

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Thomas Hunton R44

f24VA¹

Transcribed by Will Graves

5/24/14

[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.]

To the Governor of Virginia

Your petitioners (the heirs and legal representatives of Thomas Hunton deceased late of the County of Middlesex and formerly of Lancaster []) respectfully state

That the said Hunton as your petitioners have been informed and verily believes entered the service of the State and belonged to heard Navy during the war of the revolution and at a very early period –

The children and grandchildren of the said Hunton have no personal knowledge of the continued Services of their deceased father but have been under the full impression that their ancestor was in the Navy of Virginia, in and during the revolutionary war, they are strengthened in their belief of the fact from the circumstance of some few of the family having a personal knowledge of the service itself performed by the said Hunton but how long the service continued they are unable to say: – the circumstance of Thomas Hunton being in the service in various grades, and rank, is believed by each member of the family, – His services in his lifetime have been spoken of by himself and has been a matter of tradition from the oldest to the youngest members of his family.

The services of Thomas Hunton could a few years ago have been abundantly proven by an officer who was with him in service (as your petitioners have been informed & have good reason to believe) but unexpectedly and just before application was made for the testimony of a valued and highly respectable citizen, he died had the testimony above alluded to been obtained, it would doubtless have been complete in all its parts and coming from as respectable a source more would hardly have been required.

The testimony above alluded to is referred to in the affidavit of Messrs. W. Little and Galagher here with filed marked A.

The affidavit of David Henderson who was a midshipmen in the Navy is filed which proves that the said Hudson was a Seaman in the Navy and marked B.

The affidavit of Thomas Newton Lawson of the County of Lancaster is also filed with this petition as part of the testimony accompanying it – which will show that the said Hunton was promoted to a midshipmen – Marked C.

Other testimony proving service and to a higher grade (Lieutenant) is also filed marked D.

All of which is most respectfully submitted to his Excellency and the proportion of land

¹ VA Half Pay VA Sea Service

bounty allowed a Lieutenant of the Navy is respectfully solicited and in duty bound will ever pray.

S/ Susan Hunton

I William Little of the County of Jefferson and State of Virginia do hereby certify that Nathaniel Craighill² late of the County aforesaid did state in my presence a short time previous to his death (which took place in September last) that he was well acquainted with Lieutenant Thomas Hunton in the early part of his life, that he commanded on board of one of the state vessels of the Navy of Virginia during the war of the revolution and that he continued in that service for three years and upwards.

Given under my hand and seal this 23rd day of July 1832

S/ W. Little

I David Henderson of the town of Fredericksburg to state upon oath to the best of my knowledge and belief that Thomas Hunton and entered in the service of Virginia at an early period of the War of the Revolution, he was a Seaman on board of the ship *Dragon*,³ as it will fully appear from the book which I kept whilst I was on board the ship whilst under the command of Captain Calendor [Eleazer Callender]⁴. It would appear as if the said Hunton entered on board that vessel in 1777 and is charged with having received several articles between 15th April and 26 September inclusive amounting in value to £17.8. –

I further certify that the said Hunton was from the Northern Neck of Virginia – perhaps Lancaster – Given under my hand this first March 1834

S/ David Henderson

The affidavit of Thomas N Lawson of Lancaster County State of Virginia aged 70 years and upwards being first duly sworn, deposes and saith – That he was personally acquainted with Thomas Hunton deceased who was born and raised in said County but several years after he had obtained the age of manhood moved to the County of Middlesex in said State where he the said Hunton resided until his death – This affiant further states that the said Hunton was raised within a few miles of where he lived. That he entered in the naval service in the war of the Revolution and was promoted to the rank of midshipmen in the Navy at a very early period of the war.

This affiant saw him in service on board the *Page* Galley as well as he recollects and

² This man's name appears as Nathaniel Cragle in other documents in this file.

