

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Elisha Griffith S10192

MD

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 11 Jan 2015.

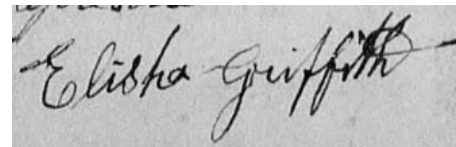
Virginia }
Harrison County }

On the 22 day of August 1832 personally appeared in open Court before Wm. Martin Wm. S Rogers Samuel Kimble Jacob Coplin & Joseph Johnson The Court of Harrison County now sitting Elisha Griffith of Harrison County and state of Virginia aged 82 years who being first duly sworn doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832

That he was drafted in a company commanded by the following named officers Ralph Hillery Capt., Thomas Kirk Lieut, Charles Busey Ensign, that he joined the Regiment at Frederick Town Maryland the Place of his residece that said regiment was under the command of Col. Charles Betty, Lieut. Col. William Betty, Thomas Johnson Brigadier General, who was afterwards Governor of the State of Maryland [21 Mar 1777 - 12 Nov 1779]. From Frederick Town he marched to Little York, in the State of Pennsylvania. From thence to Lancaster. Thence to Philadelphia at which place they were armed with Muskets From thence they Marced to Trenton Thence to Baskan Ridge [sic: Basking Ridge] where they went into winter quarters In March Following he was detailed with a small party under Col. Johnson or Col. Betty marched to Piscataway Bottom near New Brunswick where they were met by the enemy and a Skirmish took Place [Mar 1777] in which several of the Americans were killed and others wounded among the latter he recollects to have seen Capt. Thruston a Virginia officer carried from the field the Americans retreated to there quarters at Baskan Ridge From thence they marched to Frederick Town Maryland where he was discharged orally by Col. Betty having served two months and twenty days he having entered the service on the 25 day of December 1776 and was discharged on the 15th of March following.

Sometime after the time not now recolected he again volunteered his servises in a company under the command of Capt. Ralph Hillory, Lieut Elisha Bell, Ensign Joseph Madden, From Frederick Town the company was ordered to Baltimore but before there arrival there the order was countermanded and the company returned to Frederick Town where he continued in the service untill the close of the War he was frequently engaged in guarding Prisoners and the Magazine he was one of the guard who received the prisoners at Nolans Ferry [sic: Nolands Ferry] after the surrender of Corn Wallis [sic: Cornwallis, 19 Oct 1777] marched them to Frederick Town where he continued as a guard untill discharged he did not receive a written discharge but was discharged orally by his Captain, the company to which he belonged was caled the Select Company or minute men. He confident he served in all over two years From Frederick County he moved to Monongalia County Virginia thence to Harrison County Va. where he now resides

That he has no documentary evidece which go to prove the above services nor does he know any living witness who can testify to the fact He is known to Thomas Knots, Jesse Martin, Benjamin Brice Esq'r. and various other gentlemen residing in his neighborhood to whom reference may be had. He hereby relinquishes every claim 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



[Certified for the court by Jacob Coplin.]

State of Virginia
Harrison County

Elisha Griffith personally appeared before me the subscriber one of the commonwealth justices of the peace for the county & state aforesaid who being sworn saith that in consequence of age and loss of memory together with great length of time which has elapsed since he was a soldier in the Revolutionary he is unable to state the time when he entered the service the last time but he feels confident & verily believes that he did serve a period of more than two years

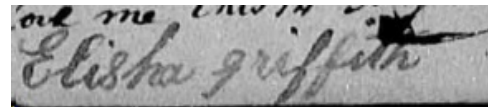
Given under our hands this 10 day of Dec'r. 1832

Jacob Coplin J.P.

Harrison County Virginia

The amended Declaration of Elisha Griffith who being sworn saith That he commenced his second tour of duty under Capt Ralph Hillory in September 1779 Marched in the direction of Baltimore as stated in his former Declaration returned to Frederick Town and was discharged having served six months. In Aprile Following he volunteered again in same Company was commanded by same officer was Stationed at Frederick Town and employed in guarding the Magazine and the prisoners at said place for the term of six months. In the Spring of 1781 He volunteered again was commanded by same officers and Stationed at Frederick Town and employed as before mentiond and was discharged at the expiration of six months

In the Spring of 1782 He again volunteered under the command of the aforesaid Capt Hillory was stationd at Frederick Town and employed as before mentioned untill the surrender of Corn Wallis was one of the guard to receive the prisoners at Noland's Ferry marched with them to Frederick Town where he continued to guard them untill the close of the war. In the several tours above mentioned he was first sargent in Capt Hillorys company and performed the duties of s'd office which he forgot to mention in his former Declaration, he further states that the officers under whom he served were duly commissioned and regularly called into service and that he was not engaged in any civil pursuit during the period above mentioned. He further states that he was born in the County of Frederick and State of Maryland that he has not record of his age. Sworn & subscribed to before me this 14th Aug't 1833
Joseph Johnson J.P.

A rectangular stamp containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elisha Griffith". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Harrison County
State of Virginia

On this 4th day of December 1833 Personally appeared before me the subscriber a justice of the peace for the county aforesaid Elisha Griffith who being first sworn deposed & sayeth That Frederick Town was not his place of actual residence as appears in his first Declaration by misunderstanding between himself and draftsman. His actual residence was about ten miles distant from s'd place in Frederick County Md.

