

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of James Spencer¹ W4590

Mary Spencer

f98VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

3/25/12 rev'd 10/26/14

[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 Ohio, Clinton County Court of Common Pleas of the term of August 1832 SS

On this ___ day of September in the year of our Lord 1832 personally appeared before the Honorable the Justices of the Court of Common Pleas now sitting within & for the County of Clinton aforesaid James Spencer a resident and citizen of the Township of Richland in the County aforesaid and State of Ohio aged seventy years and about four months, 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 in the spring of the year 1780 he volunteered his services as a soldier of militia in a Regiment raised in the County of Ohio and State of Virginia by order of one Colonel Abraham Shepherd, that after said Regiment was raised he the said James Spencer was elected and commissioned by said Colonel Abraham Shepherd a Lieutenant of one of the companies composing the said Regiment which company was commanded by Captain Lawrence Lewis Buskirk, that William McMahan was the Major of said Regiment; that on the 27th day of March in the year 1780 as well as applicant remembers by the order of said Colonel Shepherd the company commanded by said Captain Lawrence Lewis Buskirk and of which he the said Spencer was Lieutenant crossed the River Ohio into what is now the State of Ohio, where said company was engaged as Indian spies. The company after he crossed the River Ohio erected a Blockhouse at what is and was then called the Beech bottom, which Blockhouse was there place of rendezvous. The Company was divided and one part of it commanded by Captain Lawrence Lewis Buskirk scoured ^{and consisting 50} that part of the frontier which lay between said Blockhouse and Yellow Creek and the other part of the company commanded by this affiant scoured that part of the country which lay between said Blockhouse and the mouth of McMahan's [?²] Creek: the whole range of country us reconnoitered & watched by said company being about sixty miles up and down the Ohio River. The Regiment of which this affiant was a member was in the service of the State of Virginia. Deponent remembers that Francis McGuire, Baldwin [indecipherable word, could be Baldwin Parsons] and ___ Fouts were captains in said Regiment. That said Captain Buskirk's Company, this affiant being Lieutenant thereof, continued on the North West side of the Ohio River employed as Indian Spies during the whole of the summer and fall of the year 1780 until about the 20th of December of said year when said company recrossed the River to Wheeling where the company wintered and in the

¹ BLWt38557-160-55. Veteran is listed as a veteran of the Revolution, the Indian Wars and the War of 1812

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spring of 1781 again crossed the Ohio River to the North West shore, when they were employed and engaged as Indian Spies traversing the same region of Country that they had the preceding year. The first scrimmage this affiant was in the service a party of Indians came into the settlement on Short Creek in Virginia, stole horses and killed the ~~daughter~~ little son of ___ Morris on Short Creek, and were pursued by this applicant with eleven other members of the Company; we overtook them about 90 miles distant from the Ohio River in McIntosh's trace near the Muskingum River where we killed one Indian & recaptured the horses which had been stolen. The second summer this affiant was in the Service, to which the summer of 1781, the Indians killed George McCoy and his wife Margaret upon Short Creek in Virginia, and were pursued by this affiant and the said Captain Buskirk with twelve of our Company; we overtook the Indians near the Muskingum River, killed two of them & had one of our men killed, by the name of David Pursly [David Pursley?]; our company continued in this side of the Ohio River until the month of December of 1781 when we recrossed to Wheeling where we wintered and in the spring of 1782 we crossed again the Ohio River and engaged in the same service that we had been engaged in the previous years, we remained on this side of the River traversing the Country as Indian Spies, but we had no engagement with the Indians, nor did any event of notoriety occur: in the month of December of that year recrossed the River to the mouth of Buffalo Creek in the State of Virginia where we were dismissed from the service by Major William McMahan from whom I received a discharge, but which I lost many years ago. This applicant was not engaged during the time of his service in any battle or skirmish other than as before mentioned, he having acted all the time as an Indian Spy. The balance of his Regiment remained embodied, but were [several indecipherable words] but always held themselves in readiness for active service whenever required. At the time this applicant entered the service he lived in the County of Ohio and State of Virginia. That he has no documentary evidence of his service, he having lost his discharge and commission and that he knows of no person now living by whom he can prove his service; That he is not now in the receipt of nor did he ever received a pension for his services in the from the General or any of the State governments and declares that his name is not on the roll of any State or the United States.

