

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension Application of William Griffin R4318

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Virginia } SS.

County of Carroll }

On this 5th day of July 1847 personally appeared in open Court, before the County Court of Carroll County, William Griffin a resident of Carroll County and State aforesaid aged 88 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 7th 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers. That he enlisted in the County of Kent in the State of Maryland on the — day of February 1781 [sic] in the Maryland State troops under Captain Isaac Perkins, during the War, and marched for Delaware, and at Salisbury in the State of Maryland at the head of Double Creek, was engaged under General Smallwood in a battle with the British and fifty of General Smallwood's men fell in that battle, and over one hundred of the British,

That he then marched to Somerset Court House in the State of Maryland, and there had another small skirmish, and then went to Snow Hill in the State of Maryland, and there had a severe engagement in which he the said William Griffin received a bayonet wound in the left thigh, also a musket ball in the right shoulder, which caused him to lay by three weeks or prevented him from active service. That said Company was there ordered to New York, whither they went (including the said William Griffin) and joined General Washington's Army. [See note below.] That he continued in service and was under General Washington at the taking of Cornwallis at Yorktown in Virginia [19 Oct 1781],

That he served nine Months and fifteen days, and then he received his discharge at Newtown in the County of Chester [sic: Kent County] and State of Maryland, after peace was made. That he had his House burnt in the County of Campbell State of Virginia, and his papers burnt up at which time his discharge was burnt;

That he has no documentary evidence, and that he knows of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to his service.

That the said William Griffin to the following interrogatories propounded by the Court makes the following answers;

1st Where and in what year were you born?

Ans. I was Born in the State of Maryland on the 25th February 1759. If my Father's Family Record was correct.

2nd Have you any record of your age, and if so where is it?

Ans. I have no Record of my age myself;

3rd Where were you living, when called into service, where have you lived since the Revolutionary War, and where do you now live?

Ans. I was living in Kent County in the State of Maryland, when I enlisted, shortly after the Revolutionary war, I moved to the County of Franklin in the State of Virginia, and lived there 18 years and upwards. I then moved to Campbell County, Virginia, and lived there a few years, & then moved down into Buckingham County, Virginia, and lived there about fifteen years. Then I moved back into Campbell County again and lived there about Four years; I then moved from Campbell County to Grayson County Virginia, (a part of which is now [since 1842] Carroll County), where I have been living for the last fourteen years, and where I am yet living.

4th How were you called into service: were you draughted, did you volunteer, or were you a substitute, and if a substitute for whom?

Ans. I enlisted to serve during the war?

5th 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?

Ans. Capt. Isaac Perkins, Lieutenant Smyth, Ensign Claypole. I cannot recollect the names of any of the Regiments. There were about ninety six men including officers Privates & all in Capt

Perkins's Company to the best of my recollection. and at Trenton we joined General Smallwood's army and continued with Smallwood's army until after the taking of Cornwallis at York Town, and was still under General Smallwood until I received my discharge.

6th Did you ever receive a discharge from the service, if so by whom was it given and what has become of it?

Ans. George Budd gave me my discharge if I am not mistaken (but I have no learning & cannot read writing) but I received a discharge in the fall of the year 1781 which discharge was burnt up in my House in Campbell County in the State of Virginia many years ago.

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

William hisXmark Griffin

[Certified by John Carroll, former Representative in the Virginia legislature.]

Hillsville Carroll Co. Virga.

Augt 12th 1850

Sir,

Mr. William Griffin of this County requests that you should examine his application & evidence as a Revolutionary soldier, which is filed in the Pension office by Mr. Isaac N. Coffin, the old Man Griffin is yet living and is in very indigent circumstances, and has often been requested to go to the Poor House of our County, but always refuses, hoping his claim someday will be recovered, he is an illiterate man can neither read or write, and his Memory about dates is very deficient, and at the time he said he enlisted in 1781. he only arrived at the date by other transactions that had occurred about that time as he said he could not recollect the date I have no doubt but he enlisted in the year 1782 or 3 [sic] & continued during the war he being a very ignorant man & loosing his papers by fire & not being able to employ any person to attend to business for him, has been (I have no doubt) the cause of his claim not being allowed or attended to, for ever since I have known him which has been some 12 or 13 years he has resided in the most remote place to be found and worked or begged a little support, from his nearest neighbors and cultivated his little Patch with his hoe and never leaves his cabin far, only to procure sustenance, he will give you ⅓ if you can recover,

Shimuel Godwin Esq.

Yrs.

Fielden L. Hale

Land Office Annapolis, 16th September, 1850.

I hereby Certify, That it appears by the Muster Rolls of the Revolution remaining in this office, That William Griffin, Enlsited as a fifer, in the 1st Maryland Regiment, for the term of three years, on the 19th day of January, 1779 and on the 16th day of August was made prisoner [see note below]. And I further Certify, that by a Pay roll kept by John Hamilton, Agent for the Maryland Line, also remaining in this office, That William Griffen a fifer, was discharged the 15th day of May, 1782, and received pay up to the 1st of January, 1783.

