

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Nathaniel Kerr R5887

Margaret Kerr

f81NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

rev'd 3/20/15

[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.]

State of North Carolina, County of Orange

On this the 17th day of April 1845, personally appeared before the undersigned one of the Justices of the Courts of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for said County, Margaret Kerr, a resident of Hawfields in said County of Orange aged 89 years, who being first duly Sworn according to Law, doth, on her oath, make the following Declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress, passed July 7, 1838, entitled "An act granting half pay & pensions to certain widows:" That she is the Widow of Daniel Kerr, Deceased, who during the War of the Revolution (to the best of this Declarant's knowledge & believe) did serve the United States as hereinafter set forth:

1. The Declarant the said Margaret Kerr further states upon her said oath, that she has reason to believe and does believe, that in the War of the Revolution, and in the fall of the year 1778, there was a draft for militia men to Serve the United States, six months in said War of the Revolution and that her deceased husband the aforesaid Nathaniel Kerr did serve all of said six months as Ensign, the Declarant is under the impression that Collier [John Collier] was Captain, Locke [Francis Locke] Colonel and Rutherford [Griffith Rutherford] Brigadier General, rendezvoused (as well as this Declarant can remember) at Randolph old Court House, thence to Salisbury, thence to South Carolina, where they were with General Butler [John Butler] at "Black Swamp"; and at this last employment she thinks during the "Briar Creek" battle [March 3, 1779] – a week or two before the expiration of said six months draft the said Nathaniel Kerr, fell sick and remained in Lincoln's [Benjamin Lincoln's] Army, till his recovery which was not till the beginning of the ensuing fall. This deponent lived neighbor to said Nathaniel Kerr during the Revolutionary war, and remembers of said Kerr being to the South in said Campaign, of his being sick, and being assisted home by one of his friends. The Declarant has often heard her deceased husband speak of his hardships in the tour & of his being very ill during the Summer of 1779: & that at the time of the Battle of Stono [June 20, 1779], he was sick in General Lincoln's Camp and that said Camp was but a few miles from Stono. That he heard the firing very distinctly. That said Nathaniel Kerr did not return home till sometime in September following. That in all of the foregoing six months tour (Except a week or 10 days before the expiration thereof), the said Nathaniel Kerr did serve as Ensign in the Company aforesaid, and in Colonel Locke's Regiment. That in the said tour, said declarant has reason to believe and does believe, that her deceased husband was duly Commissioned Ensign as aforesaid and did serve as such until taken sick. The Declarant can find no commission or discharges of the aforesaid Daniel Kerr, and her impression is, that all his papers were destroyed by fire about the close of the Revolutionary War.
2. The said Margaret Kerr, Declarant as aforesaid, further states upon her said oath, that, she has reason to believe and does believe, that in the Summer and fall of 1780, that in the town of Salisbury in the State aforesaid there were troops stationed and military stores kept and that as

“Forage Master” the said Nathaniel Kerr served the Army three months and two weeks, as she has understood and believes, and that duly Commissioned thus to act by General Butler [John Butler], or General Caswell [Richard Caswell].

