

[Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters](#)

Pension Application of James Porter W1478

Mary Porter PA [NC]

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Tennessee } May term 1821

Smith County Court } On this 21st day of May 1821 personally appeared in open court, being a court of record for the the County aforesaid, James Porter, aged sixty eight years a resident in said, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath declare that he served in the Revolutionary War, as follows, he entered the service about the time the British troops landed at New York [22 Aug 1776], in the first regiment of Pennsylvania Militia, commanded by Colonel Crawford, and then by Col. Robadau [or Robadan], and then by Col. Green; in Capt. William Porter Company and was in the service of the united States, nine months at one time, and twelve months at an other time, under Capt Robert Bell in the first Rejiment from North Carolina, Commanded by Col. Malbry [possibly Francis de Malmedy of the North Carolina State Troops], – that he was in the battles of Statten Island [sic: Staten Island, 22 Aug 1777], and at Fort Washington 16 Nov 1776], at Beaufords defeat [sic: defeat of Col. Abraham Buford of the 3rd Virginia Detachemnt, 29 May 1780], at the battle of Guilford Court house [Guilford Courthouse NC, 15 Mar 1781], and in the battle at Utau Springs [sic: Eutaw Springs SC, 8 Sep 1781]. That he was taken prisoner at Fort Washington, and kept so for upwards of one year, that he received two wounds in said service, one in the leg, and one in the head, and was honorably discharged from the service at Salisbury [NC] by Col. Butler and General [Griffith] Rutherford, which discharge he has lost; and that he needs the aid of the government for support. 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 persons 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 – to wit, ten head of hogs, one sow and six pigs, one cow and calf, two yearlands, one old mare, another mare and colt, two ovens and two plows. he owes twenty dollars, and has three dollars & fifty cents due to him, has a wife named Mary about forty five years old [see endnote], has two children, a son about 18 years old, but deformed & helpless – a daughter, about 14 years old – he is farmer by profession, and so infirm that he is not able to work for a support. James Porter

State of Tennessee }

Smith County } Samuel Walker [pension application S1731] this day personally appeared before me William McClain an acting Justice of the Peace for s’d. County and made oath in due form of Law that he was at the Battle at the Utau Springs and that a man by the name of Malbry or Malbery Commanded there as Colonel, Green [sic: Nathanael Greene] commanded as General, and that Coln Malbry or Malbery commanded the Noth carolinia[?] Soldiers at that Battle Sworn to and subscribed before me this 7th of Sept 1822 Samuel hisXmark Walker

State of Tennessee }

Smith County } Circuit Court October Term 1822

On this the 15th day of October 1822 personally appeared in open Court it being a Court of Record James Porter aged sixty nine or seventy years, a resident in the County and State aforesaid who being first duly sworn according to Law doth on his oath declare that he served in the Revolutionary war nearly three years, that after serving in the militia three months alluded to in a declaration made by him on the 21 day of May 1821, which has been returned for amendment, that he enlisted in the regular army in a regiment called the Flying Camp in the Pennsylvania line [which existed from 3 Jun to 30 Nov 1776]

commanded by Colonel Robaden or Colonel Green or both of them, he is not certain which or whether both, in Capt Scott's company of said regiment and was enlisted by said Capt. Scott, for three years or during the war, that he enlisted as he believes on July or Aug 1774 or 1775 [sic] at Amboy New Jersey and he believes it was called the first regiment of Flying Camp, that he was in the battle at fort Washington, where he was taken prisoner by the enemy and was carried from thence to New York, from thence taken aboard a prison ship by said enemy carried to Savannah in Georgia, where he made his escape, making upwards of three years from the time he inlisted until he made his escape, while he was going from the place of said escape to join the regular army in the North he was taken sick, which sickness disabled him from traveling about six months and was naked and not able to travel until the next spring at which time he joined the army under Generals [sic] Bluford and Green in the South [see endnote] during which time he was in the battles and under the officers named and alluded to in the declaration on the 21 May 1821 and continued in said army till the end of the war, when he was honorably discharged which discharge he has lost. [Oath similar to that in the preceding declaration.] one mare, one cow, seven head of hogs, (three of them grown the other four pigs) two ovens, one plough, that he owes fifteen dollars and one dollar owing to me, has a wife named Mary near sixty years old and has two children, a son about twenty years of age deformed and helpless, a daughter, about sixteen years old and that I am a farmer by profession and so infirm as not to be able to labor and cannot live without public or private charity

