

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Thomas Bressie R12763                      VA Half Pay  
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 21 Oct 2017.

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February 1776.

Ord: a Warrant to Samuel Boush &[?] use Thomas Bressie & £42.16.8 for the pay of himself and Company as a Guard at ye Great Bridge – Militia.  
Extracted from the Journal of the Committee of Safety page 12.

D'r. The Commonwealth of Virginia in Acc't. With Lawrance Smith, Jun'r C'r.[?]  
1778

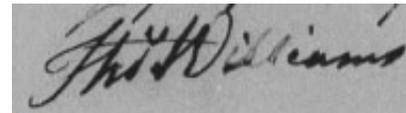
Jan'y 15. To Capt Thomas Bressie paid up to this date}    £441.11.10  
Extracted from Lawrence Smith's Pay Roll

Copy/ From the Journal of the Executive Council of Virginia of the 22<sup>d</sup> day of March 1777.

“Ordered that a commission issue to Captain Thomas Bressie in the service of this State. A certificate of the Review of his Quota of men returned and ordered to be filed, the said Bressie is to rank as an Officer appointed the thirteenth day of May last.”

State of Virginia                      }  
Norfolk County                      } To wit

I Thomas Williams [pension application S14843] of Currituck County North Carolina aged 74 years. Do hereby Certify that I was personally well acquainted with Capt. Thomas Bressie, who served as an Officer in the Revolutionary War. I do further certify that I saw him the said Thomas Bressie when in Command and attached as Major to the third Virginia Continental Regiment in or about the year of 1779 or 80 and I am inclined to believe that he remained in the Service until the end of the War of the Revolution Given under my hand this 29<sup>th</sup> day of April 1837.



Virginia                      At a Court held for Norfolk County the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of April 1845  
The Court doth certify upon the evidence of A Barnes that Thomas Bressie dec'd died intestate bearing an only child Thomas M Bressie his only heir at Law as he has understood and believes that the said Thomas M Bressie died in 1824 after having duly made his last will and testament of record in the Hustings Court of Norfolk by which he made his wife Elizabeth Bressie sole legatee and devisee of all his estate. That Elizabeth Bressie the wife of the said Thomas M Bressie after his death married James D Fisher and by the said marriage had an only child named Sarah Frances Fisher. That James D Fisher died leaving his wife Elizabeth and daughter Sarah Frances surviving him: that Elizabeth Fisher then died leaving her daughter Sarah Frances Fisher surviving her who died an infant [i.e. under 21] about two years after he mother. That Sarah Frances Fisher died an infant leaving a paternal grandfather Israel Fisher who is now living and Frederic Cason, Lewis Cason, Maria Caprew uncles and aunt of the half blood being the brothers and sister of Elizabeth Fisher dec'd of the half blood and Frances Cason a cousin being the daughter of Rheuben Cason dec'd who was a half brother and Elizabeth F Vangover a cousin she being the daughter of Sarah Vangover dec'd who was a sister to Elizabeth Fisher dec'd formerly Elizabeth Bressie. That the said Israel Fisher, Frederic Cason, Lewis Cason and Maria Caprew, Frances Cason and Elizabeth F Vangover are now living.

And at a Court held for Norfolk County the 26<sup>th</sup> day of April 1845. The Court doth certify upon the evidence of Taylor Sivills[?], that Thomas Bressie who he has no doubt was in the War of the Revolution

from what he has learned from the said Thomas Bressie the said Sivills being intimately acquainted with him – That the said Thomas Bressie died bearing an only son named Thomas M Bressie who intermarried with Elizabeth and he thinks her name was Jameson that is Elizabeth Jameson was her maiden name. That the said Thomas M Bressie died hi thinks in the Borough of Norfolk leaving his wife Elizabeth surviving him, who after the death of her said husband married Mr Fisher, he thinks his christian name was James. That the said Thomas Bressie had a brother named William Bressie who was said to have served in the war of the Revolution, that the said William Bressie died leaving several children, among those living are the following William Bressie, Patsey (who now lived in Richmond) what her surname is he does not now recollect, and Mary Sivills the wife of the said Taylor Sivills, that these three are all the children of the said William Bressie deceased who are now living. The Court doth further certify that the said Taylor Sivills is a person of respectability and full faith and credit is due to his testimony.

[The following are from [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia](#). The federal pension file contains copies.]

