

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Petition by the men of the Amherst County, Virginia Militia who fought at the Battle of Camden<sup>1</sup>  
Transcribed by James Lynch 7/10/09

To the Honorable the Speaker & Gentlemen of the House of Delegates The Petition of [illegible word on copy] Militia of the tenth Division of Amherst County Humbly Showeth

That your Petitioners are of the Number of those who were lately Ordered into Service on the Southern Expedition. That with a Conscious Shame and heartfelt sorrow we most sincerely lament and Deplore the shameful Timidity [sic] which marked our behavior at the Unfortunate Battle of Cambden [sic], as well as its unhappy Consequences. That as to our Conduct amongst Others on that important Occasion, we dare not pretend to justify Ourselves. Yet by way of alleviating in some degree our Guilt we humbly offer to the Consideration of your Honorable House the following Facts. That your Petitioners were the first Militia men of this State who were Ordered into service at such a distance as South Carolina. That on our Arrival at Hillsborough we staid [sic] but a few days to Rest before we marched to the South from which time [illegible word on copy] a few days Halt which we made at Deep River. We were marched almost Night and Day and kept a half allowance of Flour for Eight or Ten days before the Battle. That from these Circumstances and being wholly unacquainted with Military Discipline; which we had not time to learn; Greatly Exhausted by Fatigue at that hot Season, which we had not been inured to; Dispirited for want of Rest and Diet; and Panick [sic] struck by the Noise and Terror of a Battle which was entirely New to most of us; We (amongst Others, Officers and Privates) were so unhappy as to abandon the Field of Battle Not withstanding all the efforts of our Gallant Generals & the Example of our brave brethren the Regulars. To Extenuate our own Guilt by accusing Others we disdain to do and dare not attempt yet we humbly beg leave to Represent to your Honorable House; That had our inferior Militia Officers been experienced in Military Discipline or Capable of encouraging us by their Example as well as Orders and particularly had we not been drawn up in such Close Order but had more space to Act; And Lastly been Permitted to Fire on the Enemy before we received their Fire or before we came so near We verily believe the Event had been Otherwise. But to Proceed... On our return to Hillsborough finding that all our Blankets & Cloathing [sic] (except what little we had on) were entirely lost, being destitute of money or other means of supporting Ourselves at that place, we Petitioned our Officers for furloughs to go home in Order to provide such as we could. This they refused but at the same time most of those who went from our own County with us not only did not forbid, but advised & encouraged us so to do. When we had accordingly returned to our own County we [illegible word on copy] ourselves to the County Lieut. Informing him of the Cause of our Returning and of our Resolution of returning to our Duty as soon as we could provide a few Cloaths [sic] to supply our immediate wants, who indulged us with Furloughs for about 20 days which were prolonged to this present instant being the 9<sup>th</sup> of October.

Accordingly having met this day in Order to Proceed to Camp there to serve out the Remainder of our Term and to make good the time we have lost. To our Astonishment and Grief We are told by Authority

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<sup>1</sup> Virginia State Library microfilm collections: Legislative Petitions: Reel 9, Box 11, Folder 24  
Amherst County

That we are to be turned over to the Regular Service for Eight Months which is also further Confirmed by the Report of some who have already been at Camp where they were refused to be Received on any Other Conditions. We are moreover informed that Pay Rolls have been made out during our Absence in which none were Included but those who were then Present.

In these alarming & unhappy Circumstances We have no Other Resource but to Petition your Honorable House for Redress. Which we most humbly Beg and Pray That (Besides the Reasons Contained in the above Memorial) for these following to wit That having been Ordered into Service early in the Summer [a] Great Part of our last Crops have been lost by possibility of making any the year to come. That in this Case most of us being already very poor and many families large tho' weak, it must Compleat [sic] our Ruin & theirs. We have always understood That the penalty of Eight Months service inflicted by the Act was on such only as should Refuse to pay due obedience thereto by marching when Ordered. But we humbly beg leave to Represent That we never did Refuse but did actually go and have Served a Considerable part of our Term & always intended & still do [to] faithfully serve out & make good the whole.

In which time we yet hope By the Mercy of Divine Providence (as we now joyfully hear that we are to have Regular Officers) That we shall by our future Conduct not only retrieve our own Reputation as Citizens of a Free State But also the losses & Dishonour [sic] which our Country has sustained by our former Pusillanimity.

Wherefore we most humbly hope & pray that your Honorable House will Order that we shall be relieved by the next succeeding Divisions of our County (if wanting) when our Term of Service as at first appointed is made good (we being totally unprovided for all campaign) and that our pay (without which we cannot subsist) may be paid agreeable to Justice & Equity. Finally confiding in the Justice, Candor & Clemency of our Worthy Legislature to who we Commit our Cause & that our distressed familys [sic] we shall cheerfully march on – never doubting that while it shall please the Almighty to continue to us the inestimable Blessings of a free & frequent Representation but Impatrial Just [last line illegible on copy]

**EXTERNAL COVER OF DOCUMENT:**

The Names of the Subscribing Militia Men are Hereunder Written:

Samuel Dinwiddie – Sergt.	William Bou[lware?]
Landon Carter – Sergt.	John Bowman
John Lo[bbam?]	William Bowman
Simon R[amsden?]	Owen Hern[don?]
Edwd. Bybee	Nicholas Lyon
William Phillips	Jacob [d?]ucket
James Hopkins Junr.	John Clair
Alexander [F?]oubus	Alexander Patton
William [F?]oubus	Joseph Pender
Pleasant Davison	John Brown
Henry McLean	