That in the three tours of six months service and the fourth tour (which he is confident was more than six months) mentioned in his amended declaration, his duties consisting chiefly in guarding prisoners and the magazine, he is unable to detail any incidents or circumstances attending them which are of public notoriety. The dates there given are from recollection only; and by the lapse of time and the failure of memory he cannot be as precise as he could wish. In speaking of entering on his tours of duty while he belonged to the select company he has usually called it Turning out or "volunteering." he remembers however that he felt himself bound to be ready on a short notice which notice was uniformly given when his services were required

Sworn & subscribed the day & year aforesaid

Joseph Johnson J.P.

Bridgeport Harrison County Va/ June the 16th 1834

Sir Mr. Elisha Griffith, an applicant, from this County, for a pension, whose declaration was suspended, for want of proof, as appears from your letter to Mr. J. J. Allen, now in the possession of Mr Griffith, has recently found out the residence of Osburn Hillery [Ausburn Hillary, pension application W8219], an important witness in his case, whose affidavit I have procured and herewith transmit to you at the request of Mr. Griffith. Osburn Hillery the above named witness is the brother of Capt. Ralph Hillery mentioned in the enclosed affidavit, under whom Griffith served.

Your attention, to his application, is now earnestly solicited, as we presume that this affidavit contains the testimony necessary, for the progression of his case

I have the honor to be/ Your Obed't. servant/ J. S. Horner

Fayette County } Ss.

Pennsylvania }

Before me the Subscriber a Justice of the peace in and for Fayette County Pennsylvania personally came Osbourn Hillery and being sworn according to law deposeth and saith that he is now seventy four years of age that he was a souldier in the Revelutonary army and commanded by Colo. Baker Johnston of the maryland line and that he knew Elisha Griffith or Griffin a resident of the County of Frederick in maryland previous to the Revelutionary war and that in the time of the Revelation he knew the said Griffith or Griffin to be a Serjent in Captain Ralph Hillerys company of the aforesaid Redgmt Commanded by Colo. Johnston – that it was the same year of the Battle of Trenton [26 Dec 1776] that deponant and said Griffith or Griffin was in the Battle of Bascon Ridge in New jersey [see endnote], – at the said Battle Colo. Johnston & Colo. Charles Bettey or Betty were with their Redgments and that during Battle of Bascon Ridge a Captain of the Virginia line was wounded in the right arm – and further deponant saith that Elisha Griffith or Griffin after his return to Frederick town maryland was under the command of Captn. Hillery and was one of the Gard at the Magazeen at Frederick town. That he was in the service ‘till after the surrender of Cornwallac that said Griffith or Griffin marched under Capt. Hillery to Nowlands ferry and returned with the prisoners to Frederick town assisted to gard them at Frederick town and further saith not Osburn hisXmark Hillery

Sworn & subscribed the 12th day of June 1834 before me Thos. Williams J.P.

[The following report is by US District Attorney Washington G. Singleton, who investigated hundreds of pension applicants from present West Virginia. For details see my appendix to the pension application of David W. Sleeth S6111. Singleton wrote “not Entitled” on the report, resulting in Griffith’s claim being rejected temporarily.]

Elisha Griffin – Applicant

on the 17th July Griffin gave the following narative. was born in Frederick Cty Maryland in the year 1750

that on the 25th of December 1776 several Batallions of Militia were raised in Frederick Town Md & marched to Philadelphia, thence to Trenton and thence to Bascin Ridge, he was s soldier in one of the Batallions commanded by Col. Charles Beatty. Ralph Hillory was his captain and he himself orderly Sergeant – Cant say whether the Batallion was volunteers or drafted – nor can he tell for what length of time they were called into service. they all went and returned together. – they were gone two months and twenty days.

About a year after the foregoing service a company of volunteers sixty odd in number was raised in Frederick Cty Md. for six months. the same Ralph Hillory was captain – and himself orderly Sergeant – they were called minute men, – it was their duty & such were their orders – to keep themselves ready to march at a moments warning – Gun in order & three days provisions in their knapsacks. – we all remained at our respective homes – on one occasion the company was ordered to Balto. to repel the British said to be there – they set out on the march but were very soon ordered back, was gone only 3 or 4 days – the company was after this some few days guarding prissoners at Frederick Town. dont know

what prisoners they were, nor how many days they were in this service but not many.

After the expiration of the last mentioned term he volunteered again under the same Captain for six months – the company went to Nolens Ferry and received Cornwallis' prisoners and guarded them to Frederick town – was in this service about one months, and thus ended his services – Col. Johnson wrote his declaration told him the same [four illegible words]. he now tells. made no contract with Johnson. In testimony that the forgoing statement contains the truth I hereto subscribe my name. July 17 1834.

Elisha Griffith

Witness/ N. Goff [Nathan Goff]

A true copy/ W. G Singleton [three illegible words]

Land Office, Annapolis, January 4th 1836

I hereby Certify, that it appears by an Enrolment remaining in this Office, of Captain Ralph Hilleary's Company, Select Militia, dated 26th July 1781, – That the name of Elisha Griffith, appears upon the roll of said Company, to have been appointed the first Sergeant, and to have served in the Select Militia,
George G. Brewer/ Reg'r. Land Off. U. S.

NOTES:

Initial doubts about Griffith's claim may have resulted from the fact that militia service was seldom for more than a few months at a time.

The file contains a statement in support of Griffith's claim dated 30 Sep 1833 and signed by five of his neighbors.

I could find no reference to a battle at Basking Ridge NJ.

Griffith's pension was eventually restored. A letter from Joseph Johnson dated 25 July 1838 requests James L. Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions, to direct the regional pension agent to pay the pension. In 1843, through Nathan Goff as attorney, the heirs collected an amount still due.