

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Moab Stevens R10115

f & A13NC

Transcribed and annotated by Will Graves

rev'd 3/11/11 & 2/27/23

[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 'indecipherable' or 'undeciphered' 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. Researchers should not rely solely on the transcripts but should review the originals for themselves. These transcripts are intended as an aid to research, not to be used in lieu thereof.]

The State of South Carolina

On this the Twenty Sixth day of September in the year of our Lord One thousand Eight hundred and Thirty Two, personally appeared in open court Moab Stevens before Baylis J. Earle one of the Circuit Judges of the said State and Presiding Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in an for the District of Chesterfield and State aforesaid who being first duly sworn according to Law, maketh oath to the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed on the 7th June 1832. That he was born in the month of September, 1755 in Johnson [Johnston] County and State of North Carolina. That about twenty years of age he removed to Bladen County in the last State mentioned where he resided until March 1796 when he removed to the District of Lancaster where he resided twenty six [could be twenty five] years when he removed to Chesterfield District where he now resides and has resided since his removal from Lancaster District. That in the month of February 1776 the militia of Bladen County (among other of the militia) were ordered to rendezvous at Rock fish in Cumberland County, North Carolina against the Tories who were then assembled at Cross Creek (now Fayetteville). Then we marched in pursuance of orders under the command of Captain Sam¹ Smith [Samuel Smith]¹ the Major was James Richardson, his Col. was Thomas Robeson [Thomas Robeson, Jr.] and the whole detachment was command by General Moore.² That his brigade advanced in the direction of Fayetteville. The Tories crossed the Cape Fear River and were attacked and defeated³ by General Casswell's [sic, Richard Caswell's] Brigade. That he was in service at that time to the best of his recollection six weeks. That from the above period until the year 1781 he was frequently out in small detachments and for short periods against the Tories sometimes for a week only and at other times longer. That in the month of November 1781 [probably 1780] he was compelled to leave his home, by the Tories, he went to the Cape Fear River (22 miles below Fayetteville) that from that time to the first of September 1782 [probably 1781] he was at least the third of that time in actual service sometimes under the command of

¹ I could find no such officer on any known roster of NC militia, state or Continental officers. There was, however, a Capt. John Smith of the Bladen County Regiment who served under Col. Thomas Robeson, Jr. at Moore's Creek Bridge. https://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/nc_patriot_military_captains.html In my experience, it is not unusual for veteran's to be mistaken as to the names of the officers under whom they served when applying for a federal pension some 50 odd years after the events recalled by them.

² The only NC officer of that surname and rate was Brigadier General James Moore of the 1st Brigade of NC Continentals. He was not commissioned as such until April 10, 1776. He is not known to have been on the march to Moore's Creek.

³ The Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge, February 27, 1776
https://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_moores_creek.html

Capt. Wm McDaniel [William G. McDaniel] and during the whole time the Regiment was commanded by Col. Robeson. He was in one skirmish and defeat of the Tories at South River—this was about July 1782 [sic, July 1781].⁴ The next engagement with the Tories was in Elizabeth Town August 1782 [sic, August 1781] in which the Tories were defeated⁵—he recollects the names of only two of the Captains who commanded the Tories at the two fights was Mobly & Scarborough-- . At the Brown Marsh⁶ in September he was in an engagement with the British & Tories combined—that the Army was commanded in that engagement by Genl. Butler [Brigadier Gen. John Butler]—Col. Robeson was the Commander of his Regiment in the three last engagements—And deponent is under the impression the enemy was commanded by Major Craig [James Craig]. In the last mentioned engagement the enemy attacked the Americans in the night time. The American Army was defeated & retreated. The most obstinate part of the fight was sustained by Col. Mebane [Lt. Col. Robert Mebane] of the Continental Army⁷ who was at that time, in the neighborhood & took the Command of a detachment. That his Service during the Brown Marsh engagement was for about 5 Weeks That after About the first of September 1782 [sic, 1781] he was in no other engagement but was in the Service with a few days of furlough at intervals until the months of March 1783 when he was finally discharged. That from the Battle of Brown Marsh to the time of his final discharge his Regiment's head quarters was at Elizabeth Town in which he was principally employed in detachments to bring in the Tories to head quarters and affording protection to the Inhabitants of that & the surrounding Country.

That previous to the fall of Charleston [Charleston SC fell to the British on May 12, 1780] he volunteered as a Soldier under the Command of Major Richardson and Lieut. Absalom Powell commanded the Company. That at the time the volunteers were ordered to march to Charleston he hired one William Wilkins as a Substitute for three months Service. That his Substitute was in Charleston and was captured. Lieut. Powell was captured at the said time and Major Richardson who was absent on furlough at that time escaped. That deponent paid his Substitute three Cows & calves for the Service of three months. That the deponent is unable to fix with exactness the whole period or term of time he Served during the whole war having Served so frequently without keeping any account of the time but deponent distinctly believes that (including the three months Service of his Substitute)⁸ he Served more than two years. That the longest period he served at any one time was during the time they had a fight with the Tories at Elizabeth Town was about eight weeks during which term he was not permitted to visit his home.

