

## Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of John Williams R11588

f24NC

Transcribed and annotated by Will Graves

rev'd 6/2/15

[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 'indecipherable' 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 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

[p 2]

State of North Carolina, Rutherford County

I John Williams a resident of said County aged seventy nine May next Born in Virginia Lunenburg County May 1752 Makes on oath the following declaration in order to obtain the Benefit of the Act of Congress passed the 7<sup>th</sup> June 1832.

I entered under Col. Archibald Little<sup>1</sup> one of the State Troops of North Carolina at Hillsborough in said State for eighteen months and was marched under his Brother William Little<sup>2</sup> to Wilmington in said State & was there stationed the whole of the time of my enlistment except such times as we were marched up the Cape Fear River to a place called the half way swamp<sup>3</sup> to meet the Tories who were embodied at that place. I was marched up there twice in the Course of my servitude. I was in no battle & was honorably discharged by my captain Wm Little. I returned home. I was then drafted as a Militia Man from Caswell County North Carolina & Marched under Captain George Samuel for the relief of Charleston.<sup>4</sup> When we got on as far as Orangeburg I obtained a furlough for three weeks & before I returned Charleston was taken [May 12, 1780]. I was discharged by my Captain & returned home. The year of Gates Defeat<sup>5</sup> I went a 3 months tour as a substitute for a drafted Militia man by the name of Benjamin Richard and marched under Captain William Harden from Caswell & joined Gates army near Camden. Whilst I was stationed there General Sumpter [Thomas Sumter] made a requisition for four hundred men to guard his prisoners & plunder consisting of two Brass Cannons & eighty waggons which he had taken from the British on the South side of Wateree near Camden.<sup>6</sup> I was one of this detachment & were guarding the prisoners & heard the cannon during Gates Defeat. We pushed on to a point a little above the Mouth of Fishing Creek on the south side of Wateree where we halted about one o'clock the 16<sup>th</sup> day of August with our prisoners. I & my comrade John Dobbins halted to get some peaches when four British Cavalry passed us & directly Tarleton's<sup>7</sup> troops followed on to attack Sumpter's Guard & cut them all to pieces whilst they were killing beeves & preparing to eat.<sup>8</sup> Their arms [were] all out of their hands except those guarding the prisoners. I & my comrade dodged out of the way & crossed the Wateree & came up into Mecklenburg County, North Carolina near Charlotte & kept on home. I was called out in draft 3 weeks & was stationed 10 miles from Charlotte & was discharged by Gen. Davidson<sup>9</sup> who was killed at the Catawba by Cornwallis men. Col. Williams<sup>10</sup> came in to Caswell and I again enlisted for John Holliway[sic, John Holloway] & marched & before we reached Kings Mountain Ferguson [Patrick Ferguson] was defeated & we were permitted to go home.<sup>11</sup> I volunteered to go against the Cherokees & marched from Caswell to Hillsborough & then

through Salisbury & on up the Catawba & at or near a place called Greenlee's ford we met Genl Thomas Parsons who turned us back. General Rutherford<sup>12</sup> had men enough. I was about six weeks out this time. Upwards of thirty years ago I gave my papers to one William Twitty who said that he understood we were to be paid for our services & he never returned them nor do I know where they are.

Interrogatory the 1<sup>st</sup> is answered

2<sup>nd</sup> Interrogatory: Have you any record of your age

Ans. I have not. My oldest Brother raised me & told me my age. My father decd when I was 3 years old.

Interrogatory 3. Where were you living when called into service Where have you lived since the revolution & where do now live

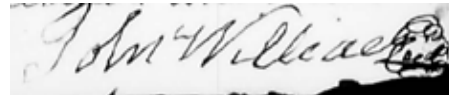
Ans I was living in Caswell County North Carolina when called into service and lived there until about forty two years ago. I removed to this County & have lived here until now where I am still living.

