

A DOUBLE MASON LINE

From

Major John Mason

Deputy Governor of Connecticut

To

New-Cadet John Mason Kemper

West Point 1931

State of Connecticut)
County of New Haven } SS

Personally appeared Donald Lines Jacobus, genealogist,
of New Haven, Conn., who being sworn deposes and says:

That some time since he engaged in research on the Mason family for Mrs. Louis C. Bulkley of Shreveport, Louisiana, and that in the course of this work he found official records proving that Captain John Mason, (son of Major John Mason) served as a captain in King Philip's War; and also that after studying the records of several men named Elijah Mason who served in the Revolutionary War in Connecticut and Vermont, he was satisfied that two Revolutionary soldiers named Elijah Mason lived in Vermont, one of whom removed from Lebanon, Connecticut to Hartford, Vt.

(Signed) Donald Lines Jacobus

Signed and sworn by the said Jacobus this 8th day of April,
1932 before me

(Signed) Ruth R. Reich

Notary Public

(Notarial Seal)

The Mason Family line is traced for five generations in the New England Historic Genealogical Register (Volume 15) from Major John Mason¹ (circa 1600-1672), founder of the American family to Elijah⁵. Even thus far it is a very unusual record of continuous military and public service.

Major John Mason was a Lieutenant in the English army and saw service in the Netherlands during the siege of Bois le Duc in 1630. It has been frequently said that he fought "under Lord Fairfax", but that is impossible since Thomas Fairfax was at that date little older than John Mason and had not come into his title. That they served as companions in arms is more than possible, and the proof of their intimate association lies in the cordial letter written by Sir Thomas Fairfax in 1645 to John Mason in America, urging him to return to England and accept the commission of a major general in the Parliamentary army under command of Lord Fairfax.

This was fifteen years after John Mason had emigrated to America. He became a citizen of Dorchester, Massachusetts and a representative of the town in General Court, but about 1635 he removed to Windsor, Connecticut, with its first settlers. Major Mason was a recognized leader by virtue of his native gifts and military experience. The war with the Pequot Indians was a momentous crisis in the history of the infant colony, and Major Mason was the leader of the expedition which defeated the savages (1637). To commemorate this victory the State of Connecticut

erected a monument in 1889. It stands upon the crest of Pequot Hill, near the site of the Indian fort destroyed by the Connecticut troops, and is inscribed to "The Heroic Achievement of Major John Mason and his comrades",

Major Mason's first marriage is not of record nor the name of his wife, but their only child, a daughter (her name Isabella in one genealogy and Judith in another) was born at Windsor and married there John Bissel.

His second marriage (1640) was to Anne Peck, by whom he had seven children. Three were born at Windsor and with this little family he removed to Saybrook where he was soon placed in authority as Commandant of the Fort and a "Commissioner of the United Colonies." In Saybrook the four other children were born. Manifestly Major Mason never lost the pioneer spirit for, when he was about sixty years old, he made a final move to the young town of Norwich, where he became Deputy Governor of Connecticut and Major General of its fighting forces. There he died and his widow survived him but a short time.

The first John Mason was of commanding person as well as position, and is described as tall and portly and dignified in manner: "wise and prompt in planning, and energetic in executing, as a commander brave and self-reliant."

John Mason² (1646-1676) was the second son of Major Mason and worthily carried on the inheritance of public spirit and service. He lived in Norwich, represented the town in the colonial legislature for several terms and was a well-known colonial "Assistant" or Magistrate. He was commissioned Lieutenant in the forces of colony in 1672 and Captain in 1675, leading his company, in one of

the most famous encounters of King Philip's War - The Great Swamp Fight at Narragansett, December 19th, 1675. He received a mortal wound but lingered until September 18, 1676, when he died at New London.