James his—mark Porter

State of Tennessee Smith County

On this 24th day of November 1824 personally appeared in open Court being a court of record, for the County of Smith, James Porter aged about seventy one years, and a resident in the aforesaid County of Smith, who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following amendment to his former declaration in order to obtain the provision made by the acts of Congress of the 18th of March 1818 and the first of May 1820. That he the said James Porter enlisted for the term of three years or during the war in the summer of the year 1776 in the State of New jersey, in the company Commanded by Captain Scott, in the Regiment Commanded by Col Green in the line of the state of Pennsylvania on the Continental establishment that he continued to serve in the said Corps until he was taken prisoner at Fort Washington, on York Island within four or five months after his enlistment and after being in possession of the enemy for more than twelve months made his escape on Savannah River, and went to Saulsbury in North Carolina where he joined a company of Cavalry Commanded by Captain Gillifalls to which Course he was advised by the officers, who informed him that there was no fighting in the North whither he was going for the purpose of rejoining the Continental Army. Captain Guillifalls from Saulsbury went to South Carolina accompanianed by the declarant on entering which State, Guillifalls entered into Col Beauford Regiment [late April 1780] and after Guillifalls death the declarant entered into Captain Stokes' [John Stokes, BLWt526-300] Company, in which company of Stokes' & Regiment the declarant continued to serve until Col Beaufords defeat in South Carolina after which he remained in Captain Forbis's [John Forbes or John Forbis] company belonging to Regiment of Col Pauly until Gen Green came to South Carolina, at which time he enlisted into service under Gen Green, by whose special directions he acted sometimes as a Scout, at other times in assistance of Militia Captains, & other times is assistance of Militia Captains, & other times in bearing messages, until he was discharged from the service in the state of North Carolina in the summer season of the year 1783 according to the best recollection of declarant. That he was in the battle of Statens Island while in the Militia Service before he enlisted. That he was after he enlisted in the continental service in the Battle of Fort Washington, on York Island, commanded by Captain Scott. After he made his escape from the British, he was in the Battles of Mons Corner, South Carolina, [sic: Moncks Corner, 14 Apr 1780] of Beaufords defeat, of Guilford, & of Eutau Springs. That he has no active evidence now in his power of his said services except Samuel Walker, Robert Shaw [W6006], and Thomas Hambleton [Thomas Hamilton S32301]. [Oath similar to the preceding.]

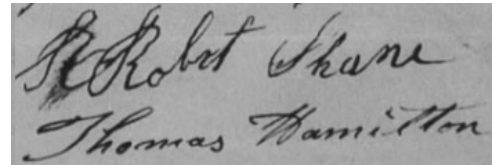
James hisXmark Porter

An enumeration of the articles of property belonging to the declarant. 1 Cow & calf. Horse 2 years old. 1

sow & 7 pigs. 8 hogs 1 year old, 1 Plough, 1 Axe, 1 hoe, 1 Sprouting hoe. A farmer by occupation. He is not able to do more work in one day than a good hand ought to do in an hour. He has a wife by the name of Mary about forty eight years of age, who had one arm broken, and can do but little work. He has one son named Alexander 22 years of age, deformed, and not able to do any work, & one daughter named Sally about 18 years of age, able to do good work.

State of Tennessee }
Sumner County }

Robert Shaw and Thommas Hambleton Came personally before us William Montgomry and John McMurtry acting Justices in said County and being Duly sworn doth say that they are both well acquainted with James Porter who is makeing Application for a Pension We know him to be the same who served in the Revolutionary Army in the North Carolina line the first that I the said Shaw new of said porter was directly after the Defeat at monks Corner I Cannot tell particular what Officer he was under but shortly after he was under Colonel Buford and was in Bufords Defeat after that he was with General Green We both new him under Captain Forbis at the Battle of Gilford where Forbis was killed, and always understood and believe that said Porter Continued in the army Untill the end of the War and was then Honorably discharged. When we were first acquainted with said porter we Understood from him that he had been taken prisoner at fort Washington and Continued prisoner Untill the British fleet went to Savanna where he made his escape from them and then joined our Army again as soon as he got in a situation to be fit for duty further always as far as we knew or heard he was Considered a brave and Useful soldier after Captain Forbes was killed we knew him Under Captain Bell and was with him at the Battle of Eutau [see endnote] Springs in whose Company we Understood he Continued Untill Dischage at the End of the War Sworn to and subscribed before us
November the 30th 1824

A photograph of two handwritten signatures in cursive ink. The top signature reads "Robert Shaw" and the bottom signature reads "Thomas Hambleton".

Smith County Ten/ 25th December 1827

Dear Sir [Hon. Robert Deshar?]

