

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Mark Murray (Marry, Murrill, Murrell) R7523

f73NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

6/2/09: rev'd 10/11/17

[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.]

[Note: the pages in this file have been badly scrabbled; I have attempted to put them in chronological order.]

[p 15]

State of Tennessee County of Wilson

On this 5th day of May 1845 personally appeared in open Court before the County Court of said County of Wilson now sitting Mark Murray, a resident of said County and State, aged eighty-nine 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 was mustered into the service of the United States, as a private soldier on the last Saturday in the month of April in the year 1780, and was in actual service until the 15th day of November in the same year. Nathan Mayo was the Captain of the Company of volunteers to which he belonged, Benjamin Whitly [sic, Benjamin Whitley?] Lieutenant and James Cooper Ensign. Captain Mayo's Company was attached to the Battalion commanded by Majors Sharpe and Knight or Night, Benjamin Seawell and William Brickle were the Colonels, and a part of the time they were under the command of General Sumter and a part under the command of General Butler. The applicant lived in Halifax County, North Carolina, at the time he volunteered, close to the line between that County and Martin County, and was received or rather enlisted at a little town then called Hogstown¹ in the last named County -- the Company was paroled for eight days at this place and at the end of this time, he and the other volunteers met and under Captain Mayo marched to Halifax, in Halifax County to draw arms. The Company drew the arms and were then marched to Chatham Courthouse then head quarters in that part of the State, at which place General Sumner had the command, and from this point they were marched with the view of joining the Army under the command of General Gates; intending to cross the Big Pedee [River] at the Long Bluff -- the Army arrived at the Big Pedee on Saturday evening the day of the month not recollected, and there encamped for the night, intending to cross the next morning, that the urgent request of some gentlemen in the neighborhood, the General agreed to entertain them on the next day Sunday, with a show-battle. So in the next day a large crowd came in composed of ladies and gentlemen, and the show-battle was regularly fought -- no damage done except a fine horse, ridden by Major Knight, was killed. On Sunday night the news of General Gates defeat [Battle of Camden, May 15-16, 1780] came to General Sumner [Jethro Sumner] by some [of]

¹ Williamston

Gates's flying soldiers. General Sumner then retreated to Cole's Bridge on Drowning Creek -- at this place orders were received for General Sumner to march and join General Sumpter [sic, Thomas Sumter] but at the end of 2 or 3 days march, they heard that Sumter was defeated. They then retreated to Ramsey's Mills upon Deep River, from that point they marched to Salisbury, from Salisbury to Charlotte, from Charlotte to a point on the Catawba River below where the British Army was stationed -- here the British stole a march on us and we [were] forced to retreat -- the pursuit continued for 3 days and nights -- we crossed the Yadkin River at the Shallow Ford in boats, and that night there fell a very heavy rain by which the march of the British Army was stopped. Each Army lay several days in this position, when a reinforcement came to the assistance of the Americans, and General Green [sic, Nathanael Greene] then took the command, if the applicant recollects correctly, -- the British retreated and were pursued by the American Army a day and a half, or 2 days, where each Army stationed, and at this point this applicant was regularly discharged. On his return home to his father, he gave him his certificate of discharge, since which time he has not seen it. His father has been dead for a great many years, and he has no doubt but his certificate has long since been lost or destroyed. He knows of no documentary proof to sustain his application, but he would here state that in the month of August 1837 he employed one Jno. H. Dew and attorney at law to draw up an application that the papers were prepared with the affidavit of Bradley Medlin² clearly sustaining the truth of the foregoing statement as to the services of the applicant -- the papers were lost and it was not until very recently that he could get them. Soon after the date of said affidavit, said Medlin died, and the applicant can only file the contents of this affidavit. That he is now getting very old, is unable to work, and unless he can get the aid he is entitled to from the government, he will be reduced to want & beggary. He does not know any person, who can testify more fully to his services than will be found in the annexed proof. 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, and that he has resided in the County of Wilson & State of Tennessee ever since the year 1810.

S/ Mark Murray, X his mark

Sworn to & subscribed the day & year aforesaid.