3. The said Margaret Kerr, Declarant as aforesaid: further states that in the Summer following, 1781, there was a draft for three months militia man to Serve the United States in said War of the Revolution. The Declarant's husband was in this tour, attached to a Company of Dragoons, Dugan [Maj. Thomas Dugan], she thinks was Captain in this tour, McClary was Major and Dudley [Guilford Dudley] was Colonel were marched to the South were stationed some time at “Bell's Mills”¹ at “Grassy Island”, “Sandy Creek” and “Deep River,” the object of this was to all the Tories, who were very numerous in the South part of Randolph & in Chatham, Moore and Rockingham Counties. In this tour there was a small engagement between Colonel Dudley & the Tory party – some of the enemy this declarant has understood were killed, and some made prisoners. At the expiration of said tour were discharged, at Randolph old Court House by Major McClary, and returned home. In all of this tour, this Declarant believes that her husband was in a regularly organized Corps, and called into Service by Competent Authority. This tour this Declarant is under the impression ended about the last of August 1781.
4. The Said Margaret Kerr, Declarant as aforesaid, further states that in a short time after the expiration of the aforesaid tour, there was a call for troops to pursue the Army of Colonel Fanning [David Fanning] who had lately surprised and captured the Town of Hillsboro [September 12, 1781] and had made prisoner the Governor [Thomas Burke], and all the troops stationed in said Town of Hillsborough. [Name obliterated by an ink blot] this Declarant thinks was Captain, & Collier Colonel [John Collier], General Butler was Brigadier General, were marched to “Raft Swamp”² were at North East Bridge and in the neighborhood of Wilmington some time – General Rutherford she understood had command of the troops while in the vicinity of Wilmington. In this tour the said Nathaniel Kerr was a private of Infantry and after remaining in the Service in said Tour three months as well as she can now remember, was discharged and returned home. In this above tour, the said Nathaniel Kerr was in a regularly organized Corps and Called into Service by Competent Authority, as this Declarant as understood and believes.
5. The Declarant, the said Margaret Kerr, further states upon her said oath, that she has reason to believe and does believe, that in the Spring of 1782, her deceased husband, the aforesaid Nathaniel Kerr, was again in the United States service, as private of Dragoons. In this last tour was in General Green's [sic Nathanael Greene's] Army under Major McClary she thinks and remembers of hearing him say he was in Greene's Army when they were camped at Beach Hill, near Bacon's Bridge, the length of this tour the Declarant does not remember, but is under the impression it was of three months duration and his Captain she believes was Dugan.

This Declarant, the said Margaret Kerr, further stateth, that she has reason to believe, that the said Nathaniel Kerr did serve the United States in one or two other tours of duty in the war of the Revolution as private of Cavalry, under Captain Dugan, but does not now remember them well enough to State with precision. The declarant feels it her duty further to state, that in consequence of not having been married to the said Nathaniel Kerr till after the close of the Revolutionary War, his having died upwards of 28 years, together with an imperfect memory, will apologize she trust for not being enabled to set forth more in detail, the Revolutionary Services of her deceased husband, the aforesaid Nathaniel Kerr.

The Declarant here states in brief, that she believes to have been her deceased husband's Revolutionary Services & what she has stated all fully in the foregoing Declaration: To wit:

1 <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/bellsmill.htm>

2 <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/littleraftsw.htm>

In 1778, '9	5 months & 20 days	as Ensign
In 1780	3 months 2 weeks	as Forage Master
In 1781	3 months	as pri[vate] Dragoons
In 1781	3 months & 2 weeks	as pri[vate] Infantry
In 1782	3 months	as pri[vate] Dragoons

There are some other tours in which the said Nathaniel Kerr served, but as the Declarant has stated above, she does not recollect them well enough to detail and therefore does not urge her Claim to a pension for them, claiming an annuity only for the five Several Tours above specified: making in all, 18 months and 20 days, as nearly as she can estimate such service.

The declarant did not understand till within a few weeks past that there were any "Record Evidence" of her husband's Revolutionary Services. She made an effort to obtain a pension some three years ago, but has again not being able to find anyone living, that Served with her husband in the Army, abandoned the effort as fruitless.

Her Deceased husband was in the Army with General Greene, General Lincoln, General Rutherford, General Butler, Colonel Locke, Colonel Collier, Major McClary and others. This Declarant during the war of the Revolution was a resident of Randolph County, North Carolina and lived neighbor to the said Nathaniel Kerr, and feels satisfied that in the above mentioned tours of Service set forth her Deceased husband did Serve as there stated and respectfully submits her claim to the Commissioner of Pensions, and will accept such annuity as he may Judge her entitled to.

The Declarant further states, that she was married to the said Nathaniel Kerr on the first day of September 1785, as appears from her family record hereto annexed.

The Declarant further states, that said Record is all it purports to be, the "original family record" of said Nathaniel Kerr.

That said Nathaniel Kerr did die in the year of 1826. That she was not married to him, prior to his leaving the Service, but the marriage took place previous to 1 January 1794, Viz.: at the time above stated.

The said Margaret Kerr, in conclusion states that from old age and bodily infirmity, [she] is unable to attend Court to make this her Declaration.

