

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Gatus (Gater) Fox R3725

Transcribed by Will Graves

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[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 8th of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

[p 3]

State of Tennessee Gibson County

Be it remembered that on this 7th day of July 1843 personally appeared in open Court before the Circuit Court of said County of Gibson and State of Tennessee -the Honorable Benjamin C. Tollen one of the Circuit Judges in and for said State presiding – Gaitus [sic] Fox, a resident of said County of Gibson and State of Tennessee aged eighty six 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 of the 7th of June 1832.

He states that according to his best recollection and belief he entered the service as a volunteer substitute in the Militia for one James Utley in the fall of the year preceding the Battle of Guilford. He thinks it was in the year 1771 [sic, 1781], but being "no scholar" his recollection of dates is very indistinct and he cannot state the day of the month or even the month. He has no means of referring to dates but by comparing his present age and his age at the time he entered the service. He remembers distinctly that he entered the service some time in the fall before the Battle of Guilford and left at about two weeks after that battle took place. The company to which he belonged was commanded by Capt. Ethelred Jones and a Mr. Knight was Lieutenant of the company. He states that during this tour of service he was commanded by one Palmer [probably a mistake an attempt to identify Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Farmer] either as Major or Colonel, but he is unable to state positively. His impression is that he was Colonel. He remembers distinctly that he was under command of General Davidson [William Lee Davidson], who was killed in an engagement with the British at the Island Ford [sic, Cowan's Ford]¹ on the Catawba River. He further states that he was born in the County of Brunswick in the State of Virginia in the month of March 1757 according to the best information he has on the subject - never having any record of his age and having kept it from information and memory. At the time he entered service he was residing in the County of Wake in the State of North Carolina. From there he was marched with the brigade or division under General George Davidson [sic, William Lee Davidson] to which he was attached up the country to the Island Ford on the Catawba River and was stationed there for the purpose of guarding that pass and preventing the British from crossing. But on the night after their arrival at that station they were attacked by the British, and being greatly outnumbered, were driven from their position with the loss of their General as above stated. They were pursued about four miles to the widow Torren's [sic, Torrence or Tarrant] plantation [Tarrant's Tavern, February 1, 1781], at which place they were overtaken by the cavalry of the enemy and obliged to disperse and he take themselves to the woods for safety. They went through the woods until they reached the town of Salisbury when they reassembled and from there marched with all possible rapidity to join General Greene [Nathanael Greene] which they did in the County of Halifax [sic, Halifax].

¹ William Lee Davidson was killed on February 1, 1781, at Cowan's Ford on the Catawba River in North Carolina.

They continued with General Greene and under his command until the Battle of Guilford² in which they participated. After this battle they marched to Salisbury and from there to Hillsboro where they were discharged.

He further states that in the ensuing summer he again entered the service as the volunteer substitute in the Militia of one Thomas Binney for eighteen months, but only served a small portion of the time. He served under Col. George Litle [sic, George Lytle] but he cannot now recollect the names of any of the other officers. In fact he cannot state whether there was any other officers in command during this period of his service. They were marched to Hillsboro and stationed there to guard that place, it being at that time the residence of the Governor. After having remained at that station for a short time, perhaps a month, but as to the length of time his recollection is very indistinct. They were attacked [Hillsborough, September 12, 1781] by the Tories in large force under command of Col. Fanning [David Fanning] by whom they were defeated and all made prisoner including the Governor [Governor Thomas Burke].³ They were carried to Wilmington where they were kept in a prison in a place called the "Provo's." While here the small pox broke out among them and many of them died of that disease. After having remained in this place for about three months as well as he can remember some of them were exchanged and the others released. He states that after he was released is as above stated, having served only about four months including his imprisonment he was not required to serve out the balance of his time and was discharged - and returned home.

He further states that after his return home a short time he again entered the service as a ranger in a company of volunteer mounted men commanded by Capt. Tignal Jones - and served one year by turns, with other troops of the same description. During this service he was wounded by a Tory outpost with two bullets in the thigh but it was only a flesh wound and has never disabled him much. He states that he has long since worn out and lost his discharges and has no documentary evidence of his service, and that he knows of no one whose evidence he could procure, who can testify to his services. 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 the agency of any State, Territory or district in the Union.

Gatus Fox, X his mark

Sworn to & subscribed in open Court this 7th July 1843

S/ J.B. Blakemon Clerk

[Joseph Riddle, a clergyman, and Moses Woodfin and John W. Crockett gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

And the said Court do further certify that the following are substantially the answers of the applicant to the several interrogatories propounded to him by the Court in pursuance of the regulations of the War Department, to wit:

Question 1st. When and in what year were you born? Answer - I was born in the County of Brunswick in the State of Virginia. The only means by which I can state the year of my birth is by reckoning back from my present age and by this mode of calculating I must have been born in the year 1757.

Question 2nd. Have you any record of you age and if so where is it? Answer – I have none nor did I ever have.

Question 3rd. Where were you living when you were called into service? Where have you lived since

² March 15, 1781

³ Governor Thomas Burke of North Carolina was taken prisoner by forces commanded by Col. David Fanning on September 12, 1781, in Hillsborough, NC. <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/hillsborough.htm>

the Revolutionary War and where do you live now? Answer - I lived in the County of Wake in the State of North Carolina when called into service. Since the Revolution I have resided in the States of North Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee and now reside in Gibson County, Tennessee.