S/ J. L. McClain, Clerk

[James T. Tompkins, a clergyman, and Micajah Estes gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

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I, Brittain Drake, a Justice of the Peace, residing in said County of Wilson, do hereby certify that I am well acquainted with Mark Murray, whose name is to the foregoing affidavit for a pension; and that he is a citizen of good moral standing and entitled to full credit on oath. I further certify that one Bradley Medlin who was a pensioner and has since died, came before me, then an acting Justice of the Peace in said County of Wilson, on the 21st day of August 1837 and made oath to the following affidavit, to wit, "State of Tennessee Wilson County. This day personally appeared before me Brittain Drake an acting justice of the Peace for the said County Bradley Medlin and made oath in due form of law that he is certain from the best of his recollection that Mark Murray the applicant above was a soldier and served as he states in his petition & Memorial (signed) Bradley Medlin, his Mark, Sworn to & subscribed before me this 21st day of August 1837. Brittain Drake, JP &c" I do certify that the foregoing is a true & correct copy of the affidavit of said Medlin made at the time and for the purposes aforesaid. Sworn & subscribed

² [Bradley Medlin S2817](#)

this 5 day of May 1845.

S/ Brittain Drake

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brittain Drake". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "S/ Brittain Drake".

S/ J. L. McClain, Clerk

[State of Tennessee Wilson County]

On this 21st April 1849 personally appeared before me John K. Wilson one of the acting Justices of the Peace in and for the County aforesaid Mark Murry a resident of the County of Wilson and State of Tennessee aged ninety-four years who being first duly sworn according to law makes the following Declaration in order to obtain the benefits of the provisions of the act of Congress passed 7th of June 1832 entitled an act for the relief of certain officers and Soldiers of the Revolution. That he entered the Service of the United States on the last Saturday being the 29th day of April 1780 in the following manner to wit he volunteered as a private soldier under Captain Nathan Mayo in Martin County North Carolina he lived in Halifax but was invited [sic, invited ?] to go to a muster over the line by his neighbors Thomas Weathersby, William O'Cain and Jonathan Drake they agreed all for to mess together and volunteer to join General Gates who was then stationed in South Carolina. There Colonel's name was Benjamin Sowel [sic, Benjamin Seawell] and William Brukle [sic, William Brickle?] was there Lieutenant Colonel's name their Ensign's name was James Cooper and their Lieutenant's name was Benjamin Whitley they were mustered into service at a place called hogstown on Roanoke [River] but afterwards altered to Williamstown Colonel Long was some time furnishing arms which he finally did he Colonel lived close to Enfield (Halifax Court house) to which place they had marched leaving Scotland Neck race ground and reached Colonel Long's on the 9th May following under orders which was given 8 days previous they were 3 Companies one from Halifax one from Martin and one from Bertie Counties they were then marched to Chatham Courthouse where they met General Sumner with the troops of North Carolina. They stayed there but a few days before they were marched in the direction of South Carolina to meet with the General Gates who was stationed near Camden crossed Deep River at Ramsey's Mills next to Coles bridge on Drowning Creek thence to Pedee [River] to the long bluff. They would have joined Gates but the battle took place and they could not reach in time and orders was then to march back this was the battle called Gates defeat and orders were then given to join General Sumter But before they could join Sumter orders were received to join General Green and Sumter having been used up in a battle they were in neither of these engagements they were then Stationed at the Shallow Ford on the Yadkin [River] and waited with expectation the British Army finding they would not cross there they marched to Salisbury where they were stationed some time. At the last place General Sumner went home and the troops were then placed under General Butler when the 3 months of the first service was out they were on Pedee and they volunteered again for 3 months on account there was no relief as they were called at that time which was there was no new soldiers come to fill up their place and they could not be spared Captain Mayo and Lieutenant Whitley took sick were sent for by carriages and went home. Their places were filled by Captain Richard Cooper was still the efficient officer. They were again marched from Salisbury to Charlotte but finding they could not stand before the Main Army of the British they retreated on the other side of the Yadkin about this time the Virginia troops had a battle with the Tories near the Moravian town they got there time enough to see the last of it they were then placed under General Green about some time in October of the same year and were finally discharged at Salisbury on the 15th day

of November 1780 by General Butler he returned home and gave his discharge to his father who kept it and Declarant does not know what has become of it he thus served 6 months and 15 days in two three-months tours rather continued in service and 15 days over on account that they were held in service until new soldiers had arrived.

Declarant would have applied long since but having placed his business in the hands of Colonel Dew who then placed them in the hands of his Brother-in-law William Syper Esquire who after making in all necessary proofs accompanying his Declaration neglected to send them on to Washington for 8 or 10 years. Declarant had an interview with General John H. Eaton and he wrote to Syper to produce the original papers after Colonel Dew's death who when receiving General Eaton's letter found the original papers and they had never been sent on. Declarant then placed the original papers in the [hands of] Jordan Stokes Esquire who made them out new and sent them on made out the proof before the court but they neglected to date them. They were sent on to Washington in this imperfect manner until Colonel Gentrey went from this district who sent back that they were in such an imperfect state they would not answer. Declarant has just been kept out of his Pension by no neglect of his and now reviews his claim for 6 months and 15 days service in the War of the Revolution and for this he claims a Pension. He further declares that his name is not on any Agency in the United States to his knowledge. Sworn to and subscribed before me on the day and year first above mentioned.

