

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Abner Messenger S9022

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Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

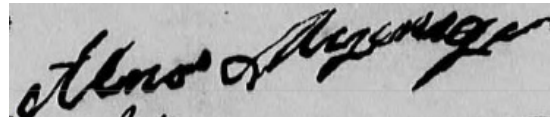
State of Virginia Preston County SS

On this 12 day of November AD 1832 personally appeared in open court before the Justices of the county court of the said county now sitting Abner Messenger a Resident of the county and state first above written aged seventy four 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

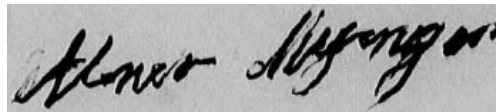
That he in the year 1778 as he believes enlisted in the state of Connecticut Hartford county [sic: Hartford County] & Sunbury township his captain was Amasa Mills his Col was — Eno he [illegible word] they were called Enos Regiment That he marched to West Point in the state of New York where he served part of his time he then marched to the Horse Neck [Horseneck, now Greenwich] in his own state where he served out his time he is not sure that the enlistment was authorized by Congress or whether it was only a state measure but he recollects it was an enlistment for which he was provided compensation he rather thinks it was a state regulation as in the terms of the enlistment he was told he could be part of his time at home in this town he does not recollect of seeing any considerable body of men the next year he was drafted for three months his capt was Churchill Joined Col Meads [John Mead's] served that town at Horse Neck he has not recollection of seeing any considerable bodies of men this town he recollects of hearing of the British breaking the salt kettles on the sea shore but was not there he thinks the next summer he was not in the service except as a volunteer a few days [few days] at a time & then return home but the following summer he was again drafted & placed under Capt Slodder [sic: James Stoddard, pension application S14591] we marched to the White Plains which was over on the New York side some few miles he recollects that he was told a scrimmage had been fought there some time before [28 Oct 1776] he there saw the French troops [in 1781] during his stay there he was on guard and helped take a French deserter who was endeavouring to escape he was delivered over to the French and was shot next day as he was told — we then marched back to Horse Neck where two Battalions were set to build up a fort we were commanded by Maj Simpkins the other by Maj Shipman our chief commander was General Watterberry [sic: David Waterbury] I recollect the majors had a quarrel & would have fought a duel as he understood but Watterberry stopped it — while here he marched against the British who had landed to destroy the salt kettles & helped repulse them he also recollects of a hard march to Bedford to reach there to prevent the British from burning a military store he there saw the regular troops who also had met there for the same purpose but the British did not get their he recollects of seeing where the fort was laid out at Horse Neck general [Israel] Putnam & a [illegible word] General Parsons [Samuel Holden Parsons] The fort was laid out under the directions of Putnam that this affiant carried the chain when it was laid out that he was still at the fort when the news reached us of the capture of Cornwallis [sic: Cornwallis at Yorktown, 19 Oct 1781] he well recollects of seeing a stir among the British [illegible word] for a day or so before he heard the news that it was said by our officers something of importance was heard from by the British. that they knew it from the stir among the vessels he have no discharge or documentary evidence he had one from his officer in the nine month town in the [three illegible words] no recollection of ever having any nor does he know any person who knew of his service though it is likely there is such persons in [illegible] who does he relinquishes hereby every claim to a pension whatever except the present he declares that his name is not on the pension list of any state

Sworn & subscribed the day & year first aforesaid

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Abner Messenger". The ink is dark and the handwriting is somewhat slanted and fluid.

The amended declaration of Abner Messenger an applicant for a pension made the 19th day of December 1833 before me the undersigned Justice of the peace in & for the county of Preston and State of Virginia and after the said Abner Messenger was duly sworn he sais that his first tower under Capt. Amasa Mills as set forth in his declaration made in court was for nine months That the second tower under captain Churchill he served Nine[?] months that his third tower under Capt Sloddard he served twelve months that he failed to set forth the particular periods of his service in his original declaration not knowing that it was necessary as well as from old age and consequent loss of memory he was not able on first reflection to say precisely the length of his services but upon full reflection he sais he is satisfied he served not less than the above periods and that he claims a pension for the same Given under my hand and sworn & subscribed before me the day and year first above written

David Trowbridge JP

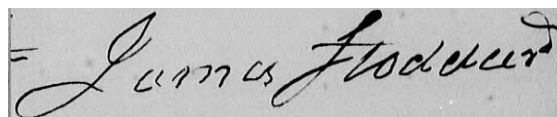


State of New York Broome County Ss

On the 9th day of November 1833 before me personally appeared James Stoddard Esqr personally known to me to be a person of unblemished moral character and possessed of his good mental faculties and made Oath as follows Viz that Abner Messenger who is now present before this deponant did serve as a soldier in the Revolutionary service of the United States in a company under my command for the space of twelve months in a battalion under Maj Elijah Humphries and a Brigade commanded by David Waterbury in the Connecticut State troops at the place called Stanford and Horse necks in the years 1782 and 1783 and further says that he this deponant is in his eighty seventh year and that the said Abner Messenger was some eighteen years younger than himself and further says that he confidently believes without any doubt or hesitation that the person present is the same person who served with him as before mentioned and further saith not

subscribed and sworn the day and date above written
before me

George Wheeler A judge and justice of the peace
of Broome County N.Y.



[The following report is by US District Attorney Washington G. Singleton who investigated hundreds of pension applications for present West Virginia. For details see my appendix to the pension application of David W. Sleeth S6111.]

Abner Messenger aged 74 yrs. receives \$50

this old Gentlemans first application was rejected for want of proof [see endnote], so concious was he of his right and tenacious of his Integrity that he in his 75 year of age mounted his old horse (something younger than himself) and went all the way to New York to procure evidence of his services. – his poor old Horse died on the way. – he then took it afoot. persisted in his march until he found his Captain. – procured his affidavit & returned on foot all the way to his residence in Preston County – the detail of his services are somewhat lengthy. I am perfectly satisfied that he is fully entitled to the amount awarded him – and there being evidence in his case, it would be a waste of time to report his case in extenso.

W G Singleton/ Nov. 24 1834

NOTES: The Commissioner of Pensions usually demanded additional proof of claims for militia tours of longer than a few months. On 6 Jan 1834 a certificate was issued to Messenger for a pension of \$50 per year for 15 months service.