Sworn to and subscribed, on the day and year first above written before me.

S/ John Tate, JP

S/ Margaret Kerr, X her mark

[p 10: Bible record]

Margaret Graham was born the first day of November 1755 and intermarried with Nathaniel Kerr the 1st of September 1785.

Margaret Kerr Daughter of Nath. Kerr Intermarried with John Galbraith the 22nd day of December 1807
 Samuel Kerr Married Polley White September 17th 1818.

*Margaret Graham was born
 the first day of November 1755
 And intermarried with Nathaniel
 Kerr the 1st of September 1785*

*Margaret Kerr Daughter of Nath. Kerr
 Inter-married with John Galbraith
 the 22nd day of December 1807*

*Samuel Kerr Married Polley White
 September 17th 1818*

[p 11]

Mrs Kerr
Her Book

Samuel Kerr was Born January 20th 1787

Margaret Kerr was Born November 26th 1789

William Kerr was Born December 18th 1792

Mary Kerr was Born December 30th 1794

James Kerr was Born November 15th 1797

Nathaniel Kerr was Born December 22nd 1798 [? last digit looks more like a "3" than an "8"]

Mrs Kerr
Her Book
Samuel Kerr was Born
January 20th 1787
Margaret Kerr was Born
November 26th 1789
William Kerr was Born
December 18th 1792
Mary Kerr was Born
December 30th 1794
James Kerr was Born
November 15th 1797
Nathaniel Kerr was Born
December 22nd 1798

[pp 18-20, Letter from James Kerr regarding his recollections of what he was told about his father's Rev. War services:

State of North Carolina, Orange County the 17th of July 1845

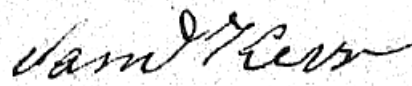
Dr. James A. Craig, Sir

I now sit down to answer yours of inquiry respecting my father's military services in the war of the revolution &c. I will begin answering your inquiries respecting myself. I am the oldest son of six children which my father Nathaniel Kerr had by my mother Margaret Kerr. I believe I am now in the 58th year of my age and was born in Randolph County in this State and lived there until my seventh or eighth year when my father with his family removed to Guilford County where he lived the remainder of his life & believe my parents were married in 1785. I recollect to have heard my mother say they were married in September some 15 or 16 months before my birth which by reference to the family record you will find (I believe) took place on the 20th of January 1787. I believe my father settled

himself in Randolph County near Bell's Mill several years before the commencement of the Revolutionary War. I have heard father say his Trunk was burnt with Mrs. Dougan's house by the notorious Fanning near the close of the war & I believe his papers with it to the best of my recollection father died in February 1826 before the passage of the Act in favor of the Militia who served in the revolution. My mother understanding that an act had been passed in favor of widows whose husbands had served in the war of the Revolution prevailed with me to go to Randolph County in quest of evidence of my father's military services. On my arrival there which was some four or five [years?] ago I found all his companions in arms were dead except one and he (Daniel Merrill,³ a pensioner) said he & father had served one campaign of about three months together, that they were messmates & lay the greater part of the time near Salisbury in the State that father then served as Wagon or forage master he believed my father had performed a good deal of service in the Army but that was the only time they had served in company together & then went to see John Graham⁴ (a pensioner) of Davidson County he said he, that is Graham, served in the Cavalry under Colonel Davie. That once or twice in the head went into the camp of the militia he had seen my father in the Army that he believed he was a commissioned officer he believed and Ensign but I do not recollect that his said in whose company or Regiment. I then went to see Sherwood Kenneday⁵ of Davidson County a pensioner also. He said that he himself had served a campaign of five months a great part of the time in the state of Georgia under Colonel [no name stated] that he knew my father he had seen him in service different times during that campaign that father was a commissioned officer he believed an Ensign he could not tell to whose company or Regiment he belonged he knew he did not belong to the same with himself – having understood that it was absolutely necessary to prove in whose company & Regiment father had served in order to get a pension & failing to procure such evidence I returned home. My mother not knowing of any recorded evidence of father's services ceased to prosecute her claims. As to father's sayings of his services in the State of Georgia I distinctly recollect of his saying he suffered extremely for the want of water as they were marched through some parts of that State I think I have heard him say he was in Augusta & perhaps where we crossed the Savannah River I have heard him say he was lying sick in camp scarcely able to get out of his tent at the time of Stono Battle in South Carolina that he heard the firing of the Guns & had he not been sick supposed he should have been in the Battle. I have heard mentioned several places in North & South Carolina he had passed while in the Army. I have heard speak of Charlotte, Rugeley's Mills, Camden, Pine Tree, Ninety Six, crossing the Saluda & Broad Rivers, of the Army lying at or near the Bacon's Bridge. I have heard him speak of a Tour down the Pedee [River], one or two tours in the neighborhood of Raft Swamp & one up to the mountain's (perhaps to Rutherford County) I do not distinctly recollect of his saying he served under Colonel Collier & Dugan but I have heard him speak of serving with them and in such a way as to make me believe he served under them. The same statement will apply to Generals Greene, Moultrie, Lincoln & Butler. I would just further state I was one of my father's Executors. In settling up his estate I only took charge of such papers as were considered valuable & were kept by father in a small truck. A parcel of old papers & account books &c I believe were left with Mother. I believe she has forgotten what she done with them when she quit housekeeping. The above statements are true to the best of my knowledge & belief.

