

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of James Cain W5891

Mary Cain

f49NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

10/30/10: rev'd 3/3/17

[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.]

[p 6: Fold.com version is much easier to read than the Ancestry.com version of this application.]
State of North Carolina Bladen County

On this the 6th day of May A.D. 1833, personally appeared before me Robert Melvin one of the Justices of the peace for the County of Bladen James Cain, a resident of Bladen County, in the State of North Carolina, aged eighty-one 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.

1. In the early part of the year 1776, he entered the service as a Private in a Company of Bladen Militia of which William Ellis was Captain, and James Johnston Lieutenant. The Company marched to Jumping Run below Wilmington, and there joined the Bladen Regiment of Militia commanded by Colonel Thomas Robeson and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Brown. There were other Troops from some one or more of the adjoining Counties, but he has no recollection of the names of any of the other officers, except that he believes, they were all under the command of Colonel or General Lillington [John Alexander Lillington]. He has, for those reasons which will be mentioned hereafter, no distinct recollection of the time he served, but thinks it was at least three months. He has no recollection of any Continental Officer, or whether he received a written discharge or not, if he received a written discharge (as he received several) he has lost it.
2. There was a draft in Captain Ellis' Company of Militia, at what time, he has no recollection, but not long after the service above detailed, was performed, when he became a substitute for a man by the name of Thomas Caswell for a service of five months, as he verily believes, but for fear of a mistake he will say three months, and was immediately thereafter appointed first Sergeant. The Company in the first instance marched to the plantation of Thomas Amis on Drowning Creek, or Lumber River in Bladen (now Columbus) County, where they joined two other Companies of Bladen Militia under the command of Captain Peter Robeson and Captain James Council the whole commanded alternatively by Colonel Brown, Lieutenant Colonel, Richardson, and Major Thomas Owen, who made Amis' Plantation their head quarters in the various movements made by them against the Tories in the upper part of Bladen now Columbus & Robeson [counties] and the adjoining parts of South Carolina. On one occasion they marched as far as Cheraw Hills – thence returned and marched over little Pedee [River], at forts Bridge, where an attack on the Tories had been anticipated, but they having retired and dispersed themselves, the Whigs returned to Fair Bluff, and shortly afterwards were discharged. He does

not recollect receiving a written discharge but if he did, it has, as in the other case, been lost. He served with no other Troops except those above mentioned.

Owing to the decay of his memory from age, and bodily infirmities, those above, are the only services which he can particularize with anything like precision. For many years, he has been afflicted, first with a palsy in the head, and afterwards, also in the hands and arms and during that time circumstances which had been most strongly impressed upon his mind have entirely faded from his recollection. While therefore he could not undertake to state with anything like certainty the commencement, duration, and termination of the different tours of duty he performed during the Revolutionary War, still he does not hesitate to declare that he served more than three years, including the services above specified. He acted as first Sergeant in Captain Ellis' Company – was with him in most of his expeditions, and sometimes when he was with his Company, and the contemporaries of Captain Ellis must all know that there was not a more decided Whig – or other Officer in the County more frequently in service than he was. Among the various expeditions in which he was engaged some for a longer, and others for a shorter period, he recollects the following –

1. On one occasion he went as a Sergeant (in which capacity he acted as before stated from some time in the year 1776 to the close of the War) in Captain Ellis's Company against the Tories, into the upper part of Bladen, and the adjoining part of South Carolina, and on arriving at the plantation of one Thomas Ord, it was ascertained that the Tories had collected in such strong force, as to induce Colonel Richardson the commanding officer to retire to Rockfish below Fayetteville. All the men being mounted they made a rapid march and arrived after marching all night at Leggets Mills, early the next morning, pursued as it appeared by the Tories – whose suddenly fell upon them immediately on their arrival there – and compelled them to retreat, with the loss of a young man by the name of Armstrong, son of Colonel Armstrong. Several of the Whigs were wounded among the rest Captain Ellis who lost [text compromised and illegible]. Churn, the Tory Commander, called Major Churn, and said to be a stout Mulatto was killed, as it was said by the hands of Major ^{then Captain} Ellis.
2. He was a considerable time in the service in the same company, on an expedition to the neighborhood of Wilmington – then in possession of the British. About 1000 or 1500 men had been called on the upper side of the North East River under the command of General Lillington – and the British having marched from Wilmington, had thrown up entrenchments on the opposite side. General Lillington having determined to attack them sent an express to General (then Colonel) Brown, who with a portion of the Bladen Militia, among whom was Ellis's Company, had been ordered on a reconnoitering expedition on the sound, in the neighborhood of Wilmington with orders to march up on the Wilmington side of the North East River, and bring on the attack, upon which he would be sustained by the Troops from the opposite side. Colonel Brown accordingly made the attack, but not having been sustained by General Lillington was overpowered by superior numbers of the enemy and compelled to retreat – having received a severe wound in the arm, not a single man of General Lillington's Force crossed the River.
3. Captain Ellis & Captain Peter Robeson having ascertained that the Tories had collected on South River, with a view as it was said of marching to Wilmington determined on attacking them – they rendezvoused with their Companies at the plantation of James Singleton on the Cape Fear River, marched to South River and on the Evening of the same day attacked the Forces at the Governor's Ford and defeated them driving most of them across the River.