4<sup>th</sup> Inter How were you called into service

Ans. I was at Hillsborough in Orange County at a General Muster Col. Little was there as a recruiting officer & resided in that place and enlisted me as before stated. I have already stated that served two tours of duty as a substitute of three months each & six weeks as a volunteer to go against the Cherokees.

Interrogatory 5<sup>th</sup> I have answered as far as I can Recollect. I can say further I knew Genl DeKalb,<sup>13</sup> who fell in Gates Defeat. I knew Gates. I saw General Marion<sup>14</sup> & DeKalb part when he left the army a few days before Gates Defeat to go on some expedition. Gates Defeat was on Wednesday and we were cut up on Friday at Fishing Creek by Tarleton as already stated.

S/ John Williams [Seal]

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Williams". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

I do further declare on oath that I am not on any pension roll whatever & do for the purpose of obtaining the above pension release & give up all claims to any other pension whatsoever.

S/John Williams [Seal]

[Ambrose Mills, a justice of the peace, and Alexander McFaddin gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[p 20]

The amended declaration of John Williams of Rutherford County North Carolina to be taken as part of his declaration heretofore made & certified in the Court of said County on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September 1832 who upon oath declares that he served under Colonel William Little at Wilmington as already stated eighteen months as a drafted militia man, three months under Captain Samuels but was on service, four months lacking of two days, six weeks as a Volunteer under Captain Forqua to go against Cherokees. Three months as a Substitute under Captain Harden & six weeks Do under Colonel Williams making on his own account twenty-three and a half months & four months & a half as a substitute. This affiant further declares that his age and infirmity is such that he cannot go to Caswell to inquire of any person [who] is living who could prove his services, that he is very poor has but one child in the State & she a sickly elderly woman. That he knows of no living witness to whom he might apply to corroborate his statement & if the foregoing will not answer he must there lose the compensation proffered by

his Government for services long rendered & still unpaid.

Sworn to in Open court the 8<sup>th</sup> July 1833

S/ John Williams

[p 19: Drury Dobbins, a clergyman, gave a standard supporting affidavit dated September 9, 1833.]

[p 21]

State of North Carolina Rutherford County

On this 24<sup>th</sup> day of April 1834 personally appeared in Open court before the Justices of the said Court now sitting John Williams a Resident of the United States in the County of Rutherford and State of North Carolina aged 82 years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following statement or declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1832 Saith that he is far removed from the place where he Resided when he served his Different Tours in the Revolutionary War and if any of his old fellow Sufferers are living he has no knowledge where to find them but his Character for Truth and Veracity will be given by persons who have been acquainted with me for the last 30 years but from old age and consequent loss of memory I cannot swear positively as to the precise length of the different Towers [sic, Tours] I served nor the dates but according to the best of my memory not less than the periods mentioned below and in the following Grades and for which Service I claim a pension. I hereby Relinquish every claim to a pension except the present and declare that my name is not on the pension Roll of the agency of any State whatsoever.

Saith that his first Tour he enlisted for eighteen months in the year 1778 under Captain William Lytle Colonel Archibald Lytle commanded the Troops. I then Resided in Caswell County North Carolina we was marched from that place to near Wilmington North Carolina where we was Stationed we Scouted and scoured the neighborhood for a [at] least Sixty miles I recollect that I was twice as high up the River as the halfway Swamp to keep down the Scotch Settlement known as Tories in them days I was Discharged at Wilmington and returned home to Caswell County I think early in the year 1780 I was drafted and served a Tour of 3 months under Captain William Harden commanded by Colonel William Moore we was marched to Hillsboro North Carolina then to Orangeburg South Carolina from that place we set out for Charleston before we reached that place it was surrendered and we returned home to Caswell County North Carolina where we was Discharged. My next was a Substitute for man by the name of Hubbard for 3 months under Captain George Samuels commanded by Colonel Steven Moore we was marched on to near Camden South Carolina where we Joined the main Army under General Gates from there we was sent to join General Sumter was in the Battle on the Wateree [Battle of Fishing Creek, August 18, 1780], where we was Defeated we was [indecipherably faint word] or halted about Charlotte North Carolina at the expiration of my Service I was Discharged by General Davidson and returned home to Caswell County North Carolina. My next Tour I was drafted and served under Captain George Faulker Colonel Williams commanded we set out for a Southern Tour but before we joined the main Army Ferguson was Defeated at Kings Mountain we was marched back home and Discharged. I think this was 1 ½ months say one month and a half. My next was a Volunteer under Captain George Faulker – Colonel Williams Commanded we was marched on to near the head of Catawba in Burke County North Carolina where we met some of the Officers returning who had been in pursuit of the Indians from that place we was marched back to Caswell County North Carolina where we was Discharged this was one month and a half

