

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Joseph Davis R2738

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Virginia }  
Harrison County } on the [blank] day of December 1832 Personally appeared before the court of Harrison County now sitting Joseph Davis resident of Harrison County and state of Virginia aged 65 years, 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 passed June 7<sup>th</sup> 1832. That he resided in the County of Fauquire [sic: Fauquier] and state of virginia, that in the month of February, about the 15<sup>th</sup> day in the year 1781 That he entered the service of the United States, as a substitue for William Pepper and was attached to a Compay Commanded by a Captain Jennengs and marched to Fredericksburg, was transfered to a Company under the Command of Captain John Willis and attached to Col. Toll's Ridgement [sic: Oliver Towles's Regiment]. Soon after a requisition was made for volnunteers to assist Lieutenant Skinner in Conveying a number of horses to Col. H. Lee then in South Carolina, that declarent did engage in said service as a voluteer, that he went on with said Lieut. Skinner to ninty-six in South Carolina and there Joined the Continental Army Commanded by General [Nathanael] Greene. that he delared that being young was employed by Col. Lee as waiter, Continued in said Service until about the 20<sup>th</sup> of September in the year above stated, was near the Battle at Utaw Spring [sic: Eutaw Springs, 8 Sep 1781], but not engaged in it. that he then being sick with the ague and fever, was permitted to go to his uncle in North Carolina till he should recover and after remaining there until the last of October, that he proceeded on to Virginia and arrived home about the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 1781. That he had a written discharg signed by Col. Henry Lee: but has been lost or mislaid

That he was Born in the County of Dorchester in the State of Maryland, in the year of Our Lord 1767 on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of October as he has Been informed, having no record of his age. that he was a private in the army when the above services were rendered. that since the Revolutionary War he removed from Fauquire County to Loudon [sic: Loudoun] County, from thence to Rockingham County Virginia from thence to Monongalia County thence to Harrison County, where he is now living

That he has no documentary evedence by which he can prove the above service, and knows of no living witness by whom he can prove the above service. That he begs leave to refer to Thomas Knotts, Jesse Martin & Jesse Nixon living in the said County of Harrison who can testify as to his Character. He hereby relinquishes every Claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present, and declares that his name is not on the pension Roll of any state.

Sworn to and subscribed.

Joseph Davis

We Hamilton Goss of the County of Harrison a Clergyman and Demcy P Carroll residing in the same place hereby certify that we are well acquainted with Joseph Davis who has subscribed and sworn to the above declaration, that we believe him to be 65 years of age that he is reputed and believed in the neighborhood where he resides to have been a soldier in the Revolutionary war, and that we concur in that opinion. Sworn and subscribed this 26 day of January

Jacob Coplin JP

Hamilton Goss/ D. P. Carroll

War Department/ Pension Office/ Feb 18, 1833

Sir [Col. Joseph Johnson, Congressman and Davis's agent], The declaration of Joseph Davis has been examined. He claims for services performed from the middle of Feb 1781 to the 20 Sep of that year. It would appear from his declaration that he was only thirteen years of age at the time he entered the service, and that soon after entering the service he engaged as a volunteer to take charge, with others, of some horses to be conducted from Virg'a to Col Lee then in S. Carolina, and that after he arrived there, he

acted as waiter to Col. Lee. Were this claim not objectionable on account of the age of the applicant, the service performed by him would not entitle him to a pension under the act of June 7, 1832. His claim has accordingly been rejected, and his declaration filed with other rejected cases in this office, agreeably to the regulations of the Dept

[The rest of the letter concerns the applications of James Fleming R3605, William Ford S8506, William Martin S5736, and Charles Shaw S7484.]

[The following note is in the handwriting of US District Attorney Washington G. Singleton, who investigated many pension applicants in Harrison County and elsewhere in present West Virginia. Nathan Goff assisted in the investigation. For details see my appendix to the pension application of David W. Sleeth S6111.]

