779, marched down the River some distance on the East side & camped there until the time of the engagement expired. That he afterwards removed to Burke County and there volunteered for three months in the militia in Captain Canaday's [probably Thomas Kennedy's] Company under Colonel Charles McDowell [sic, Charles McDowell], and marched southward to the upper Branches of Broad River in Rutherford County against the Tories – and was discharged at the end of three months – in the spring of the year 1780. That immediately afterwards he volunteered in Captain Canaday Company under Major White¹ as a minute man for six weeks but served three months. That immediately afterwards in the fall of the year 1780 he volunteered in the company [of] Captain Harden [probably John Harden] for three weeks against the Tories in the mountains of Burke County. That he again volunteered for ten months in the summer of the year 1781 in the company of Captain Nathaniel Martin in the militia in the Regiment of Colonel William Polk under General Sumter [Thomas Sumter] and marched from Rowan County to Fort Orangeburg² and was at the battle there, marched from

¹ Possibly either Joseph White or Thomas White, both of Burke County North Carolina and both of whom served under McDowell.

² Probably the engagement on May 10-11, 1781 between Sumter and Giesendanner.
<http://gaz.irshelby.com/orangeburg.htm>

Orangeburg to Fort Friday³ and was in the battle there ~~from thence into the State of Georgia~~ from thence to the Eutaw Springs⁴ and was engaged in the battle there on the 8th day of September 1781 – marched from thence to the four holes – and from thence into the State of Georgia and was put under the command of General Wayne – and was discharged when his term of ten months expired 70 miles South of the Town of Savannah & was 400 miles from home when so discharged.

He has a record of his age at home which says he was born in Bucks County Pennsylvania on the sick September 1755, that he removed to Rowan County North Carolina in the year 1763 where he has generally resided ever since. That he has no documentary evidence of his service having lost his discharges – he refers to the accompanying affidavit of Abraham Alexander⁵ & William Carigan⁶ as the only evidence he can procure of his military service. That he cannot procure the certificate of a clergyman because none reside near him that are acquainted with him.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any State.

Sworn to & subscribed in open court the day & year aforesaid
S/ John Giles, Clerk

S/ Thomas Benson, S his mark

State of North Carolina Rowan County September 20th 1833

This day came Thomas Benson personally before me John Huston one of the acting Justices of the peace for and in Rowan County and made oath in due form of law for the purpose of amending his Declaration of 20th May last

Deposeth and saith that by reason of old age and the consequent loss of memory he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his service but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than the periods mentioned below; And in the following grades.

First Tower in the spring of 1779 in April he went from Rowan County to Burke and volunteered in Captain David Caldwell's company a private in the foot for 3 months to guard the frontiers against the Indians. Colonel McDowell we were stationed at Davidson Fort on the Catawba River above Morganton Burke County When that tower was out I volunteered for 3 months more and served under the same officers; I was not positive of but one of these towers when I filed my declaration but having conversation with Mr. William Brown⁷ I am now satisfied we served 2 towers before we returned to Rowan we generally went out as far as Swannanoa once in two weeks to make [indecipherable word, looks like "disloven"] Twice as far out as French Broad [River]

The 3rd tower I volunteered 5 months in the foot a private in Captain Huston's company in Mecklenburg County instead of Rowan in my former Declaration in the Regiment of Colonel Locke & General Rutherford. 4th tower I volunteered a private in the horse in Burke County for 3 months in Captain Canady Company under Colonel McDowell and when that term of service expired^{5th} I volunteered 3 months more in Captain Canady Company Major White Colonel

³ Usually referred to as Fort Granby which Sumter attacked from February 19 through 21, 1781.