In the Name of God Amen I Thomas M. Bressie of the County of Currituck and State of N Carolina, considering the uncertainty of this mortal life and being of sound and perfect mind and memory blessed by Almighty God for the same, do make and publish this my last Will and testament in manner and form following that is to say. I give and bequeath unto my beloved wife Elizabeth Bressie all of my real and personal estate goods and chattels of what kind and nature after all my just debts are paid &c. Lastly I constitute and appoint my beloved wife Elizabeth Bressie sole Executrix of this my Last Will and testament; hereby revoking all former Wills by me made.

In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 15<sup>th</sup> day of July 1824

Thomas M. Bressie

[Proved in Norfolk Borough 26 May 1828.]

To His Excellency/ The Gov'r. of Virginia/ & Privy Council of State

Elizabeth Bressie widow of Thomas Bressie dec'd. who was the son & only heir of Major Thomas Bressie or Bracey dec'd. formerly of Norfolk County respectfully represents that the said Major Bressie entered the service of the revolutionary war about the year 1776 and continued to the end of the war in 1783. She begs to refer to the Journal of the Council of 1777 page 371 which shews that he was commissioned a Captain to take rank from the 13<sup>th</sup> May 1776; and she proved by the affidavits of Mrs. Owens a very respectable lady in the Town of Portsmouth, Major Wyatt and a gentleman who was engaged in that war, and Isaac McDaniel a soldier formerly in Major Bressie Company – That he continued to the end of the war & held the rank of Major at the time of the conclusion of the war. she considers that under the act of 1779 (Hen. [Hening's Statutes at Large] 10 Vol. p. 160) the said Major Bressie was entitled to the proportion of land allowed to an officer of that rank, and also to the addition for a seventh year's service, as promised by the act of 1782 (Hen. 11 Vol. p. 84). She files herewith a certificate of the Auditor shewing that he drew his depreciated pay as a Captain, & the Certificate of the Register that no warrant has issued for his Bounty.

I Elizabeth Owens do hereby certify that I was well acquainted with Major Thomas Bracey of Norfolk County, who was an officer in the army of the Revolutionary war, and that Major Bracey, acting (as was said) by orders of General [Charles] Lee, came to my father house in this county and burnt it some short time after the war begun – I also certify that Major Bracey continued in the Army for three or four years afterwards and to the best of my belief and knowledge he did not return home from the Army untill after peace. As witness my hand this 1<sup>st</sup> of May 1830. [signed] Elizabeth Owens

I, Isaac McDaniel [Isaac Daniel] now seventy years of age do hereby certify that early in the war of the Revolution I enlisted as a soldier in a company commanded by Thomas Bracey of Norfolk County,

and was afterwards transferred to Capt. Crump's company in which I continued the term of my enlistment. I did not know any thing of Major Bracey afterwards untill peace; but it was always understood that he continued in service untill the end of the war.  
Witness my hand this 6<sup>th</sup> day of May 1830.

*Isaac Daniel*

I Spivey Wyatt [Spievy (Spivey) Wyatt S6456] of Norfolk County now [8 May 1830] seventy one years of age do hereby certify that I was well acquainted with Thomas Bracey of this County, who was a Captain in one of the Virginia Regiments on Continental establishment and commanded a company in the year 1777 and was engaged in service at the North. That he afterwards was promoted to be a Major – and continued in service more than three years – and that he (to the best of my knowledge and belief) continued in actual service to the end of the war. I know however that he did not return home from the Army untill after the close of the war.

*Spivey Wyatt*

I, Ann Lewis certify I was well acquainted with Major Thomas Bracey (who was my uncle) an officer in the revolutionary war. That he has been dead many years, having left two sons Francis & Thomas his heirs. That Francis has since died a minor & without issue, and Thomas married & has since died leaving a widow Elizabeth Bracey to whom I am informed he devised his estate.  
[26 May 1830.]  
Ann Lewis

I Stephen Sikes of Deep Creek in Norfolk County, now sixty nine years old, do hereby certify that I knew Major Thomas Bressie dec'd late a resident of this County, who was an officer in the revolutionary war. I know that he had command of a minute company at the time that Lord Dunmore came to Norfolk (1775) and afterwards he was appointed a Captain in the Army and he raised his quota of men. I know that he was in command & in service as a Captain at Portsmouth at the time of the surrender at York-town [19 Oct 1781] – and that he was in a Battalion or regiment under the command of Major Wells, who was the only field officer in that regiment. I know that I was drafted as a Militiaman & was placed in Captain Bressie company to proceed to the siege of York and on the march Bressie acted as a Major & Wells as Colonel. But I do not know that Bressie was commissioned as a major, although he held the title ever afterwards as long as he lived. I was discharged on the return of Wells' regiment which did not reach York before it was ordered back to Portsmouth to level the fortifications at that place. I believe that Major Bressie continued in service to the end of the war. I know that he was always considered as an officer who had served to the end of the war.

