

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters](#)

Pension Application of Matthew Bussell W899

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 9 Aug 2012.

[Note by C. L. H.: The entire pension file includes 123 pages, many of which are not transcribed here. Complete transcriptions and much more on the remarkable story of Matthew Bussell are in a biography by E. Wayne Bussell: *Matthew Bussell and the American Revolution—Sailor and Soldier*. (Friesens Publishing, 2012. 528 pp. ISBN 978-0-615-43689-0). Col. Bussell (US Army Ret.), a 4th great grandson of Matthew Bussell, has generously contributed his transcriptions of several documents.]

State of Tennessee }

Claiborne County } On this the 23rd day of march 1831, personally appeared in open court, being a court of record for Claiborne County, having the power of fine and imprisonment, Matthew Bussell resident in said County, and about seventy five years of age who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions made by the act of Congress of the 18th of March 1818 and the 1st of May 1820. That he the said Matthew Bussell enlisted for the term of two years on the [blank] day of [blank] 17 under Samuel Denny recruiting officer for the united states Navy. Went on board the Ship Dragon – Capt. James Marcum [sic: James Markham, pension application R72], which sailed in Company with the brig Jefferson, the ship Tartar, the Lewis gally, the Henry Galley & others the names of which he cannot recollect, and all commanded by Commodore Baron [sic: James Barron]. That he served the term of his enlistment on board the said Ship, and was discharged at the mouth of the Chickahomany [sic: Chickahominy River] on James River in the state of virginia on the [blank] day of [blank] 17 the precise time he does not recollect, neither does he recollect the precise of his enlistment, being old and frail that he has lost his discharge, That he hereby relinquishes every claim to a pension whatever except the present – that his name is not on the [pension] roll of any other state but the state of Virginia, and that the following are the reasons for not making earlier application for a pension, – that he did not desire a pention, while he could procure the necessaries of life without, it, and that he did not know wheather he could make the necessary proof, of his having served as above stated, – And in pursuance of the act of 1st of May 1820 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 person 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. Schedule to property, to wit,

One Cow and Calf worth	\$5.00
One bed and furniture worth	10.00
One yearling calf	4.00
	\$19.00

That he is a farmer by occupation & has a very small farm about one hundred acres of verry poor land entered at one cent per acre of his own worth not more than ten or fifteen dollars; Is now old and verry infirm, and not able to cultivate said farm, that he has a wife about forty five years old & four small children living with him, who make out to cultivate about four acres of said land, from which he procures his scanty subsistance – that he has no body else to assist him in any way towards making a support. That since the 18th of March 1818 little or no change has taken place in my property, except that about three

years ago he lost fourteen head of Cattle and three head of horses which died of some distemper that the most of what was left, which was but little, has been consumed in the satisfaction of debts which he had contracted without extravagance, but to procure the necessities of life, until he is reduced to his present distressed situation. This he states is the truth with respect to any change that has taken place in my property since the 18th of March 1818

Sworn to in open Court March 23rd 1831

Matthew hisXmark Bussell

State of Tennessee }

Claiborne County }

On this sixth day of December 1833 personally appeared before me Benjamin Sewell, a Justice of the peace for said County in said State, Mathew Bussell and relinquishes all claim to a pension or annuity for his services in the marine of the navy of the State of Virginia durig the Revolutionary war, as stated in his declaration which is hereto annexed – and states that he now claims a pension for his services in the malitia of the State of Virginia during the war of the revolution, as stated in his declaration to which this relinquishment is annexed.

mathew hisXmark Bussell

NOTES:

On 2 Dec 1844 Fanny Bussell, 71, applied for a pension stating that she was born and raised in Spotsylvania County VA on Motts Run near Foxes Mines on the south side of Rappahannock River, and that her maiden name was Fanny Reynolds. She stated that about the first of June 1791 she was married by Charles Clark, a Methodist preacher who lived in Fredericksburg, to Matthew Bussell, who died on 13 Jan 1844. As proof of the marriage she offered her husband's family record, which was certified by Shirley Bussell and James Bussell. It is very faded, but an effort at transcription is below. On 25 Dec 1849 Fanny Bussell stated that her husband died on 30 Jan 1843. On an application for bounty land dated 29 Aug 1855, Fanny Bussell was said to be 98 years old, and her husband was said to have been a private in the cavalry of the Virginia Line. This application was witnessed by Charles Bussell and Stephen Overby.

