

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Thomas Herndon W8924 Mary Herndon f92VA
Transcribed by Will Graves 3/20/14

[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 'indcipherable' 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 7]

State of Kentucky Scott County: Sct.

On this 28th day of August 1838 personally appeared before me Robert McCalla a Justice of the peace for Scott County Mrs. Mary Herndon a highly respectable lady – aged seventy-three years the first day May last past, who being first duly sworn as the law directs doth on her oath make the following declaration to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the Act of Congress passed last Session – That she is the widow of Thomas Herndon Deceased who was a private soldier in the Revolutionary War. She further declares that she was married to the said Thomas Herndon on the Day of January 1786 which appears before me on record in the family Bible – and that her husband the aforesaid departed this life on the 31st day of November 1821 of consumption which is also taken from the record of the family Bible and that she has remained a widow ever since that period.

Sworn and subscribed to the day and Date above written before me
S/ R. McCalla S/ Mary Herndon, X her mark

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Kentucky Scott County Sct.

Personally appeared before me Robert McCalla a Justice of the peace for said County Achilles Stapp and aged revolutionary soldier and made oath. That he was well acquainted with Thomas Herndon the above named and states that he well knows that Thomas Herndon enlisted in the Army of the Revolutionary war sometime about the first day of March 1776 and Joined him the said Stapp on or about the 15th of the same month and that he served in the Company of Captain Joseph Spencer in the 7th Regiment of the Virginia State line commanded by Colonels Alexander McClanahan [Alexander McClanachan] and Nelson York – and served 2 years and obtained an Honorable Discharge and this affiant thinks he said Herndon served 18 months afterwards as a militia man.

S/ A. Stapp, X his mark

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State of Kentucky Scott County: Sct.

On this 1st day of December 1838 Personally appeared before me Robert McCalla a Justice of the peace in and for said County Mrs. Mary Herndon aged Seventy-three years on the first day of May next who being first duly sworn according to law doth on her oath make the

following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions made by the act of Congress passed July the 7th 1838 entitled an Act Granting half pay and pensions to certain Widows. That she is the widow of Thomas Herndon Deceased who was a private in the Army of the Revolutionary War. She knows nothing of the period of his enlistment neither of his Discharge but for which she refers you to the affidavit of Achilles Stapp. She further declares that she was married to the said Thomas Herndon on the 2nd day of January 1786 by the Reverend Ambrose Dudley and that he the said Thomas Herndon departed this life on the last day of September 1821 which will appear from the family record which is as follows

Thomas Herndon and Mary Shipp was married on the 2nd day of January in the year 1786 – Sarah Herndon Daughter of Thomas Herndon and Mary Herndon was born on the 20th of October 1786 – Richard Wiatt Herndon son of Thomas and Mary Herndon was born 26 January 1788, Nathanael Herndon was born 18th of May 1791 – John Herndon was born the 28th of May 1793 – Thomas Herndon Departed this life on the last day of November 1821. She further declares that all the births of their children are in the hand writing of her deceased husband and their marriage is recorded in the family Bible of Thomas Branham deceased and she does not recollect in whose handwriting it stands but it is correct and that his death is in the handwriting of one of her sons. That her husband the aforesaid Thomas Herndon died on the aforesaid last day of November 1821 of Asthma or Phthis. That she was not married to him prior to his leaving the service but the marriage took place previous to the first day of January 1794 (viz.) at the time above stated.

S/ Mary Herndon, X her mark

On this 29th day of November 1838 personally appeared before me Robert McCalla a Justice of the peace for said County Achilles Stapp¹ an aged and respectable Gentlemen who being first duly sworn doth on his oath say that he (Stapp) enlisted in Virginia on the 2nd day of March 1776 in the company of Captain Joseph Spencer of Virginia and that Thomas Herndon enlisted in the same company and joined it at Spotsylvania about the middle of the same month under the command of Captain Joseph Spencer and in the 7th Virginia Regiment commanded by Colonel Alexander McClanahan [Alexander McClanachan] of Botetourt County Virginia. The first Lieutenant's name was Garland Burnley, 2nd Lieutenant __ Cunningham in the name of the Ensign forgotten. From Spotsylvania we marched through part of Virginia and Maryland into Pennsylvania and fought in the Battle of Brandywine [September 11, 1777] and the next was the Battle of Germantown [October 4, 1777] and other skirmishes and am positive he the said Herndon served 2 years and to the best of my recollection he got his discharge at Valley Forge. Sworn to and subscribed the day and year above written before me

S/ Achilles Stapp

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State of Kentucky Scott County: Sct.