On another occasion when Captain Ellis's company was on an expedition against the Tories down the Cape Fear to the lower part of the County – several active Tories were taken

prisoners – on another occasion however a detachment of Captain Ellis's Company was defeated and Lewis Avery killed & Thomas Avery wounded.

They were afterward engaged against the Tories on South River in Cumberland County, at a place called Great Creek. The Tories were on the opposite side of the Swamp and an extensive marsh intervened across which was a causeway made of large timber. It was concluded by Major Ellis, who commanded (James Johnston being in the Captain of the company) to send a detachment of the Company on the causeway to endeavor to get across to the enemy, and bring on the attack, while the rest of the Company by going around the swamp, would make an attack in a different direction – but the detachment had not proceeded far on the causeway before they were attacked by the enemy (who were in ambuscade) and obliged to retreat – Upon which Captain Ellis concluded to retire – Several of the Company were wounded, among others Archibald McDaniel.¹ He was engaged in various other expeditions against the enemy in South Carolina, Robeson, Cumberland, Sampson & New Hanover [Counties]. He received several written discharges, but he has lost them all, and has no recollection for what period of service they were given – He has no documentary evidence, and no living witnesses of his service, whose testimony he can procure except Archibald McDaniel & William Smith whose affidavits are hereunto annexed.

He hereby relinquishes every claim 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 and subscribed the day & year aforesaid

attest S/ Robert Melvin, JP [?]

S/ James Cain, X his mark

Answers to Interrogatories prescribed by the War Department, as propounded to the Applicant by the Court

1. *He was born either in September or October 1752, on Little Pedee [River] in the State of South Carolina, removed to Bladen County before the Revolutionary War – resided there during & since the Revolutionary War.*

2. *He had a record of his age, but the Book which contained it [he loaned] to a neighbor, whose house was burnt while the Book was in his possession.²*

3. *I resided during the whole of the Revolutionary War & ever since in Bladen County.*

4. *I was a volunteer in every instance, except when I served as a substitute for Thomas Cashwell.*

5. *For answer I beg leave to refer to my declaration.*

6. *I received several written discharges – but have lost them all.*

7. *Reverend Daniel McDuffie, Jonathan Jones, Daniel Melvin Senior, Robert Melvin Esquire, Robert Harvey Esquire & Reverend S. N. Richardson*

[Daniel McDuffie, a clergyman, and Jonathan Jones gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[Image 425 of Ancestry—the first part of this affidavit does not appear in the Fold3.com version]

On this the 20th day of August in the year 1833 Archibald McDaniel after having been duly sworn according to law, makes oath before me, Robert Melvin one of the Justices of the Peace in and for the County of Bladen, That the applicant James Cain Senior was, for several years during the Revolutionary War, a Sergeant in Captain William Ellis's Company of Bladen Militia, in which Company he was a private. That this Applicant served in frequent expeditions against the Common enemy with the said James Cain that said Cain served, as he believes

¹ [Archibald McDaniel R6676](#)

² The text in italics above was taken from the Ancestry.com version of this document.

several years, and was reputed a faithful soldier – but he cannot particularize any expeditions in which this Affiant served with him except the following – to wit – to Drunken Run below Wilmington – to the Plantation of Thomas Amis, & into South Carolina to the Governor’s Ford on South River, where the Tories were defeated, [p 5] to Great Creek on South River, where this Affiant was wounded; & to the lower end of Bladen & upper part of New Hanover Counties. But this Affiant has no recollection of the precise time, that said Cain was employed in those expeditions.