Question by the Court. Where and in what year was you born? Ans. I was born in the state of Virginia on the Potomac [River] in the year 1762 according to information derived from my parents.

Question by the same. Have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

Ans. I have no record of my age

Question by Same. Where were you living when called into service? Where have you lived since the revolutionary War and where do you now live?

Ans. When I entered the service I lived in Ohio County Virginia: ever since the revolutionary war I have lived North West of the Ohio River in what is now the State of Ohio, and now live in Richmond Township Clinton County of Ohio.

Question by Same. 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 volunteered my service in a Regiment of militia raised by order of Abraham Shepherd in Ohio County, Virginia

Question by Same – State the names of some of the officers who were with the troops where you served: such Continental and Militia troops as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your services?

Ans. Colonel Abraham Shepherd commanded the Regiment of militia to which I belonged;

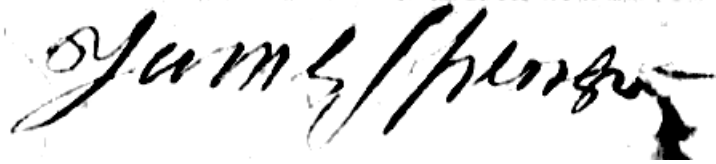
William McMahan was Major of the Regiment, Francis alias Frank McGuire, Baldwin Passing [?] and ___ Fouts were captains in said Regiment. I can state no other general circumstances touching my services other than as before stated, nor did I personally know any other troops than the Regiment to which I belonged. Question by Same, did you receive a commission & if so by whom was it signed & what has become of it.

Ans. I received a commission from and signed by Colonel Abraham Shepherd, which I have long since lost

By the court – State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighborhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief of your serving as a soldier of the revolution.

Answer, I have only been living in the neighborhood where I now reside about 2 years to which place I removed from the neighborhood of the town of Wilmington union Township, Clinton County Ohio where I resided for twenty years or more in my present neighborhood there are no persons within my knowledge to know anything of or concerning my revolutionary services except John Allen but in my old neighborhood of Wilmington aforesaid I can name many who do to wit David Nickerson, John Roberts, John McKinsey, Thomas Thatcher.

S/ James Spencer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Spencer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

[John Robertson and John Allen gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

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The declaration of James Spencer explanatory of his declaration made in the Court of Common Pleas for the County of Clinton Ohio on the sixth day of September 1832 for the purpose of obtaining a pension under the act of Congress passed on 7th June 1832

On this 9th day of November 1833 James Spencer personally appeared before the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas now sitting within and for said County who being sworn in open Court upon his Corporal oath makes the following statement, that he entered the service in the manner stated in his original declaration in the month of March 1780 and on or about the 27th day of said month and that he was actively engaged in actual service in the manner heretofore stated by him until the 20th day of December of said year – during all of which time he served as Lieutenant, that the Company then recrossed the Ohio and wintered at Wheeling applicant being at liberty to go where he policed and not being in actual service during the winter. That in the spring of the year 1781 and about the 4th of April this applicant again crossed the Ohio as a member of said Company and was engaged in the capacity of Lieutenant in active service in the manner by him heretofore stated in his original declaration until about the 6th of December 1781 when he recrossed the River, and were not actively engaged until about the 1st of April or last of March 1782 when he again recrossed the River and was engaged in actual service, served in the manner stated in his former application until about the 1st of December of said year when he recrossed the River at the mouth of Buffalo Creek where we were discharged as heretofore stated – Deponent by reason of old age and the consequent loss of memory cannot state the periods of his entering into and dismissal from the service with more particularity that he has above done. He is in very indigent circumstances. That he served all the time he was in the service he acted as a Lieutenant. That he still resides in the County of Clinton and State of Ohio & further he

saith not.