S/ J. R. Wilson, JP

S/ Mark Murry, X his mark

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Amended Declaration

State of Tennessee Wilson County: On this day personally appeared Mark Murry a resident of the County of Wilson and State of Tennessee aged ninety-six years before me Robert Young one of the acting Justices of the peace in and for the County aforesaid who being duly sworn according to law makes the following amendment our way of explanation of his Revolutionary Services in addition to his former declaration heretofore made. That his Great Grandmother came from Ireland and had to be sold for her passage and his parents always told him a gentleman by the name of Colonel Walh [could by Walk] bought her She was free and fair skinned and and after serving out her passage Mancy ~~married a man~~ had children by a Negro which accounts for his being mixed blooded. When the British took Charlestown His father came to him where he was mauling rails in the new ground and told him Mark I have bad news to tell you the British has taken Charlestown you must go and fight for your country. You are a free man and you serve your country and never do you return unless you get an honorable discharge and bring it to me. It was in the spring of the year say about March. He turned out under Captain Nathan Mayo in his first tour of Service as before stated and never left the Army unless to return home at the end of each tour of Service. The reason he was not in the battle of Camden was they were not able to reach it before it was over but he was out in Service at that time this was what was called Gates defeat. He never left the Service long until after Cornwallis was taken. In getting his first discharge for the first tour of Service under Captain Mayo their Lieutenant's name was Benjamin Whitley and their Ensign's name was James Cooper the last was an overbearing man and treated him badly because he would not wait on him. He complained to his adjutant whose name was ___ Knight a Continental officer who asked him if Cooper was a rich man at home and being told not, told affiant to pay no attention to him which made him his enemy and when he was writing the discharges refused to give affiant a discharge but his messmates William Rawles and Jesse

Rawles and William O. Cain went with affiant and complained to General Butler who ordered an honorable discharge to be given, Declarant took it home to his father and gave it to him who was highly pleased and said well done good and dutiful son. I will keep this go again and serve your country. Affiant got three honorable discharges for his many tours of service in the war of the Revolution and gave them to his father who kept them and does not know whatever became of them as he died shortly after the war of the Revolution. Declarant served under Captains Mayo and Richards and James Evans all from Halifax and the adjoining counties in North Carolina. When the war of the Revolution was over a great many speculators were through the Country who told Declarant and others "boys I am sorry for you, you will never get nothing," they bought up the claims of the Soldiers. There was one James Alsbrook who bought affiant's claims to wages or pay for his services in one or 2 of his tours for one dollar. There was one other the Sherief [sic, Sheriff?] who agreed to pay his taxes for one year or 2 years for another tour of service and so affiant got nothing for he got his living by hard labor could only read his Bible but could not write. Declarant lived in Halifax County all the time of the Revolution was well acquainted with the Hodges in that County also with Philip Pope³ who served in the same company with him they were close neighbors also with Thomas Hale who was too young to serve in the Revolution. Pope died a Pensioner. On being asked whether he went by any other name in the war of the Revolution Declarant's answer and says There was one Caban a soldier who served with me a great black-guard [blackguard] who used to call me nicknames. I suppose because I was mixed blooded. He Caban would sometimes call me Mark Merrill sometimes Murrell sometimes Maury, when Declarant's term would come to stand guard Caban who was in the same company would call him by these names, the reason was he was very friendly and loved his fun in camps. This Caban was out 2 tours of Service in the same Company. Declarant right name was Murry after his great grandmother's name. Declarant was called by these names after the Revolution but through mistake. Declarant relies on his last Declaration as amended for the tours of Service he served. Declarant's services in the war of the Revolution was as before stated in South Carolina and North Carolina. He served his country faithfully and is now old and cannot from loss of memory give that exact account of the times but only the principal incidents that took place he therefore will rely upon such proof as he has furnished and will furnish. He knows that all his services if he could detail them would be equal to 12 months in all but will be satisfied with whatever the proof in his case will justify.