³ <http://www.awiatsea.com/sn/VA/Dragon%20Virginia%20Navy%20Ship-Galley%20%5bCallender%20Markham%20Singleton%20Travis%20Chandler%20Joel%5d.html>

⁴

CALLENDER, ELEAZER [ELIEZER] VA Captain, Virginia Navy: Eleazer (Eliezer) Callender entered service in 1775. [Stewart, 160] He was appointed, by the Committee of Safety, as a Captain in the Virginia Navy on 1 April 1776 and assigned to the second cruiser to be built on the Rappahannock River. Captain Green was to be his first mate. [Stewart, 12n] On 17 June 1776 he was assigned to the Virginia Navy Sloop *Defiance*. On 19 August 1776 he was ordered to sail down the Rappahannock River to Hobbs Hole. On 12 September 1776 he was ordered to transport troops to New York. [NOAR, 47] Between then and October 1776 he left the *Defiance*. [Stewart, 17] He later commanded the *Dragon*. He lived in Fredericksburg after the war. On 12 November 1791 he petitioned the Virginia House of Delegates for compensation for a valuable horse lost in the service. He was an original member of the Virginia Society of the Cincinnati. [Stewart, 160] <http://www.awiatsea.com/Officers/Officers%20C.html>

knows that said Hunton was then regarded as a Midshipmen in the Navy; he was under Captain Markham [perhaps James Markham]⁵ of the Virginia State Navy and to the best of this affiant's belief it was in the early part of the year 1777. In 1778 this affiant left the country and therefore speaks with a degree of certainty in saying that it was in 1777 that he saw and conversed with said Thomas Hunton while on board the galley as before said in the foregoing part of this affidavit. This affiant left the country soon after he saw said Hunton and consequently cannot say positively how long the said Hunton was in actual service, but from his known acquaintance with Captain Markham it is very probable he was sometime – He was a meritorious young officer and never cashiered or dismissed the Service, that he ever heard of and believes that no such imputation was ever made or fall of by any persons who were acquainted with the said Hunton.

He was a man of gentlemanly deportment, pure honesty and strict integrity whose character was unimpeached and unimpeachable.

And further this affiant saith not.

S/ Thomas N. Lawson

[Attested in Lancaster County Virginia March 13th, 35]

Report on the claim of the heirs of Thomas Hunton – Lieutenant in the State Navy for bounty land for his services

To the Governor

Sir,

The facts which have been proved by the claimants, by the testimony of living witnesses, are as follows – William Little has stated that he heard Nathaniel Craighill say a short time before his death (which took place in September last) that he was well acquainted with Lieutenant Thomas Hunton, in the early part of his life, that he commanded one of the State vessels of the Navy of Virginia during the war of the revolution, and that he remained in that service for three years and upwards (see the affidavit of William Little).

David Henderson Midshipman & clerk of the ship *Dragon*, has stated – that Thomas Hunton entered the service of Virginia early in the war (sometime in 1777) on board the *Dragon*, while she was under the command of Captain Callender – that he the said Hunton was a Seaman – and was charged with sundry articles furnished to him between April 15 and September 26 in the year 1777 amounting to £17.8 and that he was from the Northern Neck of Virginia (see David Henderson's affidavit)

Thomas A. Lawson [sic] has stated that the said Hunton was raised in a few miles of the place where the witness lived – that he entered service in the Navy, & was promoted midshipman, at an early period of the war – The witness saw him in service on board the *Page* Galley (as well as he recollects) and knows that he was there regarded as a midshipmen in the

⁵ MARKHAM, JAMES VA Captain, Virginia Navy: On 1 April 1776 the Virginia Committee of Safety appointed James Markham as a Captain in the Virginia Navy and assigned him to the second galley building in the Rappahannock River. This was the galley that eventually was named the *Page*. [NDAR, "Minutes of the Virginia Committee of Safety," IV, 621. Note: Markham is not to be confused with John Marsden, as Stewart, *Virginia's Navy*, 12note apparently does.] On 20 July 1776 by the Virginia Council of Safety. Issued commissions to galley *Page*: James Markham, Captain, John Lurty, First Lieutenant, Henry Lightbourn, Second Lieutenant. [NDAR, "Journal of the Virginia Council of Safety," V, 1164 and notes] Dates of active service 20 July.
<http://www.awiatsea.com/Officers/Officers%20M.html>

Navy – That he was under Captain Markham, and the witness thinks it was in 1777. The witness left the Country in the year 1778, and does not say positively, how long the said Hunton was in actual service, that he never was cashiered or dismissed the service &c (see the affidavit of Thomas A. Lawson).

