

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Petition of George Willis VAS1919

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Transcribed by Will Graves

4/26/15

[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.]

[From [Digital Library of Virginia](#)] Matthews County Legislative Petitions

To the Honourable the Speaker and Gentlemen who compose the House of Delegates for the State of Virginia Assembled at the Capital in the City of Richmond on the 3 day of December 1789. The Petition of George Willis of the County of Matthews and State aforesaid most humbly represents: That your Petitioner sometime during our Last War with Britain, being a Soldier & one of the Regiment of Light Dragoons commanded by Col. George Balor [George Baylor] in the company of Capt. John Styth [John Stith?] being the Life Guard of his Excellency G. Washington, and being ordered to quarter in a Barn at old Herringtown [Baylor Massacre, September 22, 1778 at the Haring farm (Harring town) in Bergen County, NJ]¹, to the Northward with a number of others of our Regiment, on a certain Sunday night some years before Cornwallis' Capture at little York in this State; some hours after midnight, we were surprised, and the Barn Surrounded by about five hundred of the British. Orders were given aloud to kill us all, and spare none of the demon Rebels; in this dreadful predicament your Petitioner attempted an escape, in which attempt he was stabbed with different Bayonets by different Soldiers of the British as many as twelve different times, Your Petitioner was then stripped of his Clothes & left for dead. The day following; some of our Troops came to the Barn, and buried the dead; & those having the remains of Life was taken to a certain place & put under the Doctor's hands; the whole number as well as your Petitioner recollects was Four, which escaped this dreadful Massacre, (that was quartered in the Barn) under the hands of the Doctor your Petitioner remained about three months before he could walk a step without assistance; (after which he walked alone for many months with the utmost difficulty, being dreadfully wounded in his hips, your Petitioner was – Sometime afterwards discharged by Capt. Stith, who informed him that he had an allowance made him; & Directed your Petitioner to apply to the colonel of the County wherein your Petitioner lived, & he would inform your Petitioner how to obtain the allowance. Sir John Peyton being the colonel of the County, your Petitioner applied agreeable to instructions who informed that your Petitioner that half pay was allowed him during life & he would see that your Petitioner should have it, this Information & promise was all Sir John ever did for your Petitioner: your Petitioner after the death of Sir John applied to Col. John Page, the succeeding colonel who gave him the same information, & promise; but so it is that your Petitioner have never received one penny as yet: the afflictions of your Petitioner at present, which he Labours under from the reception of those Wounds, is almost inexpressible; it is most solemnly declared,

¹ <http://www.bergencountyhistory.org/Pages/baylormassacre.html>

& Affirmed, that your Petitioner Surce [scarce?] can get up when he is down at times; without assistance; and is Rendered utterly Incapable of supporting himself and your Petitioner most Humbly prays, ardently Prays; and Earnestly solicits, & Intreats That your Hon. House would take his case into your most serious consideration, & make such allowance as you shall in your Wisdom Judge fit, and as in Duty Bound your Petitioner Pays [prays] that you may in all your deliberations be directed by Unerring Wisdom

S/ George Willis



[William Buckner and Joseph Billups, Jr. gave an affidavit that they were acquainted with the veteran, believe him to be honest; believe that he served in the revolutionary war and that he is incapable of supporting himself. Their affidavit is dated November 29, 1798.]

[Reverse]

Willis's pension Petition
December 6, 1798
Claims
Reasonable
Reported

[Another file]

To the Honourable the Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Delegates of Virginia: the Petition of George Willis of the County of Matthews, most humbly represents that your Petitioner, in the course of the War between Britain and the United States of America; being one of the Life Guard of his Excellency General George Washington (deceased) under the command of Col. Baylor, in the company of Capt. John Stith, received a Number of Bodily wounds from the Enemy, which rendered your Petitioner entirely unable to support himself by Labor. The Particular circumstances of which have been more fully stated in a former Petition, to which your Petitioner begs leave to refer, in answer thereof your Petitioner received Sixty Dollars for his immediate relief, agreeable to an Act passed by your Hon. Body on the second of January 1799 for which relief your Petitioner makes his most grateful acknowledgments; Your Petitioner being informed he was referred to Congress for further Relief, made Application at their Last Session, but was rejected under the Act of Limitation; Your Petitioner begs leave to observe that Poverty and distress are still his Companions, and should he not find relief from some benevolent hand must come to extreme want and suffering, to your Honourable Body is your Petitioner advised as his last and only resort; to whom your Petitioner Humbly appeals, praying that you take his case into consideration, and place him on the List of Pensioners of this State; and make such Annual Provision for his support, as you shall in your Wisdom think his condition requires and your Petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray &c