1778 – Colonel Lytle I served – 18 months		That he does not know any person now living that he can prove his services by but must Depend entirely on his own Oath and the character he Sustains where he now Resides and a reference to the Honorable James Graham
1780 Colonel Moore I served – 3 months		
1780 Colonel S Moore I served – 3 months		
1781 Colonel Williams – 1 ½ months		
1782 Colonel Williams – 1 ½ This makes service 27 months and for which I claim a pension		

Question first by the Court: Where and in what year were you born?

Answer: I was born from Information in Lunenburg County State of Virginia in the year 1752

Question 2<sup>nd</sup>: have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

Answer: I have it from the Original kept by my Sister at my Daughter's in this County

Question 3<sup>rd</sup>: Where were you living when called into service where have you lived since the Revolutionary war and where do you now live?

Answer: I was living in Caswell County North Carolina when first called into service where I made my home until after peace was made I then moved to Rutherford County North Carolina where I have Resided ever since

Question 4<sup>th</sup>: how were you called into service were you drafted, did you volunteer or were you a Substitute and if a Substitute for whom?

Answer: I first enlisted for 18 months in the State Troop of North Carolina and served as above stated my 2<sup>nd</sup> I was drafted and served 3 months as above stated my 3<sup>rd</sup> I was a substitute for man by the name of Hubbard and served 3 months, my 4<sup>th</sup> service drafted and served 1 ½ months my 5<sup>th</sup> I was a volunteer and served 1 ½ months

Question 5 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 as you can recollect

Answer: I recollect General Gates, Generals Sumter, Davidson, Colonel Lytle, Dickson Moore, Williams. I have stated the particulars above to the best of my Recollection

Questions 6<sup>th</sup>: Did you ever receive a Discharge from the service and if so by whom was it given and what has become of it

Answer: I Recollect that I Received several one was signed by Colonel Archibald Lytle One was given by General Davidson I do not recollect who signed the others but I think they were signed by the captains I served under for I do not Recollect any higher Officer present where we were Discharged. Some years after the Revolutionary War I put all my papers into the hands of William Twitty a near neighbor amongst them was my Discharges I have made many inquiries for my papers of Twitty before his Death and also of his Administrators since his Death I have not been able to hear anything about them they are entirely lost to me I have through my friend wrote to Raleigh to see if my name was on the rolls they are they informed me they have not the Rolls of that Company or Regiment that was Stationed at Wilmington. In the year 1778 – 79 inquiry is made of Halifax would have not received any answer.

Questions 7<sup>th</sup>: State the names of some persons in your present neighborhood to whom you are known who can testify as to your character for veracity and good behavior and your Service as a Soldier of the Revolution.

Reverend Joseph Moore & David Gray

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid in open Court

S/ John Williams

[Joseph Moore, a clergyman, and David Gray gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[p 10]

State of North Carolina Rutherford County

Personally appeared before me the Subscriber a Justice of the peace for said County John Williams and after being duly Sworn Deposeth and saith that in his former Declaration he made as full a statement of his Services as his Recollection would Justify his Memory to state, he has procured from the pay Roll at Halifax North Carolina a Statement of his Receiving pay at two different times which sums I did receive as payment for my Service as a Soldier of the Revolutionary war and am informed that the Muster Rolls of North Carolina was Burnt in Raleigh North Carolina, this is all the proof that I can procure at this time on that part of my Service which was one year & 6 months say 18 months.