Question 4th. How were you called into service: were you drafted, did you volunteer, or were you a substitute: and a substitute for whom? Answer - I entered the service first as the substitute of one James Utley. Secondly as the substitute of one Thomas Binney. Thirdly as a volunteer in the ranging service.

Question 5th. State the names of some of the Regular Officers who were with the troops where you served. Such Continental Militia as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service? Answer - I remember Col Litle, Capt. "Dred Jones" Lieut. Knight Col Palmer or Major Palmer. I cannot state whether the last name was Col or Major but I think he was Colonel. Also General Davidson and General Greene. (Here the applicant detailed the circumstances of his services substantially as they are set forth in his Declaration.)

Question 6th. Did you ever receive a discharge and if so where is it - and by whom was it given? Answer - I received discharges from the Captains I served under Capt. "Dred Jones" & Capt. Tignal Jones(17,18) but they are long ago worn out and lost from getting wet as I removed from Carolina to Kentucky. I also received a discharge from Col. Lane at Wake Court House after I was released from imprisonment in the "Provo", which was wet and worn out at the same time.

Question 7. State the names of the persons to whom you are known in your neighborhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief in your services as a soldier of the Revolution? Answer - Anyone in the neighborhood I believe would certify to my good character for veracity and to their belief in my services I know Abraham Smith, Fielding G. Goodman, Parson Riddle, Mr. Crockett Mr Woodfin and many others - almost every man in the neighborhood where I live.

The above interlineations in the answer of the applicant to the 6th interrogatory relative to his discharges was made before the Registrar of the Court was here to affix.

S/ Benjamin C. Totlen,
Judge H. Presiding

[p 15]

Supplemental Declaration

State of Tennessee Gibson County

On this 19th day of May A.D. 1851 Personally Appeared before me Richardson P. White a justice of the peace within and for the County of Gibson and the State of Tennessee Gatus Fox aged ninety-four years who first being duly sworn on the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God makes this declaration for the purpose of obtaining the benefit of and Act of Congress entitled an act supplementary to the Act for the relief of certain officers and soldiers of the Revolution passed June 7th, 1832 -- says -- on his oath that he resided in Wake County in the State of North Carolina in the time of the Revolutionary War in which he served in the Army of the United States as follows (viz.) his first tour was a three months tour for which term he volunteered and served out his full time And was discharged honorably after having fulfilled his three months tour of service in the company commanded by Captain Dred Jones supposed his real name to be Etheldred but was called Captain Dred Jones that he marched from Wake County NC to Hillsboro in this tour he was taken prisoner at Hillsboro by Colonel Fanning a Tory Colonel length of captivity he cannot remember. His next tour was in the Cavalry company commanded by Captain Tignal Jones commonly called Colonel Jones in which service he was in near twelve months but returned home and in every three months and stayed

about one week at home with an engagement to return and continue in the service 3 months longer which engagement he fulfilled punctually. And in the above tour or tours he was a great portion of his time scouting about in Montgomery County in North Carolina his business was to Act in suppressing the Tories and Pochbers [sic, ? poachers ?] and When they took any prisoners to carry them to Head Quarters at Hillsboro the next tour was a three months tour his Captain's name he has forgotten but he knows that he went under Colonel Davidson and was in the Battle at Catawba River and saw him killed and the militia dispersed in the Army scattered that he thinks he did not serve the whole three months quite out and received no discharge in the Army a discharge was sent to him for a three months service that knows and well remembers his last tour but does not believe that he can specify all his service but the last tour he substituted in place of Thomas Beany for which Thomas Beany was to pay him \$100 that said Thomas Beany had laid out after he was drafted and that he was caught and compelled to serve to the end of the War that he well remembers that he served 6 months in (his) Thomas Beany's place and was in the Army on St. John's River when peace was made which date of service was in 1782 & 3 or the preceding tour he cannot state the dates At this time for by reason of a spell of sickness and old age his memory has much failed him that he is unlearned entirely that he now remembers the facts set forth by him And time in which has related above that he has and therefore in the County of Gibson and the State of Tennessee Applied by the agency of the Honorable John Crockett for a pension When and Where he had a better opportunity of proving the facts that he now states the reason Why he has so long delayed renewing his Application is because he had no agent qualified to do his business And did never received any information from the Honorable J. Crockett What disposition was made of his claim. That his service was to the best of his recollection near four years but is for the want of a better memory At this time unable to give Any better explanation on the time by dividing it in separate tours. That he had several discharges And that they are lost first got Wet and nearly faded away And finally lost that he now resides in Gibson County in the State of Tennessee And depends on his own character for truth of service being unable from the great scarcity of surviving soldiers to prove positive And that he never had any record proof of service since the loss of said discharges And that he had no knowledge of a pension for Years After its passage except the pension law Where a man had to give a list of his property. Sworn to and Subscribed to the 19th day of May A.D. 1851.

S/ Gatus Fox, X his mark

S/ Richardson P. White, JP

[Joseph White, 84, and James Ousley, 55, gave supporting affidavits as to the character and reputation of Gatus Fox.]

[p 18: Allen Fox, 50; Harrison Fox; Jackson Fox and William T. Connel, all of Gibson County, Tennessee gave a supporting affidavit as to Gatus Fox having filed papers earlier with John Crockett and of having heard Gatus Fox speak often of his Revolutionary services.]

[p 20, Gater Fox granted a power of attorney dated May 3, 1854, to Chas. C. Tucker of Washington DC, to pursue his claim for a pension—given in Gibson County, Tennessee.]