Witness my hand 6th [July 1830]

*Stephen Sikes*

NOTE: Only the most significant of the 145 pages in the federal pension file are transcribed here.

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Addendum to Thomas Bressie R12763

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. 24 November 2023.

[From [Virginia Half-Pay pension records on fold3.com](#). Many documents in the 131-page file provided no additional information and were not transcribed.]

The Board moreover taking under their consideration the repeated orders of his Excellency for the second Virginia Regiment to march to join the grand Army, & for the officers belonging to the said Regiment to make returns of their enlistments in order that their commissions might issue, and notwithstanding such orders it appears that the officers in many instances have failed to make any returns, & others have recruited only part of their quotas, – they do advise the Governor to proceed to the issuing commissions upon such reviews & other documents as are now before the Board, in order that the said regiment may march to head quarters without delay, which his Excellency did in manner following –

Colonel	Date	Lieutenant Colonel	Date	Major	Date
Gregory Smith	June 23 1777	Charles Dabney [R13624]		John Lee [VAS867]	July 1 <sup>st</sup> 1778

Captains . . . . .	Dates	First Lieutenants. . . . .	Dates
. . . . .	1777	. . . . .	1777
James Quarles [R17254] . . . . .	January 4	John K. Davis. . . . .	February 26
Philip Taliaferro [VAS4643] . . . . .	7	Thomas Minor [W5374]. . . . .	27
Thomas Bressie . . . . .	8	John Dudley. . . . .	Sept'r 22
Henry Garnet [Henry Garnett R14340] . . . . .	February 12	Augustine Tabb [Augustin Tabb1 R18331] . . . . .	October 3
Peter Bernard [R19356] . . . . .	April 14	Machen Boswell [R19364]. . . . .	6
Benjamin Spiller [VAS4610] . . . . .	May 9	John Hudson [R15350] . . . . .	Nov'r 17
Henry Dudley [R13891]. . . . .	Sept'r 1	. . . . .	1778
. . . . .		Robert Lovell. . . . .	March 6
John Lewis [BLWt1864-300]. . . . .	Nov'r 1	William Long. . . . .	7

Second Lieutenants . . . . .	Dates	Ensigns . . . . .	Dates
. . . . .	1777	. . . . .	1777
James Moody [VAS2921] . . . . .	January 1	Thomas Boush . . . . .	March 31
Richard Hogg. . . . .	June 26	John Fleet [R14208]. . . . .	August 31
William Lawson. . . . .	September 7	Gideon Flournoy . . . . .	Sept'r 1
Thomas Ransone [R17293] . . . . .	October 6	Isaac Hoomes. . . . .	2
David Bellew . . . . .	8	John Hardyman [R14719] . . . . .	3
John McElhany [R16313] . . . . .	9	John May. . . . .	4
Nathaniel Welch [R18894]. . . . .		Benjamin Edmondson [R13953] . . . . .	22
. . . . .		Levin Walker . . . . .	December 18

And whereas it appears to be absolutely necessary, upon the march of the aforesaid Regiment to call in militia for the protection and defence of this garrison, public stores, magazines, public Treasury &c the Board do further advise the Governor to call in one division of militia from each of the Counties of New Kent & Surry to do duty at this post, to be relieved once a fortnight by an equal number of militia from other adjacent Counties

Executive Department/ Richmond Va. September 24<sup>th</sup> 1845

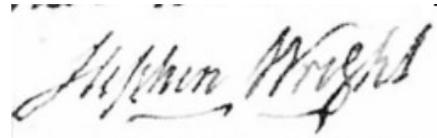
I do hereby certify that the foregoing is truly copied from the Journal of Council of March 19<sup>th</sup> 1778.

Wm. H. Richardson, Secy. Com[monweal]th

The affidavit of Col. Stephen Wright [R11907], of the Borough of Norfolk, taken on the 26th day of January in the year 1835, at the house of the said Wright, before Merit Jordan a Notary Public, in and for the County of Norfolk in the State of Virginia by Lawful authority duly commissioned and qualified. This affiant having first sworn, deposeth and saith—

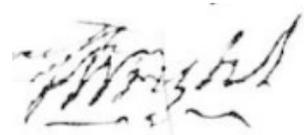
That he was well acquainted with Major Thomas Bressie, late of the County of Norfolk, and who commanded a Battalion from Norfolk County, in which he the deponent served as an Ensign and which was ordered to York Town to aid the besiegers during the siege of that place [28 Sep - 19 Oct 1781], and which proceeded as far as Mackie's Mills in the County of Isle of Wight, when the order was countermanded, and the Battalion returned to Portsmouth Va. The surrender of Cornwallis took place about that time.

