

[Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters](#)

Pension Application of William Boswell R1045

PA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Virginia

Preston County ss}

On this 2nd day of August in the year 1834 personally appeared before me William Conner one of the acting Justices of the peace in & for said county of Preston & state aforesaid William Boswell a resident of the said county of Preston & State aforesaid aged seventy eight years who being first duly sworn according to Law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to procure the benefit of the provision made by the act of congress, passed June 7th 1832 that he enlisted in the army of the United States in the year 1777 and the number of the regiment not recollected & in the Continental army under the following named officers – Towit Genl Stephens Col Muchlenburg Major not recollected Captain Neil Lieutenant Thompson in Lancaster County in the State of Pensylvania [see endnote] that he enlisted for during the war & we marched from said County of Lancaster over into the state of New Jersey where we remained some time watching the manouvering of the enemy & from thense we marched back into the state of Pensylvania to Brandywine where we had a general engagement or battle with our enemy [11 Sep 1777] in which battle the brittish claimed the victory, & from thense we marched to Germantown: some time during the fall where we had another engagement with the enemy [4 Oct 1777] we was again defeated & from thense we marched to the Vally forge [sic: Valley Forge] where as I believe Gel Washington took up his winter quarters & where we spent the winter & in the spring following we marched again unto the state of New Jersey under Genl Washington & General [Charles] Lee to Monmouth where we had a battle [28 Jun 1828] with the [the rest missing]

[The following report is by US District Attorney Washington G. Singleton who investigated hundreds of pension applications from present West Virginia. For details see my appendix to the pension application of David W. Sleeth S6111. On Boswell's report Singleton wrote, "Entitled."]

William Boswell applicant.

I the undersigned William Boswell at the requisition of the Secretary of war give the following narative of my age and revolutionary services to Wit – I was born in the year 1756 in the city of Bristol in the Kingdom of Great Brittain – and came to the United States in the year 1775 and landed in Boston in the Summer of that year shortly after the Battle of Bunker Hill [17 Jun 1775]. I came over a British Soldier and remained in that service until after the Declaration of the american Independance – in that year 1776 I deserted the British service in New York – in December in the same year I Enlisted in the american Army at Lancaster Pensylvania – I was Enlisted by Capt James Neale & marched from there destined for Trenton and joined Genl. Washington's army between Trenton & Princeton on a march. I was attached to Genl. Frederick Augustin Mullenbergs Regt [see endnote], the number of which I do not recollect and proceeded with the army to Princeton where an engagement took place Between the contending armies in which the americans prevailed [3 Jan 1777] – took Princeton & remained there some time – some three or four companies (mine included) were ordered to Philadelphia. a Major Kilpatrick commanded the division – or rather the companies thus ordered. we remained there a short time and was then ordered to the head of Elk [now Elkton MD]. on gitting there the British had left that place and gon over into Maryland, we remained there until Genl. Washingtons army came out of New Jersey & joined it again near Elk town. the main army was from there ordered to Brandy Wine where an engagement took place and continued nearly all day – the american army after sustaining great loss retreated to Chester Hill [Chestnut Hill]. the Battle was fought in September as well as I can remember, from Chester Hill the army went to Germantown at that place we had a nother Battle in which the americans were again unsuccessful, it retreated up the Chester road & went into Winter quarters at Vally forge. – in the next succeeding spring the army returned to New Jersey, and had an engagement with the

British army at Monmouth, in this action we were successful. we returned in the same year to Philadelphia which had been recently abandoned by the British [on 18 Jun 1778] – we remained in Philadelphia all winter, In the next year there was no general engagement with that part of the army to which I belonged. It remained in Pensylvania and done nothing of any consequence. in the year 1779 Stoney Point was taken by Gen. Wayne [Stony Point NY by Anthony Wayne, 16 Jul 1779] but I was not in that engagement – after this I was taken sick and sent to the Ospital at Carlile [sic: Carlisle PA] & remained there for about six months – after gitting will myself with others went to Germantown and from there to Elk and joined Genl. Ervins Division [– at which place we lay until after Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown in virg. [19 Oct 1781]. not long after this latter occurance I got my discharge and certificate which have been lost. the statement now given is in substance the same I gave to Mr. Cresap who wrote my Declaration. I agreed to give him \$50 if he should get me a Pension of \$200. or 250\$ August 4, 1834 – in all my service I was under the same captain.