In the year 1780 I was drafted & served three months under Captain William Harden & Colonel William Moore 3 months

In the same Year I was a Substitute for a man by the name of Hubbard and Served three months under Captain George Samuels, Colonel Steven Moore and General Gates and Sumter and Davidson 3 months

In 1781 I was drafted and served under Captain George Faulker commanded by Colonel Williams and served 1 ½

My next was under the same Officers 1 ½  
27 months

I have stated how I lost my Discharges if the proof cannot be thought sufficient for me to obtain a pension for the first 18 months as an enlisted Soldier I hope I will be allowed for the 9 months that I served in the Militia. I am poor, needy and Destitute and a Small Sum would be very acceptable to me in present Situation. Sworn to and subscribed before me this 21<sup>st</sup> day of July 1834

S/ Martin Beam, JP

S/ John Williams, X his Mark {Seal}

---

<sup>1</sup> The military records of Col. Archibald Lytle indicate that he served in the Revolutionary War are as follows: (NC) Captain, 6 Apr 1776; Lieutenant Colonel, 6th NC, 26 Jan 1777; wounded at Stono Ferry, 20 Jun 1779; taken prisoner at Charleston, 12 May 1780; exchanged, 9 Feb 1782, Colonel, 30 Sept 1782; served to the close of the War. Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army During the War of the Revolution*, The Rare Book Shop Publishing Company, 1914. He died in 1794 without issue.

<sup>2</sup> Captain William Lytle (1755-1829) was a captain commanding one of the companies in the regiment commanded by his brother, Lt. Col. Archibald Lytle. After the war, he moved to the area that became Murfreesboro, Tennessee. He is credited with founding that city. <http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/visiting/history.htm>

<sup>3</sup> This is not a reference to the Halfway Swamp at which forces under Francis Marion fought a skirmish on December 13, 1780. See, e.g., Patrick O'Kelley, *Nothing but Blood and Slaughter: The Revolutionary War in the Carolinas, Volume Two: 1780*, (N. p.: Blue House Tavern Press, Booklocker.com, Inc. 2004) (hereinafter cited as O'Kelley, *Slaughter 2*) 384-387. If anyone has information about a location in North Carolina known as Half Way Swamp, please share that information with SCAR.

<sup>4</sup> Charleston was besieged by the British under the command of Henry Clinton in the winter and spring of 1780. See, Carl P. Borick, *A Gallant Defense: The Siege of Charleston, 1780*, (Columbia, SC, The University of South Carolina Press, 2003.

---

<sup>5</sup> This is a reference to the Battle of Camden fought on August 16, 1780. See, e.g., Mark M. Boatner, III, *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution*, (Mechanicsburg, Penn.: Stackpole Books, 1994) (hereinafter cited as Boatner, *Encyclopedia*) 165-170. Horatio Gates (1728/9-1806) was born in England and served as an officer in the British Army. He was with Braddock at his defeat in the French and Indian War. He became a friend of George Washington and settled in Virginia. Upon the outbreak of the Revolution, he was commissioned as a Brigadier General in the Continental Line. He was credited with the defeat of Burgoyne at the Battle of Saratoga while commanding the Northern Department of the Continental Army. He was sent to command the Southern Department in the summer of 1780. Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, 412-415.

<sup>6</sup> Sumter took some prisoners and supplies when he attacked loyalist forces in the Battle of Hanging Rock on August 6, 1780. Prior to the Battle of Camden, Sumter met with Gates and persuaded him to reinforce Sumter with 100 Maryland Continentals, two cannon, and 300 North Carolina militiamen to protect Gates' right flank at the Catawba/Watauga River. The two brass cannons that Williams claims Sumter captured were in fact probably the field pieces provided to Sumter by Gates.

