

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of James Arthur W5634 Elizabeth Arthur MD
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Virginia, } At a County Court held in and for said County on the 19th day of
Dinwiddie County } ss. August 1840 personally appeared in open Court Mrs. Elizabeth Arthur,
a resident of Amelia County, but most convenient to the aforesaid
Dinwiddie Court-house, aged seventy five years, who, being first duly sworn according to law, doth on
her oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of
Congress passed July 7th 1838, entitled, “An act granting half-pay and pensions to certain widows.” That
she is the widow of James Arthur, who was an officer, a Captain or Lieutenant – she has reason to
believe the latter although called Captain during his life, but she knows not the time of his entering the
Army of the Revolution, or the capacity in which he entered – or the particular corps or regiment, but, to
the best of her knowledge and belief it was in the second regiment of the Maryland line commanded by
Col. [John] Gunby. She knows not the Countries through which he marched, or the several officers under
whom he served, or the several battles in which he fought, but has always understood that he was at the
battle of the Cow-pens [Cowpens SC, 7 Jan 1781], and at the battle of Guilford Courthouse [sic:
Guilford Courthouse NC, 15 Mar 1781], the latter she is most confident of hearing him often-times speak
of. She says that she has no documentary evidence to sustain his rank or services, neither does she know
where any is to be found. She says that she was married to him on the 25th day of May 1782, (as she at
that time understood) about one month after his resignation. Captain William Poythress [pension
application Va14], a brother Officer, who she also understood resigned at the same time, returned with
her husband; and the said Poythress intermarried with her sister Mary Gilliam on the same day – they
having, both parties been engaged previous to the marching of their husbands. That they were married in
the County of Prince George according to the forms and ceremonies prescribed by the laws of Virginia
by [blank] Gordon, a duly licensed minister of the Gospel. That her said husband departed this life in the
County of Dinwiddie on the 12th day of December 1810; and that she has remained a widow from that
day to the present. Sworn to and subscribed in open Court on the day and year first above written
[signed] Elizabeth Arthur

Land Office, Annapolis, 12th Aug^t. 1841.

Sir [Henry Northup, Esq^r.], Your letter of the 7th Inst. was received. The records and papers of the
Revolution in this office are very imperfect and they afford but little evidence of the service of James
Arthur, a Lieutenant in the 2nd Regiment of the Maryland line. By a paper or list headed “Arrangement of
the Maryland line in 1781,” and showing the Promotions since 1st January, 1781, the name of James
Arthur, appears upon said list to have been commissioned an Ensign on the 17th of June, 1780, in the 2nd
Regiment, and on the 16th of March, 1781, was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, in place of Lieutenant
Carr, resigned. Also, upon another paper endorsed “Arrangement of the five Maryland Regiments 1st
January, 1783, with the Promotions up to that period,” I find in the margin of remarks opposite the name
of Ensign Wm. Goldsborough [William Goldsborough] the following entry, “vacancy Spring of 1782,
Arthur’s resig,” – Ensign Goldsborough being promoted in his place; from these papers it would
therefore appear, that Lieutenant James Arthur was in service from the 17th of June, 1780, to the Spring
of 1782, – what is singular in this case is, I do not find his name upon any of the pay rolls to have
received his pay for revolutionary services. An Account is opened with him upon the Army Ledger, and
he stands charged with goods and money amounting to £100.12.2 up to the 12th May 1782, but the
account appears never to have been settled and there is marked in red ink on the account, “a/c not
settled;” – I have thus give you all the information to be obtained from the records in this office, and
presume no further certificate is necessary. I am respectfully, Yr. Ob^t. S./ G. G. Brewer

NOTES:

Elizabeth G. Torborne made a statement supporting the application of Elizabeth Arthur.

On 22 April 1841 Andrew Syme, 85, former pastor of the Episcopal Church of Petersburg VA, stated that he had been acquainted with the parents of Elizabeth Gilliam, who was their only surviving child and who married James Arthur. He also stated that he solemnized the marriage of Andrew Torborne and Elizabeth Arthur, daughter of James and Elizabeth Arthur at the home of the Gilliams on 29 March 1801. He also stated that he preached the funeral of Elizabeth Arthur's father five days later, on 4 April 1801. He stated that Elizabeth Torborne was a widow.

On 30 July 1841 Benjamin Harrison, 73, of Petersburg, certified the marriages of his cousins, Mary Gilliam and Elizabeth Gilliam. He also stated that Elizabeth Torborne had a granddaughter aged 16 or 18, and that Elizabeth Arthur lived with her daughter, Elizabeth Torborne, about 25 miles from Petersburg.

On 12 May 1841 Robert Gilliam, Clerk of the Court of Prince George County, certified that he could find no record of the marriage of James Arthur and Elizabeth Gilliam. He stated that he was the son of John Gilliam, a near relation to Elizabeth Gilliam. He also stated that he did find a bond dated 27 March 1801 for the marriage of Andrew Torborne to Elizabeth Gilliam Arthur.