

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters](#)

Pension Application of John Williamson R11635

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

[Capitalization partly corrected.]

State of Virginia } S.S

Tyler County }

On this 16th day of January AD 1834 personally Appeared before me Moses Williamson a Justice of the peace In and for said County of Tyler John Williamson a resident of said County of Tyler Aged 74 years the 8 day of March last past who being first Duly Sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress of 7th June 1832 That he entered the service of the United States and served under the following, named officers as herein stated. That at fort Shepherd on big Wheeling Creek in the State of Virginia [near present Wheeling WV] on or about 20th day of September in the year 1776 he volunteered under Capt Samuel Mason subaltern officers names not recollected for a tour of one month Declarant states that he was marched from Fort Shepherd passing by Catfish Camp now Washington Pa to fort Pitt now Pittsburg Pa and was engaged in watching the movements of a large body of Indians assembled at fort Pitt as he understood for the purpose of making a treaty [7 - 19 Oct 1776, by Cornstalk and other chiefs reaffirming the treaty made after the Battle of Point Pleasant] From fort Pitt affiant was marched to fort Wheeling Virginia his month for which he had volunteered having expired he was discharged by his said Capt Samuel Mason after having served one month as private soldier On or about 1st day of March 1777 Declarant again volunteered his service and was accepted by the same Capt Samuel Mason as an Indian Spy for a tour of 9 months Has forgotten his subaltern officers names he now thinks an officer named Shepherd commanded at fort Shepherd [possibly David Shepherd] this summer of 77. He states that in obedience to the orders of his said Capt Mason he assisted to defend forts Shepherd and Wheeling and to spy the adjacent country and keep a sharp look out and hold in check the savage Indians and as far as possible prevent them from committing murders and plundering the frontier inhabitants of Western Virginia & Pennsylvania and further that he spied on McMahan's Creek & Indian Wheeling Creek north of the Ohio River and on the waters adjacent to forts Shepherd & Wheeling on the Virginia shore of the Ohio River and he further states that during the above named tour he now thinks in September [the 2nd] that a number of Indians headed as he afterwards learned by the infamous Simon Girty approached fort Wheeling and decoyed out Capt Ogal [sic: Joseph Ogle] & Mason with 26 or 7 men all of whom except 2 or 3 were most inhumanly butchered The Savages afterwards besieged the fort and killed the stock &c but notwithstanding their superior force the little garrison held out and bravely defended the fort until the Savages despaired of success abandoned the siege [see endnote] Affiant was more or less every week marching and spying the country which was constantly under alarm from the frequent inroads of the Savages. A man and his family named John Grice was murdered this summer of 77 near fort Shepherd The events before named are the most important that affiant recollects of taking place during the above named 9 months tour in the summer & autumn of the year 1777 His tour of 9 months having expired for which he had volunteered he was discharged by his said Capt Samuel Mason on or about 1st day of December 1777 at fort Shepherd on big Wheeling Creek in the State of Virginia after having served upwards of 9 months from March 77 till December 77 a private Soldier an Indian Spy in the service of the United States Declarant remained about forts Shepherd & Wheeling till the spring of 1778 About April of that year he again volunteered his service as an Indian Spy a Private Soldier under the same Capt Samuel Mason Declarant is old and very infirm his memory extremely treacherous and notwithstanding he served this 2^d 9 months tour under Capt Mason he positively states that he cannot recollect his subaltern officers names Indeed his memory in regard to his marches and spying excursions is very imperfect He recollects his 2 [second] 9 months tour under Capt Mason commenced the same spring that General