⁴ <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/fortgranby.htm>

⁴ <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/eutaw.htm>

⁵ [Abram \(Abraham\) Alexander S8013](#)

⁶ Sic, [William Carrigan S8177](#)

⁷ [William Brown S8092](#)

McDowell

6th Tower I volunteered in Captain Harden's company we met South East of Morganton Burke County NC and marched up the East side of the Catawba River and crossed near the head branches of the River crossed the Mountain and East direction went towards the Yadkin River Wilkes County from thence back to Morganton as well as I now recollect in 1781 April I removed to Mecklenburg County NC – 7th Tower shortly after I removed to Mecklenburg I volunteered in the company of Captain Nathaniel Martin in ten months the other officers were General Sumter Wade Hampton Colonel Polk In the State Troops Militia a private Soldier in the horse and marched to Sandy River in the edge of the State of South Carolina we there joined Colonel Wade Hampton and perhaps Colonel Middleton we marched from there to Fort Orangeburg from thence a South East direction expecting to meet Lord Roddin^{Rawdon}; but on being informed that he had gone another way to Ninety Six we returned and took Fort Friday on the Congaree River; There we remained 5 or 6 days and from thence we marched down the River on the West side to Brown's Old fields stayed there some weeks. From thence to the Eutaw Springs and was engaged in the Battle on the 8 day of September 1781. We pursued the British to Ferguson's Swamp from there we returned back to Brown's old field where we had lay some time before from there we marched to Fort Orangeburg we were stationed there until about 100 of us was ordered to beach Island under the command of Major John Moore then came an express from General Clark [sic, Elijah Clark] that the Indians had broke out but when we went to where he was stationed which was called Clark's station which the called 70 miles there was no need for us in a few days we returned back to Beach Island. In a few days after we returned, there came an express from General Wane [sic, Anthony Wayne] by Major Habersham we then marched to Ebenezer and joined General Wayne's Troops and marched near to Savannah, and from there Westward to the River Ogeechee took 30 Indians prisoners; the next day we took 30 horses from the Indians; I and several others were sent to Ebenezer with the prisoners and horses the prisoners was put into the Blockhouse and we were sent with the horses to Beach Island to put the horses into Dosses [?] Cane Break we took care of the horses then until our term expired to the best of my recollection I entered and served out the within towers for which I claim a pension for the same.

First interrogatory Answered; State of Pennsylvania Bucks County September 6 1754

Second Interrogatory Answered; My age was recorded in a family Bible that my sister took when she removed to the West from that I took my record

Third Interrogatory Answered; I was living in Rowan and went to Burke and volunteered; again I went to Mecklenburg volunteered Captain Houston etc. and now live in Rowan County.

Fourth Interrogatory Answered; I always volunteered except when he entered the State Troops

5th Interrogatory Answered; In the 5 months Tower in South Carolina at Purrisburg Captain James Crague [sic, ?] made a company in the Infantry I then volunteered we went up the River to Augusta then crossed the River went down the River to Briar Creek there we were defeated this part of the Tower I was under regular officers which was Colonel Litle [sic, Archibald Lytle] & Major John Nelson. I always served in the Militia a private soldier except the time in the last Interrogatory In the foot the 1st 6 months & the 5 months I served the balance of the term I served in the horse and found my own horse.

6th Interrogatory Answered; Yes signed by Colonel C. McDowell & McDowell Captain Canaday Captain Hardin I gave them to William Baly [sic, William Bailey?] my Brother-in-law who handed them to the Board of auditors he got an indent and borrowed them from me.

I am known to James Golaspy [sic, James Gillespie?], William Brown and David Beaty to whom

I refer for further testimony
Sworn and subscribed before me
S/ John Houston, JP

S/ Thomas Benson, X his mark

[Walter S. Pharr and David Beaty gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

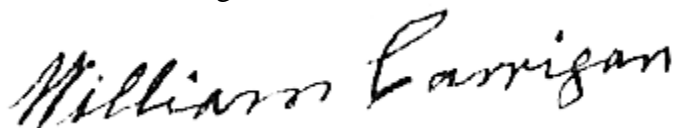
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North Carolina Cabarrus County: October Sessions of said County

William Carrigan maketh oath that he entered and served with Thomas Benson in the Militia – during the Revolutionary – War That Thomas Benson – enlisted and done service 5 months – that he marched from Charlotte Mecklenburg County North Carolina to the Ten Mile House from the City of Charleston – and then marched to Purrysburg – on the Savannah River at that place – they remained – during the winter – and in the spring – he was discharged.

William Carrigan further states – that General Rutherford – was the commander in chief – Francis Locke – Colonel and William Houston – Captain.