On this 24th day of September 1839 Personally appeared before the the undersigned one of the Justices of the peace for the County aforesaid Mary Herndon a resident of Kentucky in the County of Scott aged about 74 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 the 7th 1838 entitled an act granting half pay and pensions to certain widows – That she is the widow of Major Thomas Herndon who was a Major commanding the

¹ [Achilles Stapp \(Slapp\) W599](#)

Indian spies in Kentucky in which capacity he acted from the year 1782 up to the year 1785 or 1786 which is shown by the affidavits of Lewis Vanlandingham, James Jones and John Gatewood. She further declares that she was married to the said Thomas Herndon on the 2nd day of January 1786 By the Reverend Austin Easton which appears from the records in the family Bible of Thomas Branham Deceased and that her husband the said Thomas Herndon died on the last day of November 1831. That she was not married to him prior to his leaving the service but the marriage took place previous to the first of January 1794 (viz.) at the time above stated.

S/ Robert McCalla, JP

I do Certify and from personal knowledge – That Mary Herndon from bodily infirmity is unable to attend the Scott County court.

S/ R McCalla

That she has no family record to produce only that of her marriage which is stated above is in the family Bible of Thomas Branham Deceased and That of her youngest son John Herndon in an old Bible in his possession who lives in Owen County. The record which was sent on to York Department was from the memory of Mrs. Mary Herndon to which she has sworn to be correct. Given under my hand the date above

S/ R. McCalla

[p 3: On June 13, 1839 in Scott County Kentucky, Elizabeth Branham, gave testimony that she is the sister of Thomas Herndon deceased and well recollects his enlisting in the Army of the revolution under Captain Joseph Spencer; that her brother and two other boys from the same neighborhood by the name of Joshua Jennings and John Denny all three got sick at a place called Guinns Island [Gwynn Island?]- Jennings died on said island, her brother and Denny came home on furlough where Denny died but her brother got well; that her brother rejoin the Army and served two years; that her brother never served in the militia; that she remembers his talking of fighting in the battles of Brandywine [September 11, 1777] and Germantown [October 4, 1777] and other engagements she cannot recollect; she thinks he was discharged at Valley Forge.]

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I do Certify in the case of Mrs. Mary Herndon widow of Thomas Herndon – She is a blood relation, lived & was married at my father's [house] at the Great Crossings Kentucky – I was old enough distinctly to remember Mary Ship when single & unmarried & when she was married in 1786 & became Mary Herndon = I do certify that my father acted as Captain [indecipherable word] Captain Robert Johnson in this part of Kentucky, then Virginia in 1780 & for & during the revolutionary war & longer & although a child I distinctly recollect the killing &, tomahawking by the Indians of men & women & children black & white in this neighborhood at the close of the revolutionary war and afterwards before the Indians left our country & ceased to fight for this County where my father was in public life as a member of the Virginia Legislature. John Craig at least one of the critics acted as Captain in place of my father until his return. I know that Thomas Herndon was under my father & one of this company. I know that Herndon was one of the most distinguished & famed men of that day for his bravery & services against the Indians. He was deserving every confidence & he served at least 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783 & after – I know from tradition & by personal knowledge at the close of his services as I can recollect the cruel & awful murders & depredations of the Indians at the Close of the war in this County as well as if it was yesterday & I consider my knowledge as sufficient & as good as if I had been of mature age at the time. That can be no mistake as to the facts stated & the widow should receive

a full pension look again at the proof the affidavit of my oldest Sister, of John Gatewood, of William Leggett & others all of whom I know to be respectable & truthful, please look again at the proof & this statement & no man on earth can doubt that the widow is entitled to a full pension. I know she is entitled to a full Pension. My father Captain Robert Johnson was the Captain under which Herndon served & I know the fact & mere technicality should not deprive her of her just claim to a full Pension

S/ Rh m Johnson²
2 Dec. 184[?]