Authentic record of Captain John Mason's military service has been difficult to trace, but through the careful researches of Mr. Donald Lines Jacobus, a genealogist of recognized accuracy and experience, the references have been dug out of a partially indexed volume of the Connecticut Colonial Records:

John Mason²(Jr.); Ensign, Norwich Trainband, May, 1669; Lieutenant of same, June 1672; Captain in command of Mohegans and Pequots, September, 1675; third in command of the army, November 1675, Deputy for Norwich, October 1672, October 1674, May 1675; Assistant, Connecticut Colony 1676; member of the Council of War, May 1676; Commissioner (Justice) for Norwich, 1672-1676.⁽¹⁾

Further proof of John²'s rank as captain is provided in the brief entry in New London County Court records (Vol. III, p. 94)⁽²⁾ "June 1677 Estate of "The Worshipful Captain Jno Mason² deceased was exhibited." (a)

Captain John² married Abigail Fitch, daughter of the Reverend James Fitch by his first wife, Abigail Whitefield. Since the reverend gentleman himself married into the Mason

(1) Connecticut Colonial Records, Vol. II, 107, 170, 181, 184, 192, 221, 236, 249, 250, 274, 284, 366, 386.

(2) Printed in History of Norwich, p. 147. (Registrar, Conn. Col. Dames)

(a) It has been the opinion of several historians that he would undoubtedly have followed in his father's footsteps but for his untimely death. He was already an Assistant and in "Council of War".

family by choosing for his second wife Priscilla Mason, own sister of Captain John², there is a tangle of step relationships and in-laws between the families, confusing but interesting, which does not affect the line we are attempting to follow.

The only son of John² and Abigail (Fitch) Mason was John³, who became a Captain also in Colonial service. His record is in the Register of the Society of Colonial Wars, but we have not available at the time of writing the exact references.

Captain John³ was twice married: (1) to his cousin Anne Mason, daughter of Major Samuel Mason of Stonington. He settled at Lebanon, Connecticut but removed to Stonington about 1703, after the birth of his first child John⁴. Five more children were born to the couple and from this point the well defined line of Johns carries on to the eighth generation, but the special object of this sketch is to outline the less well known line through Peleg Sanford Mason, the only child of Captain John³ and his second wife, Mrs. Ann (Sanford) Noyes, widow of Dr. James Noyes. She was the daughter of Governor Peleg Sanford of Rhode Island, for whom her Mason boy was named.

After his second marriage Captain John³ lived in New London and was an Indian agent and teacher. In this capacity he journeyed to England with Chief Mahomet, to gain for him recognition as the Grand Sachem of the Mohegans, and in London he died (1736), aged sixty three.

Peleg Sanford Mason⁴ (1720-1761) married Mary Stanton in 1742 and lived in Stonington for some time, but died in Lebanon. Their family of three sons and four daughters carried

the Mason connections into several other colonies, but through all their migrations they cherished a strong attachment to Connecticut.

The military record of Peleg Sanford Mason is given in Connecticut Colonial Records (Volume 10, p. 123):

October 1752. This Assembly do establish and confirm Mr. Peleg Sanford Mason to be Lieutenant of the North Company or trainband of the First Society in the town of Lebanon, and order that he be commissioned accordingly.

And in Volume 11, p. 20:

May 1757. This Assembly do establish and confirm Mr. Peleg Sanford Mason to be Captain of the North Company or trainband in the First Society in the town of Lebanon.

Of Peleg Sanford and Mary (Stanton) Mason's family of seven, the second son Elijah⁵ (1756-1833), born in Lebanon, was a mere child when his father died, but under the will⁽¹⁾ he had a share of the estate, outside the homestead and land left to his elder brother, Peleg Sanford Mason, Jr. The family tradition is that Elijah was the special charge of the oldest sister Anne, thirteen years his senior. She became the wife of Joel Marsh of the family who were long neighbors and friends of the Masons at Lebanon. When Elijah was about sixteen, a large section of the Marsh family, including Joel and Anne, migrated to Vermont and became settlers of Hartford "on the frontier". Though there is no documentary evidence that Elijah accompanied the party, it is highly probable that he did - it was an adventure to appeal to his youth and his subsequent moves show that he had the pioneering impulse of his ancestors. It is certain that a few years later (1778) he married

(1) Abstracts by Donald Lines Jacobus, with papers concerning settlements with heirs, and their receipts.