William Bussell was born in the year of our Lord 1803 March

Nelly Bussell was born in the year 1804 December 12th

Nancy Bussell Was born in the year 1806 October 13th

Sally Bussell Was born in the year 1808 February 17

Bird Bussell Was born in the year 1810 May 4th

Shirley Bussell Was born in the year 1811 February 15th

Charles Bussell Was born in the year 1815 February 11th

James Bussell was born in the year 1822 April

Matthew Bussell Was born in the year 1819[?] June 14

Juday Bussell was born in the year 1807 October

William W[?] Bussell and his wife Juda was married August 24 day 1824

A typed summary provides the data below from a part of the family record that is now illegible:

"First child (female) born dead, no date

John Bussell " October — 1793

Robert Bussell " December 12, 1794

Willson Bussell " February (last day) 1796

— Bussell " February 1, 1800"

[Additional documents from the pension file, excerpted from Appendix B of *Matthew Bussell and the American Revolution— Sailor and Soldier* by E. Wayne Bussell:]

Fredericksburg, Va.

10th May 1834

Dear Sir

Matthew Bussell, a soldier of the Revolution came to this place yesterday, on his way to Washington to obtain a pension, and being without money or strength to prosecute his journey farther (having travelled on foot from Tazewell, Tennessee) has stopt short here, and given me his papers which I herewith enclose.

By the printed document which you sent him some time ago—care of Walter R. Evans, Esq., it appears that proof of service is only wanting; and it being impracticable to procure the evidence of “two credible witnesses”, it is hoped that the Certificate of Judge Brooke (one of the Judges of the Court of Appeals of this State) who was the first Lieut. of the Company to which Bussell belonged, will be deemed sufficient. If the evidence of “two credible witnesses” should be absolutely indispensable, it is feared that this old man must fail in obtaining what is no doubt justly due to him, in as much as he is now 600 miles from his home & cannot here procure any other evidence of his having rendered the service for which he claims compensation.

Where there can be no question as to the service having been performed (as will appear by the Certificate of Judge B [sic]—one of the Officers of the very Company to which the claimant belonged) it is sincerely hoped that the usual forms may be dispensed with, & that remuneration so hardly earned, may at once be awarded to this worthy veteran.

If the evidence be satisfactory I will thank you to forward his pension certificate to me, and as the old man is now upon the charity of our citizens, I hope to be excused for asking that prompt action may be had on his case.

I am, Dear Sir, with high respect

Yr mo obt servt. [Your most obedient servant]

R. B. Maury

[Addressee]

*James L. Edwards, Esq.
Commissioner of Pensions
Washington*

Affidavit of Judge Francis T. Brooke

May 10, 1834, I certify that Matthew Bussell was a soldier in a company commanded by Capt. Anthony Singleton of which I was a First Lieutenant of Col. Harrison’s Regiment of Continental Artillery and served the remainder of his enlistment for 18 months which expired a few months before the end of the war.

This I believe to be true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Francis T. Brooke [handwritten signature]

State of Virginia

Corporation _____:

Francis T. Brooke a credible and respectable witness this day appeared before me a Justice of the Peace for the corporation and State, aforesaid and made each of the above statements. Given under my hand this 10th May, 1834.

John Hart JP [handwritten signature]

Resigned:

Corporation of Fredericksburg

I John James Chew Clerk of the Court of Hustings of said corporation do hereby certify that John Hart, Esquire, whose hand is signed to the within certificate of acknowledgment was at the time of taking the said

acknowledgment and still is a magistrate of the said corporation, duly commissioned and sworn, and that full faith and credit are due to all his acts and deeds as such.

In Testimony whereof I have hereto set my hand, and caused the seal of my office to be hereto affixed this 10th day of May in the year of our Lord 1834, and of our Independence the fifty eighth.

[Handwritten Signature]: J. J. Chew