2 Dec 1842

[p 31: On September 15, 1839 in Scott County Kentucky, John Gatewood gave testimony that he was well acquainted with Major Thomas Herndon since 1782 and up to the date of his death; that Herndon served in the Spied Department during the Indian War.]

[p 49: On December 8, 1841 in Scott County Kentucky Elizabeth Payne, 70, daughter of the late Colonel Robert Johnson and widow of the late General John Payne gave testimony that she was well acquainted with the late Thomas Herndon since the year 1780 at Fort Bryan Station [Bryant's Station in Fayette County Kentucky; that Herndon was at said Fort at least 3 years under the affiants father who was Captain at said Fort; that her father Colonel Robert Johnson with Herndon and others established a Fort at the Great Crossing in the year 1784 when the affiant became acquainted with Mary Ship, the present Mary Herndon, widow of Thomas Herndon; that Thomas and Mary Herndon were married at the Great Crossings in 1785 or 6; that Mary and Thomas Herndon head one child if not to before the affiant was married in June 1787; that Thomas and Mary were respectable members of the Baptist Church; that she can place the dates of various events by the birth of her brothers R. M. Johnson and Benjamin Johnson, now a federal judge in the State of Arkansas.

² JOHNSON, Richard Mentor, (brother of James Johnson [1774-1826] and John Telemachus Johnson, and uncle of Robert Ward Johnson), a Representative and a Senator from Kentucky and a Vice President of the United States; born at "Beargrass," Jefferson County, Ky., near the present site of Louisville, October 17, 1780; attended the common schools and Transylvania University, Lexington, Ky.; studied law; admitted to the bar in 1802 and commenced practice in Great Crossings, Ky.; member, State house of representatives 1804-1806 and again in 1819; elected as a Democratic Republican to the Tenth and to the five succeeding Congresses (March 4, 1807-March 3, 1819); chairman, Committee on Claims (Eleventh Congress), Committee on Expenditures in the Department of War (Fifteenth Congress); commissioned colonel of Kentucky Volunteers and commanded a regiment in engagements against the British in lower Canada in 1813; elected as a Democratic Republican to the United States Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of John J. Crittenden; reelected as a Jackson Republican (and later Jacksonian) and served from December 10, 1819, to March 3, 1829; unsuccessful candidate for reelection in 1829; chairman, Committee on Post Office and Post Roads (Nineteenth and Twentieth Congresses); elected to the Twenty-first and to the three succeeding Congresses (March 4, 1829-March 3, 1837); chairman, Committee on Post Office and Post Roads (Twenty-first and Twenty-second Congresses), Committee on Military Affairs (Twenty-second through Twenty-fourth Congresses); was chosen Vice President of the United States by the Senate on February 8, 1837, no candidate having received a majority of the electoral vote, and served under President Martin Van Buren from March 4, 1837, to March 3, 1841; member, State house of representatives 1850; died in Frankfort, Ky., November 19, 1850; interment in the Frankfort Cemetery.

<http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=J000170>

Elizabeth Payne

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State of Kentucky Scott County Sct.

Personally appeared before me Robert McCalla a Justice of the peace in and for said County Captain James Jones an aged and respectable Citizen – and made oath in due form of law That he has been acquainted with Thomas Herndon Deceased ever since the year 1782 and at that time he acted as Major of the Indian Spies and at this time said Jones boarded at the mouth of the Kentucky River – and it was reported there that the sign of a large number of Indians was discovered in the North Bend of the Ohio River – And the lot fell on Jones and another young man to come up to the Great Crossings to inform Colonel Robert Johnson of the discovery in by the time they got to that place the Indians were in the neighborhood and had stolen some horses and had shot at two men – Lewis Valandingham and the other by the name of Smith. Smith's horse was shot down under him – and Valandingham got into the Fort on horseback with a great bind round his neck dragging after him about thirty feet long. And next morning a large number met at the Great Crossing under the command of Major Thomas Herndon who overtook the Indians three in number on Cedar Creek with he thinks six horses – the Indians were first seen by Major Herndon who shot one down – and he took a rifle from the man next to him and shot down another and the third made his escape. They retook the horses and on examination they found one of the Indians who was shot to be a white man who was in company with the Indians he further states that on reflection he might recite sundry other skirmishes he was in with Major Thomas Herndon but from the great length of time his memory fails but he is certain that Thomas Herndon acted as Major to the end of the Indian War. The above sworn to before me this 27th day of June 1839

S/ R McCalla, JP SC

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State of Kentucky Owen County Sct.