Mary Marsh of Hartford, Vermont.

Proof of the undoubted Revolutionary service of Elijah Mason has been complicated by the fact that two other Elijah Masons appear to have been in the service from Vermont. One of them, whose record is clearly traced, was all his life identified with the town of Pomfret and was thought to be from Connecticut; but his history fixes his birth-place in Watertown, Massachusetts (1754). He married in Connecticut but never lived there, nor does his life after the Revolution, according to his pension records, connect at any point with Elijah of Lebanon. The other Elijah Mason of Vermont is buried there*, while Elijah, son of Peleg, rests in the cemetery of Hiram, Portage County, Ohio**.

The confusion of identity in Revolutionary records is increased by the fact that the payrolls of Captain Joshua Hazen's company show an Elijah Mason serving as an officer and another as a private at the same time, but careful comparisons prove that the officer was Elijah of Pomfret and the private Elijah of Hartford***.

The Vermont Muster Rolls (p. 283, 295) show that Elijah Mason (son of Peleg) served under Abel Marsh in transport service prior to his tour of duty with Captain Hazen's Company in 1780, when it was called out on an alarm in a neighboring county.

Elijah's marriage with Mary Marsh starts the double Mason ancestry for the succeeding generations, for she was descended in a direct line from Daniel Mason^{2(a)} a brother of

(a) This line is well written up by Theodore West Mason (Lib. Cong. & N.E.H.G.S.) as well as by Chancellor Walworth.

* vide Secy. of State of Vermont. In New Haven Vt. 13 May 1818.

** Western Reserve Historical Society's recent snapshot of his tombstone.

*** See Mr. Jacobus' sworn statement, ante.

Captain John². From the records of Hartford (Vermont) it appears that Elijah and Mary (Marsh) Mason had six children - the number usually given is five, due to the early death of one of them. Whether they were all born in Vermont is uncertain but unimportant, since it is known that Elijah returned to Connecticut after the death of his brother Peleg in 1787* - probably in 1790, if the date of 1791 is correct for the birth of the last child. Other genealogies give the date as 1794, immediately after which the mother Mary Marsh Mason died, certainly in Lebanon.

The first bequest in Peleg Sanford Mason's will was "To my beloved brother Elijah my dwelling house and one half the farm I now live upon," and to the homestead Elijah and his family returned. When he was left a widower with five children, the oldest fifteen, the youngest in the cradle or barely out of it, he needed a woman's help. Early in 1796 he married Lucretia Greene, and the first child of her six was born the same year. The birth-place of each one is an index of the family migrations: not all are of record but the fifth child was born in Hartford, Vermont and the last quite probably in Hiram, Ohio.**

Elijah and Lucretia (Greene) Mason were the grandparents of Lucretia Rudolph Garfield, wife of the twentieth president of the United States, James Abram Garfield, through the marriage of their youngest daughter Arabella with Zeb. Rudolph. It is interesting to note that the oldest Garfield son*** married Belle

*Documents in settlement of estate copied by Donald Lines Jacobus

** Greene Genealogy

***This note, from Greene, taken in Saint Paul cannot now be verified as to the middle name.

(Hartford?) Mason, whose line of ancestry meets that of her husband in Elijah Mason, her great grandfather, through Roswell, of Elijah's first family by Mary Marsh.

In 1802 Elijah's first journey to Ohio was made, taking with him Roswell and Peleg and a third youth who was his nephew*. For a series of years he swung like a pendulum between Ohio, Vermont and possibly Connecticut, until he definitely settled on his Ohio property for the remainder of his life in 1815.

When the family removed to Ohio there were three little girls of the second brood and the two sons of the first, then about nineteen and seventeen years old.* The boys were not enamored of pioneer life, for they went back to Connecticut several times and to Vermont at least once. The trip to Vermont may have been the first one and included the entire household, for John the second son of Lucretia (Greene) Mason was born in Hartford in 1806. Her first son named Carnot was possibly born in Vermont also, for the history of Portage County, Ohio records that in the year 1804 Elijah Mason came there, harvested wheat he had previously planted and returned to Vermont, where he bought a farm.

