

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Joel Coward R2389

Anna Coward SC

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 7 Dec 2014.

To the Commissioner of Pensions

The memorial of the undersigned the widow of Joel Coward respectfully shews that her husband the aforesaid Joel Coward Deceased was prior to her marriage with him a revolutionary soldier, that she has no documents to present in proof of this except such as is now presented but upon her oath she declares that the said Joel Coward entered the service of the United States at some period prior to the battle between the American and British armies near Camden South Carolina known as the battle of “Gates defeat” in August 1780 [defeat of Gen. Horatio Gates, Battle of Camden, 16 Aug 1780] – in which battle he was engaged as a private soldier at what particular place he enlisted she is not able to state further than at some convenient place to his residence before said enlistment which was in the County of Marlboro [formed from Cheraws District in 1785] state of South Carolina, that he was a regular enlisted for three years, she cannot state whether her said husband enlisted under, but he served part (if not all) his period of service under Captain Herd, who must have belonged to the Command of “General [Francis] Marion” or “Gen’l. Gates” of the Carolina troops, that he served out the full period of his said enlistment and was honorably discharged that she has no knowledge of his written discharge further than what is here presented she has heard him speak of it in his lifetime but knows not what may have went with it.

The undersigned further declares that she was married to the said Joel Coward in the County of Richmond State of North Carolina on or about the 15th day of December A.D. one thousand seven hundred and ninety that the person who married them was by the name of Darby Hennigen who was a Babtist Minister – and duly qualified to act in such Capacity. that after her marriage as aforesaid and until the death of her said husband the said Joel Coward they lived together in the bonds of affection as man and wife up to the time of his death which took place on the 6th day of November A.D. one thousand eight hundred and nineteen, that after her marriage as aforesaid her said husband made five crops in the County of Marlboro State of South Carolina and then removed to the County of Hawkins in the State of Tennessee at which place they continued to reside up to the death of her said husband at the time aforesaid and at which place she said widow continues to reside, that her said husband the said Joel Coward was at the time of his death aged fifty nine years and that she said affiant is now aged Eighty years. That the Family record has been worn out and lost. that she is now and has always been since the death of said Joel Coward a widow that this is the first attempt she has ever made to obtain a pension. that her bodily infirmity and inability to secure Counsel has been some of the reasons of its delay

She makes this declaration in order to avail herself of the benefit of the “act of Congress passed 29 July 1848 granting pensions to widows of the revolutionary soldiers married before the 1 day of January 1800 to the end that she may be placed upon the pension roll of pensioners under that Law who are paid at Knoxville in the state of Tennessee. And that she may have the full amount of all back dues to her allowable under said act which has been by her heretofore unclaimed up to the date of her inrollment, and that the same be continued to her during her widowhood.

She further most respectfully requests that the following proofs be received in substantiating her said claim and declares that such evidence as is here presented is the best she at this late day is able to produce in absence of documentary evidence of which she has now except what is here produced. She lastly states that she has been a member of the Methodist Church for upwards of sixty years.

[21 Oct 1852]

Anna herXmark Coward

State of Tennessee }

Hawkins County }

On this 21st day of October A.D. 1852 Personally appeared before me the undersigned a justice

of the peace within and for the County and state aforesaid Nathan Vernon aged ninety years who makes the following statement that is to say—

That said affiant was born in Queen Ann [sic: Queen Annes] County in the State of Maryland the 18th of September A.D. 1762 and came to the County of Hawkins and State of Tennessee in October A.D. 1789 and that he has continued to reside in said county ever since and that he still resides in said county and that he has been acquainted with Joel Coward and his wife Anna ever since the year 1810 – intimately – and understood that said Joel Coward and his wife had been in said County living for about six years before he said affiant became acquainted with the family. he had heard of them and may have seen them but never was well acquainted with said Joel Coward and his wife Anna untill about the year 1816 and ever since said years up to said Joel Cowards death which took place in the month of November 1819. The said Joel Coward and Anna Coward lived together as man and wife and their children’s names and ages he said affiant is well acquainted with. their oldest child must be about fifty two years old or upwards and their youngest one must be about forty years old or thereabouts and they have four living children.

Said Nathan Vernon further states that he has heard Joel Coward aforesaid in his lifetime say that he was an Enlisted soldier in the revolution for three years – heard him speak of being at the battle and engaged in it under General Gates near Camden in 1780 when that officer was defeated. has heard him tell how the soldiers ran and dropped their Guns He further states that his recollection is much blunted from his extreme age and cannot recite many particulars but is confident in the belief that the said Joel Coward was a soldier in the revolutionary army for about three years. that he married Anna Johnson before the year of our Lord one thousand eight Hundred and that said Anna has remained ever since up to this day his said Joel Coward’s widow – and that he has no interest whatever in said widows Pension.

[signed] Nathan Vernon

[The following is extremely faded. See endnote.]

This is to Certify that Joel Coward Inlist’d under me in the Contanantal survice, to escape of being punnish’d as his Inlistment not being a Cording to Law I do Discharge from that Inlistment

August the 17 1780

[William Johnson]



NOTES:

The discharge was sent with a letter dated 21 Oct 1852 that included a transcription with spelling corrected and adding “Com C. Troop” after the signature of Wm Johnson. The letter further stated that the widow explained the discharge as follows: “that said paper is dated the day after the Battle near Camden S.C. and the time of Gates defeat and she said widow believes that said discharge is some paper to set said Joel Coward right according to Law and, and she has no idea that her said husband Joel Coward ever did in any way ‘desert or prove traitorous’ but she said widow declares that she has heard her husband speak of serving two tours in said war, and she understood too that Captain Herd under whom he said Coward said he served was a ‘Militia Officer.’”

On 21 Oct 1852 Elizabeth Vernon, 85, stated that she was the sister of Anna Coward and that after five years in Marlboro County their “Father and family and said Joel Coward and his wife anna and two Children moved to Hawkins County Tennessee and settled in the same neighborhood.” She also stated that, “she has seen a scar like a gash cut on said Cowards head which she has heard him say was done with a bullet whilst he was in the war.”