S/ James Spencer

[p 15: On January 22, 1848 in Clinton County of Ohio, Mary Spencer, 76, filed for a widow's pension as the widow of James Spencer; that her name prior to her marriage was Mary my poor; that she married James Spencer November 6, 1793 at Fort Washington in the Northwest territory; that they were married by a Justice of the Peace in Hamilton County by the name of John Armstrong who lived in Columbia near the mouth of Little Miami River; that their marriage took place in the house of Matthew Winton; immediately after their marriage she and her husband went to New Court Kentucky where she lived with him for years thence they removed to Turtle Creek now and Warren County Ohio where they live 7 years and from thence the moved to Cowans Creek, Clinton County Ohio where they lived until her husband's death; that she had 14 children whose names and ages he has no record of but believes they are substantially as follows: John C born September 16, 1794; Catharine born March 4, 1796; Andrew born January 12, 1797; Mary Ann born August 1, 1798; Elizabeth born May 6, 1800; James born April 22, 1802; Sarah born October 17, 1803; William born September 15, 1805; Nancy born September 16, 1807; Lewis C. born May 7, 1810; Delilah born February __ 1812; Ellen born February __ 1814; in Emily born February one, 1816 and Cyrus R born February 20, 1818; that at the time of her marriage she was about 21 years of age and supposes that her husband was "considerably the oldest"; she signed her application with her mark.]

[p 11: On November 1, 1855 in Clinton County Ohio, Sarah Spencer, 80 years of age, widow of James Spencer filed for her bounty land entitlement as the widow of James Spencer stating that she married him in Cincinnati, Hamilton County Ohio November 6, 1793; that they were married by one John Armstrong, JP and that her name prior to her marriage was Mary McClure; that her husband died in Clinton County Ohio November 1843 or 1844. She signed her application with her mark..

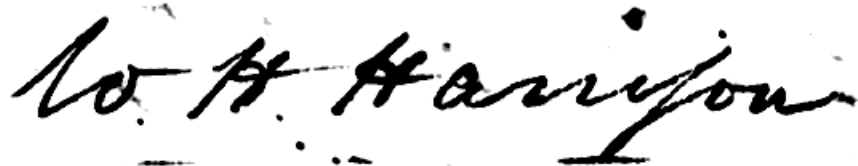
[Transcriber's Note: Although the following document relates to events after the Revolution, I decided to include it primarily because it appears to me to be in the handwriting of William Henry Harrison, ninth President of the United States. It relates to Harrison's services with the veteran in the Indian Wars and the War of 1812. It also is Harrison lament of the neglect of the veterans of the Indian Wars.]

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Captain James Spencer of Warren Clinton County Ohio served in the North Western Army in the late war under my command as a Pack horse Master. He also served in the same capacity in the Armies commanded by General St. Clair & Wayne. I know this from my own knowledge of having served with him under both these Generals as well as under the immediate command of General Wilkinson who took the command of the Western Parts after General St. Clair retired in the winter of 1791. Captain Spencer was with me (under the command of General Wilkinson) in a very hazardous expedition to erect the Fortress called Fort St. Clair where the town of Eaton now stands in March 1791. He continued to serve in the above mentioned capacity until the War was brought to a close by the peace of Greenville in the year 1795. During all his service in both wars Captain Spencer faithfully discharged his duty. I am not acquainted with any law which would give relief to his present necessities. Unfortunately the Soldiers who served under the

Heroic Wayne, who suffered all the hardships & privations incident to military operations in a wilderness have been most ungratefully neglected by their Country. The Soldiers of the Revolutionary War, & those who served in the late War have all been provided with farms, whilst those who conquered the Country from the Indians and who by their toils & blood gave peace to the frontiers & laid the foundation of the present prosperity of the Western Country have not even enough of the soil they conquered to afford them a grove.

Given at North Bend
this 26th May 1830
W. H. Harrison

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "W. H. Harrison". The letters are dark and the ink shows some texture.

[In support (or non-support, as others may differ from my conclusion) of my theory that the above is in the handwriting of a future President of the US, here is a known example of President Harrison's signature:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William Henry Harrison". The signature is written in a fluid, connected style.

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[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$80 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service as a private for 2 years in the Virginia service. His widow was pensioned in a like amount.]