

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Charles Dequisie (Duzua) R2896

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 24 Dec 2013.

State of Virginia and County of Nelson to wit

On this 15<sup>th</sup> day of February 1834 personally appeared before me James Wood Jr a Justice of the peace in and for the county aforesaid, Charles Dequisie a resident of the County of Nelson and State of Virginia aged Eighty one years the 15<sup>th</sup> day of June last past who being duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed June the 7<sup>th</sup> 1832. that he was a soldier in the french army at Orleans in the war between france and great Brittain that after the termination of that conflict [in 1763] in the latter part of the year of 1776 or the first of the year of 1777 [sic: see note below], Count Destine [sic: Charles-Hector-Théodat, Comte d'Estaing] who was the french commander in that war, together with all his troops and vessels went to the aid of the Americans in their revolutionary war with great Brittain; the service they first performed was a coasting one which had for its object the interception of the land and naval forces of Great Brittan with a view to prevent a communication between them; in the fall of 1778 they landed in Savannah South Carolina [sic] and attacked the British army and after severe battle the British was beaten and a great many of them taken prisoners, and taken charge of by the American Militia he recollects to have seen General Marion [then Lt. Col. Francis Marion] there upon his arrival which was shortly after the battle; in that battle Count Destine was wounded in his leg, and it was amputated by the seargeants [sic: surgeons?]. they then went on their vessels and sailed for france whence they arrived in the winter 1778-9 on that occasion he was in the American service not less than one year and a half to the best of his recollection. on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of May 1779 they set sail again from France under the command of Count De Grass [sic: not François-Joseph-Paul, Marquis de Grasetilly, Comte de Grasse, but Jean-Baptiste-Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau] the french commander; and on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August the same year landed in newport State of Rode iland [sic: see note below] where count De Rochambo [sic] took command of the French land forces and De Grass continued to command the fleet, from thence they marched to providence from thence to peaks kill [sic: Peekskill NY] where there was some small skirmishing with some troops commanded by General Arnold [sic], from thence to new york where they stayed some time, from thence to Phillidelphia [sic: Philadelphia] where they stayed a while from thence to Baltimore where they stayed some time from thence towards virginia about fifty miles, and incamped a while from thence to annapolice [sic: Annapolis MD] where they stayed a while and then went on board the fleet commanded by Count De Grass from thence they sailed for york [Yorktown VA] and landed there same in hampton, same on James river bay, and same in Goucester [sic: Gloucester VA] then they marched to York where they stayed canonadeing and Bombarding and being canonaded and Bombarded untill cornwallace [sic: Cornwallis] surrendered which was in october [19<sup>th</sup>] 1781 they then went to old williamsburg where they were quartered untill the spring following; and his term of enlistment having expired and he being determined not to return to france left the army and has lived in virginia ever since in that tour he was in the American service not less than one year and a half; to the best of his recollection; that his services in aid of the Americans in the revolution in all were not less than three years to the best of his recollection; and for these services he claims a pension, that in the whole of these services he was a private, he has no documentary evidence of his service nor dose he know of any one now living by whom he can prove them his pay was nine pence a day. he hereby relinquishes every claim whatsoever to a pension except the present and declares his name is not on the pension roll of any agency in any state or territory. Sworn to and subscribed the day and year first aforesaid

Charles hisXmark Dequisie

Questions by the Magistrate

1<sup>st</sup> where and in what year was you born

I was born in france as I have been told in a village called Champania the 15 day of June 1752

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

I have none

3<sup>rd</sup> where were you living when called into the service where have you lived since the revolutionary war and where do you now live – I was in the french army at orleans when called into the american service after the revolution I went to the county of caroline in the state of virginia where I lived about 16 years from thence to Hanover where I stayed about three years from thence to goochland where I lived about seven years from thence to Amherst county where I lived till Nelson was taken from that county [in 1808] and have lived in Nelson county ever since and am now liveing in Nelson County

4<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

I never did because I did not apply for one for fear if I did I would be taken to france

5<sup>th</sup> how were you called into service were you drafted did you volenteer or were you a substitute and if a substitute for whom

I was a regular in the French army that aided the Americans in their revolution

6<sup>th</sup> 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 circumstances of your service the French General was Rochambo my colonel was Otville [Hautville?] and my Major John Boiyer [John Bowyer?], and I belonged to the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment of French regulars I recollect to have seen Washington and Lafayett [sic: Marquis de Lafayette] and other officers at the Seige of York whose names I do not recollect I know nothing of the no. of any Regiment in the american army and the general circumstances of services are set forth in my declaration as well as my recollection would admit

7<sup>th</sup> State the names of persons in your present neighbourhood to whom you are known who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief of your service as a soldier of the revolution.

