

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of William McMaster R21675

fn23SC

Transcribed by Will Graves

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[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Also, the handwriting of the original scribes often lends itself to varying interpretations. Users of this database are urged to view the original and to make their own decision as to how to decipher what the original scribe actually wrote. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original.]

The State of Alabama, County of Macon

On this 24th day of April A.D. 1850 in person came before me W. B. Owsley a Justice of the Peace in and for said County Susannah T. Thornton wife of Landford Thornton of the County of Macon and State of Alabama who being duly sworn deposeth and saith that her and her sister Martha B. Thornton, wife of Jonathan Thornton of the County of Russell and said State, are the only children raised by William McMaster late of Abbeville District in the State of South Carolina deceased – and that affiant in behalf of herself and sister and as the legal and proper heirs of their Father now makes application to the Government of the United States for a Pension for the services rendered by the said William McMaster in the defense of his Country during the revolutionary Struggle for Liberty – affiant here states upon information which she verily believes to be true she having received the same from her Father William McMaster, who was at all times regarded and esteemed by his neighbors and acquaintances to be a man of strict truth and which statements were generally credited in the neighborhood in which he resided. That her Father William McMaster was born in Ireland – that he came to this Country with his parents at the age of thirteen years – that he entered the War as a volunteer at the age of sixteen years and remained in the service of the Country of his adoption during the nearly the whole of the Seven Years that the same continued – that he served as a private for himself and not as a substitute for another – during a part of the time he served on foot but the most of the time with the light horse Companies – during the time he thus served he resided in the State of South Carolina, Abbeville District – that his residence was near the Savannah River about twenty miles South of Abbeville Court House – the nearest Towns to the same were Vienna and Petersburg -- at which residence he died about the year 1824. That he served as a volunteer principally in said State of South Carolina to nearly the close of the War-- was in eleven General engagements besides skirmishes she cannot at this late period state the several battles, or the order in which they occurred, or who commanded at each but agreeable to her recollection a portion of which was forcibly impressed upon her mind by the relation of her Father – and seems now at times to be fresh upon her memory. She states that he was in the following engagements – the Battle of King's Mountain and under the command of Colonel Williamson¹ -- some of the other officers were Cleveland [Benjamin Cleveland] Sevier [John Sevier] & Shelby [Isaac Shelby] – a British officer Ferguson [Patrick Ferguson] was killed at this engagement Hanging Rock – she thinks was under command of Colonel Sumpter [sic, Thomas Sumter] Black Stocks [sic, Blackstocks] – Sumter command Kettle Creek Siege of Augusta Eutaw Springs Ninety Six was under the command of Colonel Pickens [Andrew Pickens] -- she recollects having learned from her Father that he went over from Carolina to Augusta under the command of Colonel Pickens to aid at the siege of Augusta – where Brown [Thomas “Burnt foot” Brown] commanded the British – at Beaufort she thinks her Father was under Sumter her recollection is that he was also in the Battle at Cowpens and Briar Creek – and in the engagement near Cambridge

1 Andrew Williamson was not at the battle of King's Mountain. That battle occurred on October 7, 1780, by which date Williamson had surrendered and taken protection from the British. It is possible that this is a reference to Col. James Williams (1740-1780) who was one of the commanders at King's Mountain and who died on October 8, 1780 from wounds suffered at the battle of King's Mountain.

not far from Ninety Six – in which her father was wounded by a gun shot in the left hip – in this engagement the Americans were defeated – her Father though wounded made his escape from the British – but was taken prisoner next day near Roper's Mills – by the British officer Cunningham and was taken by the British to Ninety Six and put in charge of Colonel Cruger [John Harris Cruger] who commanded the Garrison at Ninety Six – where he was treated by the British surgeon – and subsequently returned to his mother upon furlough the year the war ended – affiant also recollects that her Father was for some time under the command of Colonel McCall [James McCall] and Colonel Anderson [Robert Anderson]. She has often learned from him that he lost all his property or nearly so while engaged in the service of his country – and that he never received one cent for the property lost – or one cent as a Pension or annuity and anyway whatever neither had he made any application or a pension – she has some recollection of hearing that he received from the Government of Carolina some provision of pavement or paper showing that the Government was [illegible word] him – specifying a small portion of his services but from which he did not realize anything – at this late period affiant is unable to procure any living witnesses as to the services rendered by her Father. She now states that she is fully convinced that her Father rendered valuable service to the Country-- that in the rendition of that service he was rendered a cripple for life and neither him nor his children have received therefore any pecuniary consideration – she admits that she has talked for some years of making application for a Pension on account of the services rendered by him and when she first thought of doing so she believes she could have produced living witnesses who would have attested to the truth of most of this Statement she was however then as she admits in better circumstances pecuniarily [sic] than at this time, owing to misfortune or other causes not necessarily hereto relevant she now finds herself and husband at an advanced age – poor and surrounded by a large family of children – who from their poverty – they are raising without the means at hand to improve their minds in that manner which the children of a republic like ours should be improved. She feels assured that were her Father in life and to make the statements and showing which she here presents that he would receive from the Government full compensation for all his services she admits the only record proof which she is enabled to produce is from the Comptroller's office of the State of South Carolina – which is forwarded herewith she at the same time would suggest that from the imperfect state of the records of Carolina – upon the showing which she here presents – this application will not be limited – and judged of alone by that small showing of service under Col Anderson. She further suggests that as Justice has not been meted out to her Father that his services should not go unrewarded – and even at this late period – that his children who are now in a situation which requires aid may receive the same benefits which would have been conferred upon him were he in life – with full confidence in the merits of her application affiant hesitates to add any thing further save the hope that the application may meet with that favor which it merits [&] demands.

Sworn to and subscribed before me the 24th day of April 1850.

S/ W. B. Owsley, J. P.

S/ Susannah T. Thornton

I do certify that I was well acquainted with William McMaster a Revolutionary Character of Abbeville District -- South Carolina, often heard my Father and Mother talk of him, as such, that he was wounded in the service, and I felt the Bullet lodged in his groin, said to be received in the Revolutionary war, McMaster said so, my Father Isaac Matthews said so, That my Father was present when McMaster received it, and waited known him when wounded William McMaster was married to a Miss Townes, and they had two daughters, I think their names was Martha and Susannah they both married 2 brothers by the name of Thornton, and moved to the State of Alabama I believe them to be the true representatives of William McMaster, according to the laws of the United States they are entitled to their father's pension. Certified by S/ Joseph Calhoun Matthews, of Abbeville District South Carolina Elder of the Presbyterian Church at Hopewell
13th of April 1850 Abbeville District South Carolina