The deponent further says that he does not know that any of his companions in arms are now alive. That about one year ago he was informed that William Lord of Fayetteville N.C. was alive but if he be dead he does not know that any of his fellow Soldiers now survive.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatsoever 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 whatsoever. Sworn to and subscribed the day and year above stated

S/ Moab Stevens

⁴ Militia under the command of Col. Thomas Robeson, Jr. of Bladen County and Captain William G. McDaniel were at the engagement at Stewart's Creek, July 26, 1781.

https://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_stewarts_creek_2.html

⁵ The veteran appears to be describing the action at Tory Hole on August 17, 1781 at which the Tories were commanded by Col. John Slingsby and at which one of the Tory militia companies from Cumberland County NC was commanded by Capt. Charles Malley. https://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_tory_hole.html

⁶ September 1781 https://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_brown_marsh.html

⁷ Sic, at this time Lt. Col. Robert Mebane was acting as a Continental officer over the Orange County Regiment of NC militia.

⁸ Under the regulations of the War Department's Pension Office, compensation was not given for service by substitutes.



S/ B. J. Earle Presiding Judge of the Court of Common Pleas and Sessions at Chesterfield Court House

[Reverend William Hudson gave a standard supporting affidavit. Michael Miller also gave a standard supporting affidavit.]

The State of South Carolina, Chesterfield District

Before me Richard Gantt one of the Circuit Judges of the said State and Presiding Judge at Chesterfield Court House, fall term 1833, personally appeared Moab Stephens who being duly sworn in open court, deposeth and saith that by reason of old age and consequent loss of memory he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his service, but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than the periods below mentioned, as a private volunteer soldier in the militia of the State of North Carolina for more than two years as is more particularly set forth in detail in the annexed Declaration which has been heretofore made before this Court and sent to the War Department viz., Commencing in February 1776, six weeks, that from the conclusion of that service to the year 1781 he was in the service at least one year and an half and his impression and belief is that he was about one third of that time in actual service and most generally for short tours of duty, the militia of his county were divided into three classes and one class was always on duty in that and the adjoining counties; that from the last mentioned period to March 1783 he was constantly in service except absent on furlough for a few days at each time. That he hired a substitute for three months which is more particularly set forth in his former declaration—That deponent is positive he served at least two years during the Revolutionary War and to which service he claims a pension.

The Deponent further declares that he never according to his recollection took any written discharge from the service or if he did the same has long since been lost or destroyed. The Deponent further states that he does not know that any of persons who served with him are now alive or if alive where they live now, That he has not been in his former place of residence for seventeen years and does not know who among his fellow soldiers now live and that he is therefore unable to procure the testimony of any witness as to his actual service.

Sworn to before me this 1st day of October 1833

S/ Moab Stevens



S/ Richard Gantt, Presiding Judge

[p 13]

Moab: Stephens [sic]

South Carolina

Suspended

Let. [Letter] 27 April 1835

Jas. R. Ervin⁹

⁹ ERVIN, James, a Representative from South Carolina; born in Williamsburg District, S.C., October 17, 1778; was graduated from Rhode Island College (now Brown University), Providence, R.I., in 1797; studied law; was admitted to the bar in 1800 and commenced practice in Peedee, S.C.; member of the State house of representatives 1800-

10115

[Note: This indicates that a letter was written by the War Department, office of the Commissioner of Pensions, on April 27, 1835 to Congressman James R Ervin of South Carolina explaining the reason for rejecting the veteran's claim. Unfortunately, letters of this sort were not retained within the files in the pension office.]

[Note: In the Brief describing the deficiencies of the application, the following objections were noted:

V. *Has he mentioned with precision the length of his service, and the different grades in which he served, in a language so definite as to enable the department to determine to what amount of pension he is entitled? No

XIII. If the applicant has no documentary evidence, and has not obtained the testimony of at least one living witness, has he stated in his declaration that such proof cannot be had? No

XVII. Art the 7 interrogatories prescribed by the War Department answered satisfactorily? And, if not, which all of them is not so answered? 2. 4. 6. 7.¹⁰]

1804; solicitor of the northern judicial circuit 1804-1816; trustee of South Carolina College 1809-1817; again a member of the State house of representatives in 1810 and 1811; elected as a Republican to the Fifteenth Congress and reelected to the Sixteenth Congress (March 4, 1817-March 3, 1821); declined to be a candidate for renomination in 1820; engaged in agricultural pursuits; member of the State senate 1826-1829; served as a delegate to the State convention in 1832; died in Darlington, S.C., c. September 29, 1838; interment at his home.
<https://bioguide.congress.gov/search/bio/E000209>

¹⁰ The War Department promulgated regulations governing pension application format and requiring the following 7 interrogatories to be put to each applicant for a pension:

1st Where and in what year were you born?

2nd Have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

3rd Where were you living when called into service: where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live?

4th How were you called into service; were you drafted; did you volunteer or were you a substitute, and if a substitute, for whom?

5th State the names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops where you served, such Continental and militia regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service.

6th Did you ever receive a discharge from the service, and if so, by whom was it given and what has become of it?

7th State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighborhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief in your services as a soldier in the revolution.