<sup>7</sup> Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton (1754-1833) was a British cavalry officer much vilified for his allegedly excessively brutal tactics in fighting the Whigs. Anthony J. Scotti, Jr., *Brutal Virtue: The Myth and Reality of Banastre Tarleton*, Heritage Books, Inc., Bowie, Maryland, 2002. Tarleton left his own record of his activities in America during the Revolution and that record is still available in print. Banastre Tarleton, *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781 in the Southern Provinces of North America*, Ayer Company Publishers, Inc, North Stratford, New Hampshire, Reprint Edition, 1999.

<sup>8</sup> See, Michael C. Scoggins, "The Battle of Fishing Creek," *Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution*, Vol. 2, No. 8 (August, 2005), 20-23, for an excellent overview of the Battle of Fishing Creek. The battle of Fishing Creek was fought on August 18, 1780, and resulted in the defeat of Sumter and his forces. The battle is also referred to as Sumter's Defeat. O'Kelley, *Slaughter 2*, 177-286.

<sup>9</sup> William Lee Davidson, c 1746-1781, was a North Carolina militia general. He was killed at the Battle of Cowen's Ford in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina on February 1, 1781, while opposing the re-entry of Cornwallis into North Carolina. Davidson College and Davidson County, both in North Carolina, were named in his honor. Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, 317-318.

<sup>10</sup> After the success of the Whig militia forces at Musgrove's Mill on August 19, 1780, one of the commanders there, James Williams, took the prisoners captured at Musgrove's Mill to Hillsborough, North Carolina. The North Carolina Board of War gave Williams \$25,000 to raise mounted troops in North Carolina to fight in South Carolina. Williams is known to have recruited men in Stokes, Granville and Caswell Counties, North Carolina. The reference here is clearly to Col. James Williams. William T. Graves, *James Williams: An American Patriot in the Carolina Backcountry*, Writers Club Press, San Jose, 2002. What relation, if any, existed between Col. James Williams and John Williams, the pension applicant, is unknown.

<sup>11</sup> From the fact that John Williams did not get to King's Mountain in time to participate in the battle indicates that he must have been among the men not selected to make the rapid march from Cowpens to King's Mountain. From various accounts, it is known that approximately 1,500 to 2,000 Whig militiamen were gathered at Cowpens on October 6, 1780 and that, from this number, about 900 well mounted and armed men were selected to make a forced march to attack Ferguson's forces. Lyman C. Draper, *King's Mountain and its Heroes: History of the Battle of King's Mountain October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1780, and the Events Which Led to It* (1881; reprint, Johnson City, Tenn., The Overmountain Press, 1996).

<sup>12</sup> Griffith Rutherford (1731-c.1800) was commissioned as a brigadier general of the North Carolina state troops on June 26, 1776. He participated not only in the 1776 Cherokee Expedition but also in the battles at Ramseur's Mill and Camden. Wounded and captured at the latter engagement, he was held as a prisoner in Charleston and St. Augustine until November 1781 when he was exchanged and returned to the field to command the North Carolina forces at Wilmington. Mark M. Boatner III, *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution*, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, 1994), (hereinafter cited as Boatner, *Encyclopedia*) 953.

<sup>13</sup> Baron Johan DeKalb (1721-1780) was a German-born soldier who was commissioned as a Major General in the Continental Army in 1777. He was in command of the Maryland and Delaware Continentals at the Battle of Camden. Severely wounded in that battle, he died three days after the battle while a prisoner of war.

<sup>14</sup> Francis Marion (c 1732-1795) held the rank of captain of the Second Regiment of South Carolina State Troops in June 1775. This unit was taken into the Continental Line. Marion was promoted to major in November 1775; to lieutenant colonel in September 1776; and to colonel in September 1780. In addition, in late 1780, Governor Rutledge promoted him to the rank of Brigadier General in the South Carolina militia. He led his men into numerous skirmishes and engagements with the British after the fall of Charleston and earned the nickname of "Swamp Fox."

---

Robert D. Bass, *Swamp Fox: The Life and Campaigns of General Francis Marion* (Sandlapper Publishing Co., Inc., Orangeburg, South Carolina, 1974)