S/ Archibald McDaniel, X his mark

[p 5]

On this the 20th day of August in the Year 1833, William Smith,³ after having been duly sworn according to law maketh oath before me Robert Melvin a Justice of the Peace for the County of Bladen: That James Cain Senior the Applicant was for several years during the War of the Revolution a Sergeant in Captain William Ellis’s Company of Bladen Militia, and that as a Private in said Company, he served with him in frequent expeditions against the Common enemy – that said Cain served a great while, & was reputed a good and faithful soldier: but this Affiant can only particularize the following tours of duty, in which they were jointly engaged, to wit – to Jumping Run below Wilmington, to Great Creek on South River against the Tories, where the Whigs under Captain (then Major Ellis) were defeated [probably a reference to the engagement at Heron’s Bridge, January 30, 1781],⁴ and to the lower end of Bladen, & the upper part of New Hanover Counties. This affiant also understood at the time (as he resided in the same neighborhood) that said Cain served one Tour of duty, as a substitute for Thomas Cashwell.

S/ William Smith, X his mark

[p 10: On August 5, 1840 in Bladen County North Carolina, Mary Cain, 75, filed for a widow's pension under the 1836 act stating she is the widow of James Cain; that she married him December 28, 1780; and that her husband died July 18, 1835.]

[p 24: On December 15, 1840 in Bladen County North Carolina, Samuel N. Richardson gave testimony regarding the marriage of James Cain to Mary Meaks (Meakes); he states that he believes they were married in 1780; that they were married at the house of his father, Colonel James Richardson who was an acting justice of the peace.]

[p 31]

State of North Carolina County of Bladen: Personally appeared before us Robert Melvin and John Sikes two of the acting Justices of the Peace in and for the County of Bladen Richard Cheshire⁵ who after being duly sworn according to due form of law deposeth and saith that he was well acquainted with James Cain deceased who was a soldier in the Revolution, that he served with said Cain in the Revolutionary War during the year 1781, that he was at the Battle of Guilford and afterwards in an engagement with the Tories at Elizabeth-Town in Bladen, that said Cain served regularly with this deponent in & during the year 1781 and was in these two engagements.

This deponent further states that he is well acquainted with Mary Cain widow of said

³ [William Smith S7534](#)

⁴ http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_herons_bridge.html

⁵ [Richard Cheshire W25403](#)

James Cain deceased that they lived together as man and wife during the war, that they were reputed to be married previous to the year 1780 that he heard James Richardson (now dead) said that he solemnized the marriage between the said James Cain & Mary his wife before he entered into service which was previous to the year 1780 –

This deponent further states that he is now in his 70th year and that he is a pensioner under the United States.

Sworn to and subscribed before us this eighth day of October 1844.

S/ Richard Cheshire, X his mark

[p 46]

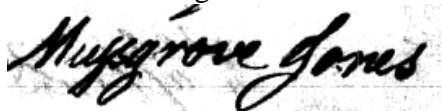
State of North Carolina Bladen County: Be it known that on this the 31st day of January 1846, came before me Amos Cain one of the acting Justices of the peace and a member of the Court of Pleas & Court Sessions for the said County Musgrove Jones⁶ a pensioner of the United States and a resident of said County & State aged eighty-four years who being duly sworn according to law deposeth and saith that in the days of the Revolutionary war, he this deponent saw James Cain in the service as a private soldier under Major Ellis in the said County of Bladen and that he understood the said James Cain served a good deal in the war – that he this deponent always understood that the said James Cain was a good Whig.

The deponent further saith that very soon after the close of the war he visited the House of the said James Cain and at that time the said Cain was married & had children.

Sworn to & subscribed on the day & year above written before me.

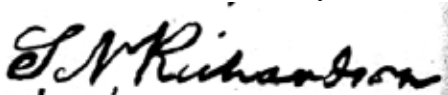
S/ A. Cain, JP

S/ Musgrove Jones

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Musgrove Jones". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

[p 15: On August 2, 1846 in Bladen County North Carolina, Amos Cain, 62, filed a claim stating that he was one of the children and heirs at law of Mrs. Mary Cain widow of James Cain; that his mother filed for a widow's pension but because she could not produce satisfactory evidence of her marriage, her claim was not granted. On fn p. 17, they is a finding by the court that Mary Cain died October 17, 1844 survived by Amos, James and John McCain all of lawful age.]

[p 48: Samuel Neale Richardson, 76, gave testimony that he is a Minister of the Methodist denomination; that he knew James Cain who was a pensioner of the United States and Mary his wife, now his widow; that they were married according to his best recollection about the time of the close of the revolution (say 1783); that he, Richardson, served as Sheriff of Bladen County in May 179[^{last digit runs off the page and is not legible}] and held that job until May 1795 and during that time he visited James Kenan and his wife Mary at their house.]

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "S. N. Richardson". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$25 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for 7 1/2 months service as a private in the North Carolina militia.]

⁶ [Musgrove Jones S7094](#)