Be it known that before me Cyrus Wingate a justice of the peace in and for the County aforesaid personally appeared Lewis Valandingham³ an aged and respectable citizen of said County and made oath in due form of law that he has been acquainted with Thomas Herndon ever since the year 1781, and up to the time of his death; and that the said Herndon and this affiant acted as spies together in the year 1782 and for and during that year, they were engaged as spies, scouts and minute men, always ready to March at a moment's warning in the defense of the frontier and continued in that capacity until the 23rd day of June 1783, at which time this affiant left the company, and returned to Virginia, and left said Herndon there, engaged in the same service until 1785 or 1786. He, the said Herndon, acted for some time as Captain, and was then promoted to the rank of Major, in which capacity he acted during the remainder of the Indian War. Given under my hand as Justice of the peace aforesaid this 3rd day of June 1839

S/ Cyrus Wingate, JC OC

³ [Lewis Vallandingham \(Vallandigham\) W2977](#)

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I John Gatewood⁴ of Scott County Kentucky aged 76 years State that I was a Soldier During the War of the Revolution under Captain Robert Johnson on the Virginia line and to the best of my Recollection at the time I came to Fort Bryan Station now in Fayette County Kentucky in the month of October in the year 1781 and remained in the said Fort till November 82 and do well know that the late Thomas Herndon whose widow Mary Herndon now resides in this County was in the service at the time I first came to the said Fort as a Spy under Captain Robert Johnson on the Virginia line and was in the service at least 12 months I do well know of my Personal knowledge that the said Thomas Herndon was a great Indian Warrior and was always ready to render any service required of him and was in the actual service as a Spy at least one year under Captain Robert Johnson on the Virginia Line. I found him in the service when I came to said Fort and left him there in the service as above stated and have been informed and believe that he served as spy upwards of 2 years and that he was in the service at least one before I came to the Fort and continued at least one year after I left the Fort as a soldier under Captain Robert Johnson on the Virginia line during the War of the Revolution.

June 28, 1842

S/John Gatewood



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I William Golson [William Gholson]⁵ aged eighty years living in the County of Greenup State of Kentucky state that I served at Fort then called Bryance station [Bryant's Station] in the County now Fayette Kentucky in the month of March 1782 and found Thomas Herndon at the above named Fort as one of the soldiers in the Fort I think it was under the command of Captain John Craig I do not know whether he had a commission or not I recollect serving with Thomas Herndon as a spy between the above named Fort and the mouth of Licking River I remained at the Fort for one and 6 months I found Thomas Herndon at the Fort when I got there and left him there when I returned to Virginia. I was there at the time of the seag [sic, ?] and Thomas Herndon was there. I will further state that he was a first rate Indian warer [warrior] and was always ready to go when he was called on. Given under my hand this 20th day of October 1842

S Wm Ghonson



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I Cave Johnson⁶ of Boone County & State of Kentucky aged eighty one years do hereby State & Certify that in the year 1780 while living at the Fort called Bryant's Station I became acquainted with the late Thomas Herndon with whom I became very intimate, we continued to live in the same Fort together for about 3 years during which time he informed me that he was in the battle

⁴ FPA S13121

⁵ FPA R4097

⁶ [Cave Johnson S8767](#)

at Brandywine in the Revolutionary War as a soldier, I considered him a very respectable man and entertained no doubt but that he told me the truth in that respect, and about the year 1786 or 7 – he was married to a certain Mary Ship, and they lived together as man & wife until his Death which took place 18 or 20 years past, his widow is now living in Scott County Kentucky, they were both respectable members of the Baptist Society she remaining so at this time.
Given under my hand this 19th of November 1841

S/ Cave Johnson

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cave Johnson". The signature is written in dark ink and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

[Veteran's widow was initially pensioned at the rate of \$40 per annum commencing March 4th, 1836, for her husband service as a private in the Virginia Continental line. Her pension was subsequently increased to \$80 per annum.]