William Boswell

Note this man seems to be Honest – & I beleve his statement to be true.

W. G Singleton/ Nov. 28 1834

Department of War/ Pension Office/ April 21 1835

Sir [John Byrne, Kingwood, Preston County]

I have examined the declaration of William Boswell who alleges to have served during the war of the revolution in the Virginia continental line, and placed it upon the files in this office.

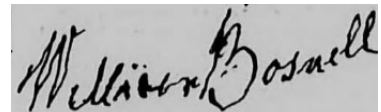
It appears that Mr Boswell made and presented to this office a declaration previous to the one now under consideration, and that it was returned in May last; he will be required to forwad it to this office again, if not destroyed. The pay rolls of the continental line of Va. do not bear the name of William Boswell, nor either thos of Robt. Carr [Robert Carr] or Jas. Dougerty [James Dougerty] who, he says served in the same company.

It is a little remarkable, that if Mr Boswell served as he has stated, that he never applied under the former pension Act, or even earlier under the present, and that having still resided in Va. did not call for his depreciation pay after the war. Proof of service will be required.

I am very Respectfully Yr Ob St/ J L Edwards [Commissioner of Pensions]

I William Boswell of the County of Preston & state of Virginia do make the following declaration & statement under oath for the purpose of removing the difficulties that have occurred in my application for a pension & also for the purpose of being placed on the pension rolle – First to remove the difficulties as stated in the letter from the Honl J L Edwards Commissioner of Pensions dated the 21st of Aprile in the year 1835 that the declaration first made & which was defective & returned to me by the war department has been destroyed or mislaid & it is stated in said letter that I alledged in said declaration now on file in the war department that I served in the revolution in the Virginia Continental line – & if so stated in said declaration my services was misstated – as I enlisted in the state of Pensylvania & I belonged to the Pensylvania Troops the following named persons served at the same time & I think in the same company in which I served towit Robert Carr James Daugherty Patrick Rabby James McConnel & thinks there was a nyor[?] Kilpatrick & one Owen Newman. The War department thinks my delaying my appplication for a pension is prejudicial to my just interest – the reason of which was because I had a considerable estate and I thought that I would not call on the government for a pension as long as I could support myself from the proceeds of my property – but when I saw persons receiving pensions for services in the revolution war when they had not served one fourth of the time I did I thought it was right that I should recover a pension also & I accordingly made my application.

Given under my hand this 26th of Aprile 1837



NOTES:

I could not identify any of the officers named in Boswell's application, which would be unusual if they were in the Continental Line. "Genl Stephens" may refer to Brigadier Gen. Adam Stephen of the Virginia Continental Line, and "Col Muchlenburg" might refer to John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg of the 8th Virginia Continental Regiment in Gen. George Weedon's Brigade, but Boswell insisted that he served in the Pennsylvania Line. Muhlenberg was a Colonel only up to Feb 1776, when he was promoted to Brigadier General.

There was a Capt. James Neal in the 13th Virginia Continental Regiment in 1777, but I could not identify "Genl. Frederick Augustin Mullenberg" mentioned in Singleton's report. This may be a reference to Frederick Augustus Conrad Muhlenberg, who was a brother of Gen. John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg, but was not himself an officer. I could not identify a Major Kilpatrick. "Genl. Ervin" might refer to William Irvine of the Pennsylvania Continental Line, or possibly to James Irvine of the Pennsylvania Militia.

The file includes a statement supporting Boswell's application signed by dozens of his neighbors.