

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

Pension Application of William Bassett W9739

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

Declaration of William Bassett for a Pension

State of Indiana } Sc

Ripley County } On this 29th day of December in the year of our Lord 1833 personally appeared before the Hon Joseph Robinson one of the Judges of the Ripley County Circuit Court in and for the said County of Ripley and state a/s'd William Bassett a resident of the County of Ripley and state of Indiana aged seventy nine years who by reason of old age and bodily infirmity is unable to appear in open Court for the purpose of making this his Declaration for a pension therein, 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. He entered the service of the United States, and served under the following officers as herein stated.

In the month of August 1776 he Enlisted in the service, and served for two years and Nine months under Genl Paulaski [sic: Kazimierz Pulaski], Col George Bailor [sic: George Baylor], Maj. Clough (who was afterwards killed in the night by the British at Taupon) [sic: Alexander Clough, killed at Old Tappan NJ, 28 Sep 1778] Capt. John Stith and Lieut Custis. [See endnote.] He left the service in the month of May 1779 after serving faithfully for Two years and nine months for which services he now claims a pension At the time he entered the service he resided in Bottertaut [sic: Botetourt] County Va. and continued to reside there until his services were rendered. He was in the Battle of Monmouth Court-house [sic: Monmouth NJ, 28 Jun 1778], and also in the Massacre at Taupon (or Tappan) thirty miles from the City of New York – where Maj Clough was killed and and Col Bailor severely wounded. He marched from Bottertaut County to Fredericksburg Va. where he remained stationed for one year or thereabouts. He then marched to Winchester Va. from thence to Fredericksburg Md. where he remained for some time, and there was inoculated together with many more for the Small pox. From Fredericksburg he marched to Redding Penn. [sic: Reading PA], from thence he marched in pursuit of the British who had left New York until he arrived at Trenton, from Trenton he marched to Princeton, and went there into winter quarter in the College Edifice. He remained there until the following spring when the British army left Brunswick and entered Amboy. He was then marched to Amboy but the British had marched to New York. He passed through Amboy and marched within about five miles of New York City where he halted and remained there on the lookout till the whole British army took shipping for Philadelphia [sic: Philadelphia, captured by Cornwallis, 26 Sep 1777] – when he was ordered to march to the White Plains – he was on the bank of the Delaware River at the time the Battle of the White Plains was fought [28 Oct 1776] from thence to Springfield from thence to Amboy from thence to Elizabeth town from thence to Morristown. from thence to Trenton. after the Battle there [26 Dec 1776] and at Princeton [3 Jan 1777] was fought where he remained stationed for that winter (the winter previous to the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse) He remained at Trenton until the following [here and at places marked * several words are obscured by cellophane tape] marched to Monmouth Courthouse and was there [*] send that day with Eleven others out of his company un[?] [*] Capt John Stith with the guard of Genl [Charles] Lee. under [*] Genl Lee. From monmoth he was marched to Hackensack. He remained there for some time when he marched to Old Tappan, and was stationd there in a Stone Barn when the Americans were betrayed by the Torys and all who were stationed there were either killed, wounded or taken prisoners except seven exclusive of Capt. Stith At the time when the affair just spoken of took place Col Bailors men were quartered at Tappan and the Inhabitants of the place pretended to be very friendly to the cause of the Americans, and some of them made parties for the American soldiers and furnished large quantities of spirits of the choisest kind for the troops – and the American soldiers supposing themselves safe and in the hands of these friends became