Young Peleg Sanford Mason⁶ (1786-1825) preferred medicine to farming, but the adoption of a civil profession did not prevent him from carrying on the family tradition of army service. He was a surgeon in the 30th and 31st regiments of the regular army in the war of 1812, appointed as from Vermont in June, 1813 and honorably discharged in June, 1815.***

* Mason Tilden Hist. Portage Co.

** First wheat harvested in Ohio, ibid

***Heitman and War Department letters.

He married (1820) Rachel Wilson and two sons were born to them: George (1822) and John Sanford (1824-1897). The latter upheld the family record, was graduated from West Point in 1847, served in the Mexican War, received many brevet honors during the Civil War and rose through all grades in the regular army to be retired in 1888 as General. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

General John Sanford Mason⁷ married (first) Anne Worrall Judkins and (second) Mrs. Peter Wilson (nee Cornelia Keller). The son of the first marriage, John Sanford Mason, Jr. (1856-1891), was a West Point graduate, stationed at many Western posts and was killed in the Sioux Indian uprising in Dakota at Pine Ridge Agency.

Lieutenant John Sanford Mason, Jr.⁸ married (1879) Lucy Maude Ord, a daughter of General Edward Otho Cresap Ord and Mary Mercer Thompson. In her own right Mrs. Mason can claim a soldier ancestry of distinguished service and colonial fame.

The children of John Sanford Mason, Jr. and Lucy Maud Ord are: Mercer Mason, who married Colonel J. B. Kemper.

Anne Mason, who married Captain K. S. Gregory

Ruth Ord Mason, who married Colonel R. H. Dunlop

Thus is maintained the unbroken history of military careers, for in the person of Mercer Mason's son, John Mason Kemper, just entered upon the West Point roster, there will be handed on the family record of distinguished service that marks the name from John Mason¹ of England to John Mason Kemper⁹.

The history of Pomfret is a large new two volume affair names alphabetically arranged, and all known of each man given thereunder. The children of both Elijah and Marshall Mason are given on page 536. Elijah's were born between 1775 and 1789 all in a row and all right there in Pomfret. In 1783 Elijah (son of Elias) attained the rank of Captain of Militia and was thereafter known as Captain. He died in New York as before quoted.

Marshall Mason's (son of Elias) descendants remained in Pomfret until (births) 1824 - 1825, etc. One Julian Ovando Mason b. in Pomfret in 1824 died in Boston 1908; was a prominent builder, who built the Massachusetts State House in 1859.

Benjamin Franklin Mason another descendant born in Pomfret in 1804 d. 1871 was a noted portrait painter.

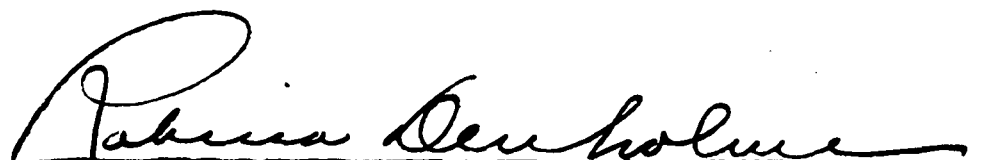
On page 535 Joel and Lucy Marsh, no dates, had children Sanford b. 1804 to Elvera b. 1818 so it is perfectly evident these are not the same people as those in Tucker's Hartford and the History of Portage County, Ohio, Green Genealogy, etc. Chancellor Walworth identifies them.

Pomfret was in the Province of New Hampshire

A Marshall Mason was married June 17, 1817 to Christian Bartholomew of P. by Joel Davis, Pastor.

Shreveport, La.
June 14, 1932.

I hereby certify that the foregoing pages constitute a true and correct copy of the original volume on file in the **Shreve** Memorial Library, Shreveport, La.


Notary Public in and for
Caddo Parish, Louisiana.