George G. Brewer Reg'r. Land Off. Md.

Supplemental Declaration [paper damaged at the places marked X]

State of Virginia County of Campbell

On this [X] of October in the year 1832 [sic], before me, Abra[X] a Justice of the peace for the [X] personally appeared William Griffin a resident of [X] who being first duly sworn according to law, does on his oath, declare as follows viz: That sometime in the year 1847 he employed a man named Hale of the County of Carroll, State aforesaid, to prepare his declaration claiming pension for his services in the War of the Revolution and that he (the affiant) has ever since awaited the result of his application; but that he now understands that his said Attorney (Hale) did make him state in the said declaration certain items appertaining to his said services in the Revolution which were erroneous and in violation of his (the affiants) real intentions as to the details of such services, several of which he does now recite and correct as follows: In the said declaration prepared by said Hale, he (the affiant) is made to say that he entered the service in January 1781 "when intended to assert that" he entered in January 1779 for three years, or during the war; that he said Agent or attorney omitted to insert in said declaration that he (the affiant) was a fifer or musician and entered the service as such; that he omitted to state that in

the battle of Snow Hill which was fought in August 1780 [see note below], he the affiant was severely wounded in the thigh and that the mark of said wound was yet visible on his thigh; and that he omitted the most particular items connected with said battle, i.e. of the affiant being captured by the enemy, being held in captivity for some weeks, and [X] being exchanged for, his again entering the [X] days service instead of 9 months & 15 days service as stated in the said highly erroneous declaration &c. He now reiterates that he did enter the service [X] January 1779 and desires the accounting officers of the War Department & pension office to notice in his former declaration in one or more places the assertion that he enlisted to serve during the War, and served until after peace was made or hostilities had ceased in the Fall of 1782, so well as he remembers; that he enlisted as a fifer in the Company commanded by Captain Isaac Perkins in the first Regiment of Maryland Troops on the Continental Establishment, and after being captured &c as above stated, and returned to said company was discharged therefrom on account of the wound received at Snow Hill in that he afterwards joined the company of Captain Smith in the same Regiment and served between two and three years as fifer in said Company also — that his discharge from the last mentioned service was given him by one George Budd, and was signed by the Colonel of the Regiment whose name he does not now remember, but that he received his written discharge from the first tour of service in the fall of 1780, and not "1781" as erroneously stated that his said discharge was burnt up with his dwelling house and all his property in the County in the year 1816, and that he has no other documentary proof of his service now in his possession, and no record proof of the same other than that which may be afforded by the Muster Rolls of his Regiment & Company, to which he would most respectfully Refer the aforesaid office for the same and for the fact of there being no other William Griffin that served in the Maryland Troops in the Revolution; and to prove his identity he begs leave to recite a few facts — he removed from Kent County in Maryland (the County from which he joined the service each time) to Franklin County, Virginia, in the year 1794 in which he resided 15 years - then 2 years in Campbell - then 13 years in Buckingham - then 5 years again in Campbell - then 18 years in Grayson (now Carroll from which County his former declaration was sent) and then again to Campbell where he now resides — That he has never been able, since leaving Maryland, to find out the residence or whereabouts of any of his contemporaries, all of whom he supposes to be now deceased. He further declares that he served under General William Smallwood and was engaged in the battles of Monmouth [28 Jun 1778], Talbot Court House, Salisbury and Somerset Court House, and was finally discharged at a place called Newtown now in Worcester County [sic] Maryland. That he trusts the said accounting officers will no longer distrust his identity and that the benign intentions of the act of Congress will be [sic] longer withheld from him on account on account of the errors of his attorney in drawing up his pension declaration and of his own illiteracy being unable to write at his advanced age, and, on account of the failure of his memory; to remember the precise periods of his entering and of his leaving the service - that his name is not on the Rolls of the Pension Agency of any State whatever, and that he hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension except the present, which he trusts will be at once granted him under the law of the 1st May 1828 or 7th June 1832. Sworn to and subscribed before me on the day and year aforesaid; and I do certify that from what I have seen and heard that the said William Griffin is entitled to a pension for he now has a scar on his thigh which is spoken of in the above declaration & is a man of strict veracity

Abner Early J.P.

And I certify that the applicant is unable from old age and infirmity to attend court.

Abner Early J.P.

NOTE:

I could not identify any of the engagements in Maryland mentioned in Griffin's depositions. William Smallwood was commissioned a Colonel of the 1st Maryland Regiment in June 1776 and immediately marched his regiment to join Washington's army in New York.

The date given by the Land Office for Griffin's being taken prisoner, 16 Aug 1780, was the date of the Battle of Camden SC, where Major Gen. Smallwood commanded the First Maryland Brigade. I could not identify a battle at any place named Snow Hill; it is possible that Griffin somehow attached that name to the Battle of Camden.