Enquire of John H and James H Rodes

State of Virginia }

Nelson County } Towit On this 20<sup>th</sup> day of Febuary 1837 personally appeared before me a justice of the peace in and for the said County Charles Deuzua alias Charles Dequise a citizen of said County and State aged eighty five years on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June next and he being first duly sworn according to Law doth on his oath make the following Declaration, in order to obtain the benefits of the provision of the act of Congress passed 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1832. That he came to America with the French Troops in the cause of the United States against Great Brittain. That he came in a French Frigate 1<sup>st</sup> Rank of 60 Guns. That he was a soldier in the artillery commanded by Count Rochambeau and joined the american Troops near Savanna in Georgia under the command of General Marion [sic] in the fall of 1779. That place was then in the possession of the enemy. County DEstaing commander in chief of the French forces by land and sea was wounded in the engagement at savanna in the right leg and in consequence lost his leg. The French fleet then sailed for France and Count DGrass was put in command of the said Fleet which then sailed again for America and landed at New Port in Rhode Island on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 1780. The Troops remained there till the summer of 1781 awaiting orders & then marched to Fish Kill thence to Philadelphia & remained there a few weeks. Thence to the neighbourhood of New York thence to Baltimore thence to Annapolis & thence took shipping to Hampton in Va and from thence marched to the immediate vicinity of York Town which was in the possession of the enemy, and joined the American army under command of Gen'l. Washington. There constructed a Battery in the piney field back of the said York Town about half mile distant – he states that he was at the said place during the seige and discharged all the duties of a soldier with fidelity. This was in Octr. 1781. After the said Town was surrendered to the american forces the said Troops to which he was attached were marched to Williamsburg and laid there in Winter quarters the winter of 1781 & 2 and when the said troops marched to the north to embark for France he moved to the County of Caroline in the state of Virginia and settled. The period of his service from the fall of 1779 until the spring of 1782 makes two years and three months of actual service in the cause of American liberty. He states that being exclusively with French troops; and haveing no acquaintance with

others it is impracticable for him to prove his said services by the evidence of other persons. He has no knowledge of any who can prove his services. He relies upon the circumstances which he has stated which occurred during his said services. He has frequently stated his services to other persons many years ago, and hopes their statements may be received as the best evidence he can procure in support of his claim. He states that he has resided in Virginia since the year 1782 as a citizen that he was born in France

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 agency in any state – that he has no discharge

Charles Duzua alias Charles Dequise his mark X

NOTES:

A correct chronology of the services of D'Estaing, Rochambeau, and De Grasse follows:

1778

- 6 Feb French-American alliance concluded
- 13 Apr D'Estaing's fleet departs for America
- July Lands off New York
- Sep Departs for the Caribbean

1779

- 16 Aug D'Estaing departs Haiti for Georgia
- 11 Sep D'Estaing lands troops near Savannah GA
- 16 Sep D'Estaing demands that Gen. Augustin Prevost surrender Savannah
- 24 Sep Siege of Savannah begins under command of Gen. Benjamin Lincoln
- 9 Oct Spring Hill redoubt stormed unsuccessfully; D'Estaing twice wounded
- 18 Oct D'Estaing returns troops to ships
- 19 Oct Siege of Savannah fails and is abandoned
- 21 Oct D'Estaing departs for France (with both legs)

1780

- May French fleet under Rochambeau departs for America
- 11 Jul Rochambeau's fleet lands at Newport RI; remains almost a year awaiting support
- 25 Sep Benedict Arnold's treason discovered

1781

- 5 Jan Gen. Benedict Arnold invades Virginia
- 22 Mar De Grasse leaves France for Haiti
- May Washington and Rochambeau plan to besiege New York
- Aug De Grasse receives letter from Rochambeau requesting assistance
- 19 Aug Combined armies of Rochambeau and Washington leave New York for Virginia
- 26 Aug De Grasse arrives Chesapeake Bay and lands troops
- 2 Oct Rochambeau's troops begin entrenchments for siege of Yorktown
- 19 Oct Cornwallis surrenders

On 20 Feb 1837 Charles A Smith made a statement in support of the claim of Charles Dequise, including the following: "I do not think it would have been possible for any ignorant and unlettered man as he is to have had any knowledge of the names of the Officers and of the places and circumstances of which he spoke in his declaration unless he had had a personal and actual experience and knowledge of them." Smith also stated that Dequise's language was "still very broken and difficult to be understood except by his acquaintances who have known him for some time."