Shortly after the return of the Battalion to Portsmouth a part of it was discharged, and a part remained in service attached to the regiment commanded by Col. Dabney – which Battalion was one of drafted Militia. Deponent cannot say, whether Major Bressie was a militia or Continental Officer, but from what he has heard, he believes he was a continental Officer. And further he saith not.



The affidavit of Colonel Stephen Wright taken this 24<sup>th</sup> day of November 1845 serving the service of Captain Thomas Bressie

The affiant Stephen Wright being sworn on the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God deposeth & saith. That he was well acquainted with Captain Thomas Bressie, who served in the War of the Revolution. That he was reputed to be an officer in the Continental or State service, and some short time before the surrender of York Town, Captain Thomas Bressie, was placed in command of a Battalion which was ordered to York, and the said Battalion proceeded on the march as far as Mackies Mills which were then so called, and now called Chuckatuck Mill, and the Battalion was ordered back to Portsmouth to level the works which the enemy had left, and to claim the town, and after most of the Battalion were discharged. I was an officer in the said Battalion being an ensign in a company commanded by Captain [Charles] Conner. After this I went to sea and I was taken a prisoner afterward at sea. I have no doubt that the said Captain Thomas Bressie served in the Virginia State line, upon Continental establishment or in the Continental line. I regarded Capt Thomas Bressie as a very good officer, as he knew more of military matters than any of us. What other service he was engaged in after the discharge of the Battalion as above mentioned I cannot say as I went to Sea. From the military knowledge displayed by Captain Thomas Bressie, he must have been long in the service. After the Battalion had proceeded to Mackies Mills on their way to cross James River to go to York, the enemy had evacuated Portsmouth, in consequence of which the Battalion was ordered back to Portsmouth.



Washington Jany 5<sup>th</sup> 1850

Sir [James L. Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions] In behalf of James Murdaugh Esq Attorney in fact, for Lewis Cason legal representative of Thomas Bressie dec'd. who was an officer in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of the Virginia State line troops, in the war of the revolution holding the rank of Captain, I respectfully ask your consideration of his claim to half pay, under the act of the 5<sup>th</sup> July 1832, upon the additional evidence I shall refer to. The following is a statement of the Case.

Thomas Bressie was commissioned a Captain as early as 1776, to Command a company in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment in the Virginia State line. In 1777 this regiment then under the Command of Col. Brent was

ordered to the North to do service with the "grand army," where it remained until the latter part of the year 1779. The Pay Rolls of this regiment for that year (79) to be found in the Pension office, in a book marked on the back "Virginia Pay Rolls 2<sup>nd</sup> Va. State regiment," do show that Captain Thomas Bressie was in Command of his Company in the month of August 1778. His Roll was regularly made out in his name for that month, but signed by Captain James Moody [VAS4032] The the number of men in it at that time, were only 23 all told. It also appears by reference to these Pay Rolls, that no roll for Captain Bressie's Company was made and in his name for the following month, September; but by reference to Captain Moody's roll for that month, it will be seen, that the 23 men who comprised Captain B's Company in August, are named and numbered on Captain Moodys roll in September. Here then, this fact is most clearly established, that Bressie's Company, that from various causes had been so reduced as to number in August (only 23 men) was, in September Consolidated with Capt Moody's Company. The enquiry then is, how did the consolidation of Bressie's Company into Moodys effect Captain Bressie. Surely but in one way and that not injuriously. For at the moment his Company was Consolidated with Moody, he as a matter of course, and in accordance with the law, became a supernumerry [sic: supernumerary] officer. Now the act of the Va. legislation passed in May 1779 promissing half pay &c especially provides, and promisses that remuneration, to all officers who by reduction of their regiments shall become supernumerry, and who did not refuse to enter into service again if required so to do. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Va. Regiment when it march to the north to join the "grand Army" Contained eight Companies. (See exhibit marked K) It has been shown that the Company Commanded in August '79 by Captain Bressie was consolidated with Captain Moodys in September, which reduced the number of the Companies to seven, if not below. [The rest of the letter not transcribed.]

R. W. Young