S/ William Carrigan



North Carolina Cabarrus County: October Sessions of said County

Abraham Alexander maketh oath – that Thomas Benson – was a soldier of the Revolutionary Army – in the Militia.

That said Benson – enlisted and done service 5 months – that he marched from Charlotte Mecklenburg County NC to the Ten Mile House from the City of Charleston – and from there was marched to Purrysburg – on the Savannah River – whilst at that place – said Benson – volunteered and served under General Ashe – and was defeated at Briar Creek.

Sworn to in open Court October 20th 1832

S/ James G Spears, Notary

S/ A. Alexander



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State of North Carolina Rowan County

The attached Declaration & certificates having been returned from the Department of War with objections The Applicant Thomas Benson appeared before the Subscriber a Justice of the peace in and for Rowan County North Carolina and offered the following amendments to & and explanation of his Declaration of May 20th 1833 and the amendments of September 23rd 1833.

Who being first duly sworn deposeth and saith that by reason of old age and consequent loss of Memory he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his service but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than the periods mentioned below and in the following grades;

For six months in the year 1777 under two engagements as a private foot soldier under Captain

Caldwell and Major McDowell

For five months in the year 1778 a volunteer private soldier Captain Houston his company
Colonel Lockes General Rutherford

For three months in the year 1779 a volunteer private soldier in Captain Canaday's company
Colonel McDowell

For three months in Captain Canaday's company Major White Colonel McDowell; a private
Soldier –

For three weeks in the fall of the year 1780 a volunteer a private Soldier in Captain Hardis [sic]
Company which was termed minute service.

For ten months in the year 1781 I enlisted in Captain Martin's company Mecklenburg County
North Carolina a private soldier in the State Troops I recollect that Colonel Polk told me in
Charlotte that we were under regular Discipline the officers were General Sumter Wade
Hampton [illegible] Polk, Colonels This Tower I served was done in the State of South Carolina I
was at the Battle of Eutaw. That I always served as above stated a private soldier in the Militia
except the ten months in the regular Army. I refer to the answers of the former interrogatories
put to me except 4th & 5th

4. How were you called into the service were you drafted; did you volunteer or were you a
substitute; and if a substitute for whom. Ans. I always volunteered a private soldier in the foot in
the militia except the 10 months service which was in the regular Army a private Soldier in the
Horse and found my own horse.

5. State the names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops where you served
such Continental and militia regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of
your service. Ans. General Greene was the commander in chief of the American troops at Eutaw
Springs. I recollect Colonel Lytle & Major John Nelson were officers of the Continental troops
at Briar Creek I recollect General Sumter Colonel Wade Hampton Colonel William poke of the
10 months service; I recollect General Wayne commander the Continental at Ebenezer: General
Rutherford General McDowell Colonel McDowell Colonel Locke commanded the North
Carolina Militia I always served a private soldier in the foot in the militia except the 10 months
service as served in the State Troops a private soldier in the horse and found my own horse we
were called the State Troops.

Sworn and subscribed before me the 11th day December 1833

S/ John Houston, JP

S/ Thomas Benson, X his mark

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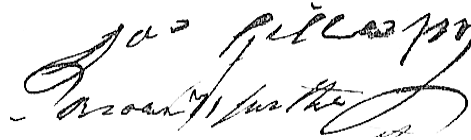
State of North Carolina Iredell County September 23rd 1833 this day James Golaspia⁸ Senior
aged seventy-four before John W Gray one of the acting Justices of the peace for and in Iredell
County and made oath in due form of law Deposeth and saith that he volunteered in Captain
Nathaniel Martin's company in the year 1781 for ten months with Thomas Benson and was a
messmate; General Sumter; Wade Hampton Colonel Polk; that I have heard his deposition read
to amend his declaration that his statements are true and that he was a revolutionary soldier as he
states in this ten months Tower and that he is to be believed when on oath.