My situation prompts me to trouble you about a matter in which I have been engaged for several years, without success

I am well satisfied that acording to an act of Congress I am entitled to a pension for my services in the Revolutoonary war. I have forwarded a Declaration and an amended Declaration to the War department, I have Rec'd for Answer that my pension Cannot be allowed principally on the ground that the officers which I have named as having served under war not on the lists of Continental officers

I wish to give you a true narative of my services hopeing you will give me some aid in this matter
I first went from Lancaster C'ty pensylvania a three months Tour as a malitiaman At the End of 3 months I enlisted at Amboy under Capt Scott for dureing the War I recolect after this we ware commanded by general [Charles] Lee, who was then called old general Lee, he was [one or two undeciphered words] officer as I understood of the Artillery Capt Scotts Copany was called a flying cam[p] company about 4 Months after my enlistment I think it was I was taken prisoner at Fort Washington by the British from that place we ware taken down to New York I think I was a prisoner with many others at diferent places for about 2 years & 9 months I was at Savanah on Board a prison ship & made My escape by means of a smal Boat in company with three others I then attempted to Return to pensylvania but took sick at Camden in S Carolina in the spring of the year I went on to Salisbury N. Carliona I was there told by Officers that my services was most needed in that quarter as the British was expected at Charleston, I acordingly joined a Capt. Guila Falls & went on & was engaged in the servic untill the End of the war sometimes under one & then another office as ocasion might Require as stated in my various declarations. I hope you will examine into my Business & see whether a man who served his

Country under every circumstance not regarding the name or grade of officers under whom I fought is to be neglected I felt myself bound by my enlistment to serve during the war and did so faithfully as I am able & have proved.

When we escaped from the prison ship we were told that a general provision was made for the special Benefit of those that were taken at Fort Washing & that they were to be protected so far as the courts authority could [one or two undeciphered words] to their Respective houses Yours &c

James Porter

NOTES:

Col. Abraham Buford was in North Carolina only in May 1780. Gen. Nathanael Greene did not arrive until late November 1780.

Neither of the pension applications under the name of Robert Shaw [W6006] or Thomas Hamilton [S32301] mentions being at the Battle of Eutaw Springs.

James Porter was finally issued a certificate for a pension of \$8 per month on 20 Jan 1832.

On 1 Oct 1838 Mary (Polly) Porter, 74, applied for a pension stating that she married James Porter on 15 July 1788, and he died on 18 June 1838. The file contains extensive correspondence relating to the conflict between Mary Porter's age given in her application and her age according to James Porter's application. On 12 Jan 1841 Sarah Osborn or Ozment of Wilson County TN stated that Mary McClane lived in Guilford County NC before her marriage to James Porter. Others made similar statements.

On 5 June 1841 Mary Porter made the following statement as an addition to her application: "She has had six children the oldest is living named John Porter and is going in his fifty second year She was married three years before the birth of her first child the said John Porter She was married about the year 1786 or 87 as stated in her first declaration or as it should have been stated agreeable to the best recollection she now has. her marriage together with the ages of her children were all wrote down in her family bible but her children carried it to school as a Book to read in and they tore out and destroyed the record a great many years since. Said record was wrote in the hand writing of her husband James Porter deceased, her second son Joseph Porter was born about two years and three months after John her first was born and this was about the year 1793 and John her first was born in 1790 The nex was Ann born about two years and one half after Josep and her next Alexander was born about 2 yr after Ann her next was James born 2½ after Alexander her last Sally born 4 years after James. She [Mary Porter] was not grown at the battle of Guilford she thinks about thirteen and she was married about six or seven years afterward, which would make her abot nineteen or twenty at her marriage this all from the best recolection she has and the ages of her children. She has but four children alive to wit John born in 1790 and Joseph and Sally and James. There is but one of her children living with her and that one is Joseph She recolect of hearing the guns at the battle of Guilford."

On 4 Nov 1841 Joseph Porter, second-oldest son of James and Mary Porter, stated that he was 50 in the previous July and that the oldest son, John Porter, was about two years and some months older. He stated that about 17 years previously he had visited his grandmother, Mrs. McClane, in Hopkinsville KY, who confirmed his age.

On 3 June 1842 John Porter stated that he was 26 in 1815 at the time of the Battle of New Orleans and that he had been at a "court Martial of the officers of the Regiment in which he mustered about eight or nine years ago and was then discharged from military duty being forty five years of age." In certifying John Porter's statement, the Justice of the Peace, William P. Hughes, added the following: "James Porter was the father of the said John Porter and a verry old and infirm man when I first knew him, he must have been in his dotage, as far back as 1820 perhaps before I did not consider him a man whose recolection was good and I considered him in his second childhood."

On 25 March 1843 Mary Porter was said to be 84.