Js. Davis –

this man called on Mr Goff left this paper it is in his own hand writing – I am informed that his claim has been rejected –

I was Born in the state Maryland, in Dorchester County in year of Our Lord 1767. In the Year 1780 my father being dead, my Mother removed to Virginia, in Fauquier County. In the fall of that year there was a draught for 18 months, and it fell to the lot of William Pepper to go into that service and not being willing to leave home, he hired me to take his place and I think that on the 17th day of February 1781 these men were called upon to rendezvous at Fauquier Court-house I then, and there appeared before Colonel H. Brook [possibly Humphrey Brooke] and was received by him in the place of Wm. Pepper; the same day took up the line of march for Fredericksburg under Capt G. Jennings, who took us to Fredericksburg, and delivered us to Colonel Tole a Continental Officer, who was there waiting the arrival of those draughts. I was there enroll'd in Capt. John Willis's Company, but before the Regiment was fill'd I was trafered to Col. H. Lees Corps of light horse then in South Carolina whereas Lieutenant Skinner stoped at Fredericksburg from Philadelphia having in charge several of Lee's horses and three of his Dragoons having more horses than they could manage well, he applied to Col. Tole for assistance, myself and one more (James Bland) were sent with Lieut. Skinner with our own consents we went on as fast as we could pass'd Guilford Courthouse N.C. 15 days after the Battle at that place [15 Mar 1781], proceeded to a place call'd Ninty-six, there we joined General Green's army which besieged the British Army under Lord Rowdon at that place [sic: Siege of Ninety Six SC under Col. John Harris Cruger, 22 May - 19 Jun 1781]. I then was placed in Col. Lee's Corps and attached to the second troop commanded by Capt. Rawdolph [probably Randolph]; The British were reenforced [by Lord Francis Rawdon] and and Gen. Green Raised the Siege. I continued in the army untill after the Battle at Utaw Springs 18 [sic: more than 50] miles from Charleston S.C. I then was taken sick was not able to march with Corps, but followed when I recovered. Came up with them at Petersburg Virginia. This was in November 1781. Lord Cornwallis had then surredered his Army to Gen'l Washington [19 Oct], I then applied to Col. Lee to let me go home, to which he agreed; he then gave me a discharg and I got home about the middle of December in said year 1781 and thus my military career ended in the revlutionary war, in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of my age.

[signed] Joseph Davis

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This man appears to be an hones man – says he wrote his own declaration – Colo Joseph Johnson was his agent – he dose not know of any person living by whom he can prove his sevises. That the above is a correct statement of his servises. That he proved his carracter by John Reynolds Esq and D P. Carrel & by J H. Goss Clegyman

[signed] Nathan Goff

[On 24 Dec 1834 the Commissioner of Pensions, James L. Edwards, wrote a letter with the following additional explanation:]

“There are strong objections to the admission of this claim besides that of the declarants age at the time. It appears that after the expiration of his term of Service as substitute he volunteered as above stated to assist in taking the horses to S. Carolina – that he there joined the Army in the Capacity of a waiter. The whole service here claimed amounts to 7 months and 5 days, allowing it to have been continuous, but no part of it can be viewed in the character of Military Service, except the first named tour, which might have been two or three months.”

Depart't of War/ Pension Off/ Jan'y 12th 1836 [last numeral unclear]

Sir [Johnson] Joseph Davis alleges that at the age of 14 he volunteered and took the place of a man who had been drafted for 18 mo. – that he rendezvoused at Fredericksburg Va. Feb'y 1781 – that soon after he was detailed to go to the South with horses for Col Lee, – that he remained in SC. in service under Col Lee until 20th Sept. the same year when having been taken sick he was permitted to leave the army, and that he proceeded to Va in Oct. In support of this allegation, Mr Davis has produced no proof; neither do the rolls in this Office furnish any. His service could not have exceeded 7 mo months, and why he should have been discharged after he had recovered from his illness is not known, and that he should have is a matter of some suspion. the claim cannot be admitted without some proof other than his own oath. I return herewith his letter and have the honor to be &c.

NOTE: On 21 Nov 1853 D. H. Wood requested on behalf of the heirs of Joseph Davis that the Commissioner of Pensions search the rolls of Lee's Legion for his name. The Pension Office replied that neither the name of Joseph Davis nor of William Pepper had been found.