[Lachlan] McIntosh descended the Ohio River and erected a fort at the mouth of Big Beaver on the northwest shore of said River Ohio [Fort McIntosh at present Beaver PA, 1778] – Declarant states that he spied & watched the war paths of the Savages which led to the frontier settlements of northwestern Virginia & Pennsylvania for the purpose of holding in check the Indians who were continually whenever an opportunity permitted murdering all ages and conditions of life not even sparing the innocent babe at the mothers breast but indiscriminately murdering and carrying away the frontier inhabitants into captivity and further that many of the captives were only saved from the milder instrument of the tomahawk and scalping knife to suffer the more cruel death of being burned at the stake During the period of the Revolutionary War and for a considerable time after peace was made with Great Britain declarant states that in consideration of the suffering condition of his Country and the eminent danger of the western frontier of Virginia and Pennsylvania falling into the hands of merciless savage Indians he was induced from a pure devotion to his country came to volunteer and offer his aid in order to better secure the frontiers contiguous to forts Shepherd & Wheeling from savage violence and murder and declarant further states that during the summer of 1778 he was kept at forts Shepherd and Wheeling and along the Ohio River as low down said Ohio River as the mouth of Grave Creek [near present Moundsville WV] and was stationed as a guard & spy at Grave Creek aforementioned as well he can recollect about one month during the summer of 78 and that he was frequently marched in obedience to the orders of his said Capt Samuel Mason to divers places along the Ohio River and in the northwestern country in pursuit of hostile bands of Indian warriors who made frequent incursions into the settlements He does not recollect of being in any engagement with the Savages during his time of duty In the year 1778 his tour of 9 months for which his services was accepted having expired declarant was discharged he now thinks at fort Wheeling in the state of Virginia some time early in December of the year 1778 He has forgotten precisely on what day of said month after having served 9 months an Indian Spy a private Soldier in Capt Masons Company in the Service of the United States. Again in the year 1779 he now thinks in the spring of that year he again volunteered his service at Shepherd fort under his same Capt Mason and marched to Grave Creek and served one month an Indian Spy During this tour the spies of which affiant was one discovered 25 Indians The Savages were put to flight and a boy son of John Zane retaken from the Indians He was then discharged after one month service by Capt Samuel Mason at Shepherd fort aforesaid Declarant states that he served every year more or less from 1776 till 1783 but he cannot remember all his officers names He served three or four months in 1780 assisted in attacking 9 Indians The spies killed 8 of the Savages only one escaped He also served in 81 - 2 & 3 during the summer of those years under Capt Mason & Capt Eleazer Williamson whose campaign was attached to Col David Williamsons command he also spied on buffaloe [sic: Buffalo] a water of the Ohio River in 81 or 2 – He is confident that putting all his services together that he served upwards of three years in the war of the Revolution and declarant is certain that he has not over rated his service but he is certain that he has not detailed all his services having forgotten the names of officers and many of his marches believing as he did that they would never be important to know in the decline of his life Declarant has stated only such events and services as he can best remember He is certain that he served every year more or less from 1776 till peace was made He is two old & infirm to attend Court He has no documentary evidence of his service He does not know any person living that he can prove his service by He was last discharged by Capt E Williamson he thinks in the year 1783 on Buffaloe Creek in the State of Virginia He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and he declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any State He served with Indian Spies chiefly
subscribed and sworn to the day & year aforesaid

[signed] John Williamson

To the several interrogatories prescribed by the war department to the applicants he answereth as followeth — 1 I was born in the year 1759 on 8th day of March at Fingalds Manner & State of Maryland — 2^d My father told me I was born as above stated I have no record of my age — 3 I was living when I entered the service in Virginia I have lived ever since in Virginia I now reside in the County of Tyler 4th

all my tours I was a volunteer private soldier I served as such 5 I knew when in service Generals [Edward] Hand & McIntosh & Col John Gibson Shepherd and Col David Williamson I served chiefly with spies I do not recollect the number of any regiment whatever I have detailed the general circumstances of my service & my discharges are all lost many years ago 7th I am known to John W Allen a clergyman William Johnanson [sic: William Johnson] and John Virden who can testify as to my character for veracity and their belief of my services as a soldier of the revolution [signed] John Williamson

NOTE:

For other accounts of the siege and massacre at Wheeling Fort, see pension applications of Benjamin Ogle (R7778), Abraham Rodgers (S6026), and John Schoolcraft (S7468), as well as *Chronicles of Border Warfare*, attributed to A. S. Withers (1831).

The file contains a power of attorney dated 29 May 1834 executed by a John Williamson of Pleasants County (West) Virginia, who signed with an X.