S/ George Willis

[Reverse]
Willis' Petition
1800
December 4 to lie on the table
5 Referred Props & Greevs
(Reasonable)
(reported)
(Bill drawn)

[Another File]

To the General Assembly of Virginia the Petition of George Willis of the County of Mathews, Humbly Sheweth, That during the Late War between the United States Of America & Great Britain, Your Petitioner Being in the Service of His Country and Under the Command of Col. Baylor, in the Company of Capt. Stith, and one of the Life Guard of his Excellency General George Washington (deceased) having takeing [sic] temporary Quarters with a number of his Fellow Soldiers in a Barn at old Harringtown, to the North, was surprised at a very late Hour of the night by a Party of the British of about five hundred men; Orders was given aloud to give no Quarter; put every damned Rebel to death: your Petitioner in this dreadful condition attempted to Escape, in which attempt finding the Barn surrounded he was stabbed with different Bayonets, by different Soldiers of this Party, as many as twelve different times, & the Blood of your Petitioner, through those dreadful & painful wounds, being nearly exhausted, your Petitioner was stripped of his Clothes and left for dead, Your Petitioner the day following was taken up & put under the hands of a doctor under whose hands he your Petitioner remained many Months before he was able to walk a single step. Sometime after which your Petitioner was discharged, & informed by his Capt., that he had an allowance made him, But so it is, your Petitioner has never as yet received anything, except Sixty Dollars which was graciously bestowed on your Petitioner by this Hon. Body at their Session of 1798, which your Petitioner has received, &'s begs leave to return his most grateful acknowledgments, your Petitioner begs leave further to state, that the afflictions & pains, under which he at present labours, is almost inexpressible, which in addition to his want, of food, and raiment, makes Death, more desirable than Life; to your Honourable Body your Petitioner advised as his only resort for relief, to your Honourable Body your Petitioner Humbly appeals, earnestly praying that you would take his case into Serious Consideration, & place his name on the List of Pensioners of this State, & make such Annual allowance as you in your Wisdom shall think he merits; & your Petitioner as in Duty bound will ever Pray &c

S/ George Willis

[From [pension records in the Library of Virginia](#)]

General Assembly begun and held in the City of Richmond on Monday 3rd day of December 1789

An Act George Willis

Passed January 2nd, 1799

Be it enacted by the General Assembly, that the Auditor of Public Accounts shall be, and he is

hereby authorized and required to issue to George Willis, who, by reason of Wounds received while in military service in the course of the late War has been rendered unable to support himself by labor, a Warrant or Warrants for the sum of sixty dollars for his immediate relief; to be discharged by the Treas. out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated by law.

This act shall commence and be in force from and after the passing thereof –

A true copy from the Role deposited in the Office of the General assembly
Received a warrant for \$60 S/ John Stewart, H. R.
19th Jany. 92
S/ Houlder Hudgens

[From [rejected pension records in the Library of Virginia](#)]

Mathews County court, 13th of November 1821

The affidavit of Hugh Hudgin taken in open Court the said affiant being first duly sworn deposeth and saith that he was personally acquainted and in habits of frequent intercourse with George Willis before and after the Revolutionary War, that he knows nothing of his own knowledge of the enlistment of said Willis in the Army of the United States service but that he understood that he enlisted in Baylor's Regiment of Light Dragoons, on Continental establishment, and that it was generally so understood among the acquaintances and neighborhood of said Willis. This affiant does not know how long he served but thinks it was several years. Then affiant positively states that he saw the said Willis after his return from the Army and heard him say that while he was in the Regiment aforesaid that the said Regiment was surprised in a Barn by the British and that they were nearly all cut to pieces and wounded and that he the said Willis had received thirteen wounds in the said conflict. This affiant states that he solved the wounds aforesaid and which appeared to be Bayonet and Saber wounds. That the said Willis departed this life sometime about the year __ and left only one air, to wit, Fran Key Willis and that he died intestate.

The affidavit of Nancy Davis and Rosy Davis being first duly sworn depose and say that Frankey Willis is the only heir living or left by George Willis deceased who was a Revolutionary Soldier and further say not.

And the court orders that it be certified that they are satisfied from the foregoing evidence that the said Frankey Willis is the only heir of George Willis deceased

Copy

Teste

S/ Th. R. Yeatman, C. M. C.

Mathews County court 10th of December 1821

Humphrey Gwyn being first duly sworn in open court deposeth and saith that he was well acquainted with George Willis and that he saw him while he was in the Army of the United States in the Revolutionary War in Col. Baylor's Regiment of Light Dragoons but how long the said George Willis served in the War aforesaid this affiant knows not.

And the court order that it be certified that the said George Willis deceased died intestate.

Copy

Teste

S/ Th. R. Yeatman, C. M. C.