It appears from an Navy Journal pages 170 & 201, that sundry orders were made respecting Thomas Hunton – amongst others, that money was advanced to him for the purpose of recruiting for the Navy – and that a letter was written to him by the Navy Board page 187 of the journal. These entries in the Navy Journal extend from February 4 to April 2nd, 1777. I have not seen any other entry in any of the Navy Journals respecting the said Hunton.

I have in my possession a copy of "a list of officers & Sigmund of the State Navy, belonging to the ship *Dragon* – Captain Eleazer Callender" – taken from the books of that vessel, but not certified by D. Henderson, who has these books, in his possession. This list is believed to be correct. The name of Thomas Hunton, a Seaman appears on it, with the following remarks attached to it – viz.: – "enlisted June 5 1777 – (by which was meant, I presume, the time of his going on board the *Dragon*) – September 1, 1777 – discharged."

The name of Thomas Hunter, a Seaman of the state Navy, appears on the Army register of the State line. It is possible, that Thomas Hunton was here meant.

Neither Thomas Hunter, nor Thomas Hunton, has received bounty land as a Seaman &c none of the records, or documents of the Navy, contain (so far as I know) any information or proof of the services of Thomas Hunton as Midshipman, or Lieutenant in the Navy. The above is a full statement of all of the facts, which have come to my knowledge, touching this claim

respectfully submitted

John H Smith, Commissioner &c

August 25, 1845 Executive Department Richmond Virginia

December 11, 1850

I hereby certify that the foregoing are true copies of papers on file in this Department.

S/ William H Richardson, Secretary, clerk

[p 11]

State of Virginia Lancaster County

This 22nd day of October 1850 before me Richard B Mitchell a Justice of the Peace in and for the County aforesaid personally appeared Thomas Jackson who being first duly sworn according to law doth state that he is 94 years of age and that he served in the Revolutionary War and that he personally knew Thomas Hunton, a Lieutenant in the Navy in the fleet commanded by Captain Markham and believe he served to the end of the war. And further this deponent saith not.

S/ Thomas Jackson, X his mark

[p 12: Amos Nicken gave testimony on September 16, 1850 stating that he saw Thomas Hunton dressed as a naval officer and wearing a sword during the revolutionary war and assumed he was a naval officer; the witness was of the impression that Hunton served to the end of the war; that Hunton died about the year 1792 in Middlesex County Virginia leaving [1] Polly B Hunton, who intermarried with John Gibson and who is since dead leaving one child Albert Gibson her only heir at law –[2] Frances Hunton who intermarried with James Brent, she has died leaving 2 children William Brent and Elizabeth Brent who has now married with William Porter who are her only heirs at law – [3] Judith M Hunton who died unmarried and without issue – [4] Elizabeth W who intermarried with McCarty in the County of Richmond and State of Virginia,

she is since dead and left one child John McCarty who has also died leaving no issue – [5] Thomas Y. Hunton, now dead leaving Susan who died unmarried and without issue, Jane F. who intermarried with William W Brown; that she has since died leaving four children Susan Jane, Ann Frances, Harriett Lee & Judith Elizabeth her only heirs at law – & [6] Thomas H Hunton. He signed his affidavit with his mark.]

[p 14: Copy of a court order dated January 20, 1851 issued in Lancaster County court stating that Thomas Hunton a Lieutenant in the Virginia state Navy died August 17, 1792.]

[From [bounty land records in the Library of Virginia](#)] 50-page file containing the originals of the documents transcribed above. Many of the documents, however, have been posted either in split images or are otherwise illegible as posted.]