Sworn and subscribed

S/ John W Gray, JP

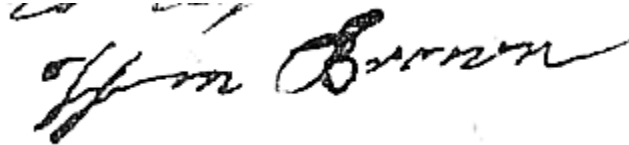
S/ Jas Gillaspy

⁸ Sic, [James Gillespie \(Gillespy\) S16827](#)



North Carolina Iredell County: William Brown further Deposeth and saith that he entered the service of the United States with Thomas Benson that we both went from Rowan County to Burke County NC in the spring of 1777 in April or May and volunteered under Captain David Caldwell's company Colonel McDowell for 3 months a private in the militia and served 3 months and when that term of service expired we volunteered 3 months more and served that term out together which made 6 months instead of 3 months which he states in his declaration taken Rowan County May 1833 and that Thomas Benson is reputed to be a revolution soldier and that he is entitled to be believed when on oath. Sworn and subscribed to before me
S/ John W Gray, JP

S/ Wm Brown



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I James Gillespie residing in the County of Mecklenburg and less than half a mile of Iredell County State of North Carolina it being more convenient to certify in Iredell County aged 74 years do certify that I am well acquainted with Thomas Benson who has signed and sworn to the attached Declaration and the foregoing amendments thereto that I believe him to be of the aged 78 years that I enlisted in Captain Martin's company in the year 1781 as a regular soldier for the term of 10 months that Thomas Benson and I were messmates part of the 10 months we were divided into scouting parties several times having full confidence in his veracity believe he served as he states in his amended declaration having a personal knowledge of the most part of the 10 months tower in the State of South Carolina he served a private soldier in the horse 10 months in the regular Army the officers were Wade Hampton 1st Colonel Polk Lieutenant Colonel General Sumter.

Sworn to and subscribed January 10th 1834

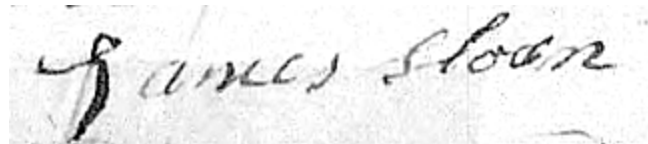
S/ Jas Gillespy

State of North Carolina Mecklenburg County: January 24th 1834

I James Sloan⁹ residing in Mecklenburg County in the 73rd year of my age do certify that I am well acquainted with Thomas Benson who has signed and sworn to this and the former amendment and the attached Declaration That I believe him to be 78 years old That he served in Captain Martin's company in Colonel William Polk's Regiment the term of 10 months in the State Troops or what was termed the Regular Army I recollect him at differs periods in the Tour of 10 months and I recollect him personally near the last of the service commenced the 1st April 1781 and having full confidence in his veracity I believe he served as he states the 10 months aforesaid but all the time he states.

S/ James Sloan

⁹ [James Sloan R9662](#)



[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$80 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831 for 2 years service as a private in the North Carolina militia.]

South Carolina Audited Accounts¹⁰ relating to Thomas Benson AA3
Audited Account Microfilm file No. 451A
Transcribed by Will Graves 7/4/18

State of North Carolina Mecklenburg County } To the Commissioners of the State of South
Carolina

You are hereby requested to Deliver to Mr. John McCutchen my Indent for my Service in the State troops in Colonel William Polk's Regiment & in Captain Samuel Martin's Company (he the said John McCutchen having fully Satisfied me for the Same) & this shall be your Discharge from your Humble Servant

Signed this 27th day of November 1785 before me
Test.

S/ James Meck

S/ Thomas Benson



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State of North Carolina Mecklenburg County } Personally came before me Thomas Benson of the
County & State aforesaid and made oath that he did serve Ten months in the State Troops in
Colonel William Polk's Regiment in Captain Samuel Martin's Company and that he never
Received any pay for said Service nor has ever Bargained or sold his right of pay for said Service
to any other Person or persons but to John McCutchen. Sworn to before me this 27th day of
November 1785 before

S/ James Meck, JP

¹⁰ The South Carolina Audited Accounts are available on microfilm at the South Carolina Department of Archives & History in Columbia, SC. They will eventually be available online at <http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/>.