Sworn to & subscribed this the 19th of July 1845 before me.

S/ Saml Kerr



³ [Daniel Merrell S7222](#)

⁴ [John Graham S6936](#)

⁵ [Sherwood Kenneday S8779](#)

S/ F. Walker, JP

I certify that deponent Samuel Kerr is a man of truth and respectability & his Statement entitled to full & ample Credit.

S/ Freeman Walker, JP

[p 73]

State of North Carolina, County of Orange

On this the 21st day of November 1845, personally appeared before the undersigned one of the Justices of the Court of pleas and quarter sessions for said County, Mrs. Margaret Kerr of Hawfields, in said County aged 90 years the first day of November Instant – Widow of the late Nathaniel Kerr, Deceased, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on her oath make the following statement additional and in explanation of her late Declaration, now on file in the pension office at Washington City.

That she was a native of the State of Pennsylvania, and in the year after the Battle of the Brandywine [September 11, 1777], moved to North Carolina and Settled in the County of Randolph on the [illegible name, looks like “uworra”, probably 'Uwharrie'] River.

That part of the County of Randolph was settled mostly with immigrants from Pennsylvania and amongst others was her late husband, the aforesaid Nathaniel Kerr; who had some years previously emigrated to Randolph County, and lived in about 10 miles from where this Declarant & her father settled, and being Pennsylvanians that they became acquainted & frequently visited each other's families.

That Colonel Collier was an acquaintance of theirs in Pennsylvania and related to her husband, and after the close of the war lived not above 2 miles from this declarant. That Major Thomas Dugan [Thomas Dougan] and Col. James Dugan [James Dougan] were brothers, and nephews of my Deceased husband.

Major Anthony Sharp was a Cousin of my deceased husband the aforesaid Nathaniel Kerr, and lived in the same neighborhood with us. All of the above named officers were actively engaged in the Militia, in the War of the Revolution except Anthony Sharp aforesaid, who I am under the impression was in Continental line.

My deceased husband, with the other named officers, were active in the cause of Liberty and being all acquaintances & neighbors were in many tours in the service together.

Although this Declarant was not married to the aforesaid Nathaniel Kerr till 1 September 1785, after the war had closed – yet being well acquainted, with him both before & during the war, she remembers the fact of his leaving home with the troops and serving tours in the Army. She further remembers of said Nathaniel Kerr being out in a 5 months tour, in the militia, to the South, that in the said tour he fell sick, and was confined to his bed, and on the day of Stono battle, was near the engagement and being quite ill, was fearful he would fall into the enemy's hands. That Major Sharp and Dr. Martin assisted him home – that as soon as he returned, the Declarant remembers, that said Nathaniel Kerr, visited her family. That in the war her deceased husband was much in the Service of the United States, that she has understood from him and others, that he served as “Forage Master” “Ensign”, and “private of Dragoons.”