merry to excess. In the meantime the Torys sent off runners to New York to inform the British of the situa[tion] of the Troops. This applicant was sleeping that night in a Stone Barn at Tappan with many more of the Troops. There were troops quartered at almost every house in the place, and he must say it with regret that few of them were in a situation to defend themself even had they been apprised of the danger which was sarounding them, oweing to the carousal a few hours previous as before stated. He was aroused from his sleep by the breaking of doors, without and the cries of the soldiers for quarters [i.e. to surrender unharmed]. Two men were sleeping close to him under the same cover and he attempted to awake them, for he knew that the Troops were surprised by the enemy – but he could not succeed in consequence of the men being insensible through drinking. He therefore thought to make his escape and wen to the barn door and sliped a small sliding door (which was contained in the large door) but notwithstanding the darkness he could see plainly that the Barn was surrounded by armed men, he therefore asked for quarter. They replied to him “God dam your Rebbel soul we will give you quarter” and they demanded of him “how many men are in the Barn”; he answered that he did not know how many. At this time the men within had become alarmed, except (those who were drunk) and were runing out at the various places in the Barn where they could make their escape where upon the British and Torys cried out “skiwer them” “skiwer them” (which meant bayonet them.) The whole party however were killed, wounded, and taken prisoner except a few of those in the Barn (Eight in all with Capt. Stith escaped) This applicant was taken prisoner and ordered to stand, while an armed man stood by to guard him. He took the oportunity when the rest of the Enemy were some distance off and sprang over a fence to make his escape, the guard sprang at him, and as he was jumping over the fence he was stabbed in the back by a plunge of his pursuers bayonet which entered near the back bone which wounded him very bad. He however made his escape notwithstanding he was almost fainting under the pain of his wound. The horrors of that night will never be effaced from his memory. Amidst the curses of our infuriated soldiers were heard the cries and groans of the wounded and dying! Maj. Clough was run through with a bayonet while asking for quarters! After this he went to Trenton – from thence to Philladelphia where he remaiind until the spring of 1779 when he went to Batimre [sic: Baltimore] where he was honourably discharged in writing by Capt. John Stith by the command of Col Bailor – in the month of May 1779.

This applicant was acquainted with Genl Washington [*] Genl [Horatio] Gates, Genl Lee Genl Paulaski, Genl Ma[*] Col [William] Washington, Genl [Israel] Putnam Genl [Anthony] Wayne & [*] were many continental companies, and Regiments , and also Malitia with the troops where I served and especially at Elizabeth town Trenton Fredericksbegh and Monmouth. but the particular companies or Regiments I cannot remember. He has no written or dockumentary Evidence and he knows of no person living who can testify to his service

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever 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 and year aforesaid –

William hisXmark Bassett

Answers to the 7 Questions –

Answer to first Quest I was born in the County of Surry old England the 18th day of April 1755. Answer to 2^d Quest. I have a record of my age in my Bible. Answer to 3^d. Quest. When I was called into service I resided in Bottetout County Va. and resided there till my services were renderd, then I removed to Kentucky where I resided untill a few years since, when I moved to Ripley County Ind’a. where I now reside Ans. to 4th Quest. I Enlisted. Answer to 5th Quest. I knew Genl Washington, Genl Putnam, Genl Lee, Genl [John] Sullivan, Genl Paulaski, Genl Wayne, Col Spencer [possibly Oliver Spencer of NJ], Genl Maxfield [possibly William Maxwell of NJ], Col Washington and many others. There were Continental and Malitia Regiments and companys [with the] troops where I served but I cannot remember the particular [*] of them. These general circumstances as of my service are stated within. Answer to 6th Quest. I recd a discharge in writing signed by Capt John Stith it was consumed by fire at Craigs Station in Kentucky [2 mi E of Danville, burned Mar 1781] which was burnt by the Indians near fifty years since.

Answer to 7th Quest. Enquire of James Whitaker of Judge Watts of Wm. Lacock of Robert Burchfield and all who know me. Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

William hisXmark Bassett

NOTES:

Bassett probably did not immediately join the officers mentioned. Pulaski's Legion was not authorized until late March 1778. Baylor, Clough, and Stith were officers in the 3rd Regiment of Continental Light Dragoons, which was not authorized until the end of 1776 and not organized until months later.

On 10 Mar 1840 Peggy Bassett applied for a pension stating that she married William Bassett on 27 Nov 1780, and he died 6 Feb 1840. As proof of the marriage she submitted the family record from her Bible, transcribed below. On 24 July 1843 Peggy Bassett's age was said to be 75.

William Bassett and his wife peggy Bassett was married November the 27th 1786

Nancy Bassett was born August 27th 1787

Thomas Bassett was born April the 14th 1791

James Bassett was born November the 18th 1793

Sally Bassett was born January the 13th 1796

Elizabeth Bass was born February the 2nt 1798

Polly Bassett was born August the 14th 1801

Rebecah Bassett was born September the 13th 1803

Melinda Bassett was born February the 8th 1805

William Bassett was born October the 8th 1808

Harriet Bassett was born July the 14th 1811

William Bassett his wife Nancy Bassett was married June the 18th 1829