After the close of the war, she has frequently heard her deceased husband, when in company with above mentioned officers, speak of their different tours, on the dangers and hardships they encountered, and being relations and intimately acquainted, were frequently in company and often conversing on the occurrences of the Revolution.

From the above Circumstances, the Declarant has been enabled to remember things of the tours, the capacity in which her husband served and with what officers in part he served in the revolutionary Army.

She further declares that she never knew or heard of any other person that served in the

Revolutionary Army, by the name of Nathaniel Kerr, except her deceased husband aforesaid.

The Declarant in Conclusion says that she is acquainted with the Honorable James S. Smith of Hillsboro, in the aforesaid County of Orange, that she is also acquainted with the Reverend Anderson Hughes, the Reverend W. D. Paisley & Reverend E. B. Curry.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and date just above written or me.

S/ Saml. N. Tate, JP

S/ Margaret Kerr, X her mark

[p 21: Letter from Hugh McCain stating that he has made search for the marriage bond of Nathaniel Kerr to Margaret Barrett, the widow of Samuel Barrett of Pennsylvania, [p.69] and not found same.][p. 69, her maiden name was Margaret Graham.]

[p 64: Letter from the NC Comptroller listing disbursements made to a "N. Kerr" for military services during the Revolutionary War.

William G. Collins
Compt. Office

I William G. Collins Comptroller of Public Accounts in and for the State of North Carolina do hereby certify that the name of N. Kerr appears of record in my office as having a special Certificate passed in his name for Military services for One Hundred and forty Two Pounds Ten Shillings and Seven pence (£142. 10. 7) See Book G No 16 page 13, which Certificate was paid at the Treasury in the year 1790.

I further certify that the Books in this office do not give the grade of office in which said N. Kerr did serve. Given under my hand and seal this 2^d day of November A.D. 1846.

Wm G. Collins Compt

[p 78]

Haw Field Orange County September 10th, 1846

Dear Sir [letter addressed to Dr. James A. Craig, Ruffins Mills, Orange Co., NC]

Yours in which you ask for additional statements relative to the services of Nathaniel Kerr my deceased husband in the Revolutionary War, has been received. I know nothing further than I have already stated, that would throw any light on the subject. I am a native of Lancaster County

Pennsylvania, whence I removed to Randolph County in this State, and settled on the Uarree [Uwharrie River] Creek, about the year 1777. Nathaniel Kerr, whom I afterwards married, was then boarding with Col. Edward Sharp, a brother in law of mine, and continued to board there, when not in the service of his country, till the year 1785, when we were married. We settled at a place about 2 miles from Col. Collier's; and also, within a few miles of Col. James & Major Thomas Dougan's, who were nephews of my husband. I was intimately acquainted with the Collier & Dougan family; for being relations & connections of ours, we kept up a friendly intercourse with them by visits &c

I well remember my husband's having served a Tour in the South, in the capacity, I think, of Ensign. The Tour was said to be one of five months. I also recollect his having been taken sick while on a Tour at the South, & that he was enabled to get home by the assistance of Dr. Martin & Major Anthony, Sharp, who were both cousins & warm personal friends of his & distinctly recollect his having served for some time, 3 months, at least, I think, at or near Salisbury as Forage Master. I further remember having often heard him speak of the hardships he endured on a Tour to the neighborhood of Raft Swamp. I also have heard him speak of pursuing a band of Tories, that after plundering & burning several houses, had fled to the South - Perhaps the Revolutionary Records in Raleigh will show the grade of the Militia; and from them the grade, in which my deceased husband served, might be ascertained. If you think it worthwhile you would confer a favor on me, by writing to the Officer who has charge of these, & making inquiry on this point. I know of no other Nathaniel Kerr who was in the service, or even in the State at the time of the War.

Have you received any answer yet, from Raleigh touching the inquiry, whether the records there furnish any evidence or not, whether the payment to my husband N. Kerr was before or after the close of the war? So soon as you do, I hope to hear from you.

Test:

S/ Saml. Kerr

yours respectfully

S/ Margaret Kerr, X her mark