Sworn to and subscribed before me the 18th day of September 1851

S/ Robt. Young, JP

S/ Mark Murry, X his mark

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State of Tennessee Smith County: On this day personally appeared Elizabeth Pope⁴ a resident of the County of Smith and State of Tennessee aged eighty-nine and a Pensioner of the United States before me John S. Mason one of the acting Justices of the peace in and for the County aforesaid and a Justice of the County Court being a court of record who being duly sworn according to law answers and says. I knew Mark Murry he lived in Halifax County North Carolina. The family lived about 3 miles from me in time of the Revolution. They lived across deep Creek a very marshy Creek and was difficult to get over. Mark and his wife used to cross to go to meetings on fishing Creek. They were very respectable for coloured [colored] people the

³ [Philip Pope W55](#)

⁴ This is probably the Elisabeth or Elizabeth Pope who was the widow of [Philip Pope W55](#)

old lady Mark's mother was a great midwife was sent for a great deal among the most Respectable people I know he was out in the Service in the war of the Revolution. I am certain he served 9 months but I cannot say whether him 3 months tours or 9 months but he was absent in the Service from early in the spring to the winter following. I do not recollect the captain's name he was under. I have heard Captain Mayo spoken of at that time but I do not know where he lived. Mark Murry was his right name but he sometimes went by other names such as Merrill or Maury. I never knew any person in all that country named Mark Murrill but this colored man Mark Murry. I know the Mark Murry in Wilson County who is now trying to get a Pension is the same man who served in the Revolution. I was well acquainted with him and his mother and wife his father died shortly after the Revolution or at least I have not a good recollection when he died. I recollect George Cabar [?] but do not know whether he was out or not but all the men with a few exceptions was out in service. Sworn to this 15th October 1851 before me
S/ John S. Mason, JP

S/ Elizabeth Pope, X her mark

[p 24: additional supporting affidavit given by Keziah Pope, 70, of Smith County, Tenn.]

[p 25: Thomas Hale, 82, of Smith County, Tenn. gave a supporting affidavit date Oct. 15, 1851, in which he states: "... I have such confidence in the man that I would believe anything he would state upon any Subject. He was a man of first rate character although a mixed coloured man. He was a free man of colour a light mulatto was highly respected and a man of truth his mother was a midwife...." Hale also testified as to the different spelling of Murray's last name offering "Murry" "Mary" "Merrill" and "Murrill" as ways in which the name was pronounced.]

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State of Tennessee Wilson County

My name is Mark Murray. I was born in North Carolina, moved to this State in 1810 -- settled in Wilson County where I now reside. I shall be 98 years of age the 29th of January next. I was a soldier in the revolutionary war in the North Carolina line Enlisted for service on the 29th day of April 1780 & was soon after mustered into actual service & was discharged on the 15th day of November 1780 General Sumner was commander of the North Carolina forces, under who charge I was. He was taken ill, left off command & was succeeded by General Butler. We were all acting under orders from General Washington at Philadelphia. Nathan Mayo was my Captain -- Benjamin Seawell was my Colonel -- William Brickle was Lieutenant Colonel -- James Cooper was Ensign. Cooper wrote the discharges we all received. Benjamin Whitley was Lieutenant Colonel. We met on the 9th May 1780 at Scotland Neck race ground, to march from thence to Halifax to draw arms, & from there we marched to head quarters, on Deep River near Ramsey's Mills -- Waded the Deep River, & marched to join General Gates at Camden was prevented from joining General Gates by learning that he & forces were defeated. We were pursued then by the British forces, & retreated back to Little Pedee [River], & stationed ourselves at Coles bridge, & the Enemy learning our position, declined making an attack upon our forces. We marched then to the Shallow Ford on the Adkin [sic, Yadkin] River, & from there to Salisbury, & from thence to Charlotte & from there to the Catawba River, within 7 miles of where lay the British troops. The British troops learning of our position marched upon us & finding their force to great, we retreated back as we had come, & finally stationed ourselves at the Shallow Ford of the Yadkin & the British declined further pursuit, but went back upon the

Catawba. We commenced again our march upon learning that Gates had been displaced of his command, & was succeeded by ___ who was leading the American troops upon the opposite side of the Catawba, & thus placed the British troops between our forces. New forces having been levied to supply our places, we were then regularly discharged on our route between Charlotte & Salisbury, as new forces were in the field. We were discharged on the 15th day of November 1780. The Ensign gave us our discharges. I never supposed my discharge of any value, & upon my return home delivered the same to my father for his care at his desire. I was his only son. My father died & I have never been able to learn what has become of my discharge -- it is lost or mislaid. I have never yet received any pension for my services from the General Government -- I am Entitled as everyone in forms me.

S/ Mark Murray, X his mark

Personally appeared before me Mark Murray the affiant to me well known, & made oath in due form of law, that the facts set forth in the above Affidavit are true to the best of his knowledge information & belief. Sworn to this 27th day of July A.D. 1853.

S/ Robert Young, JP

[p 54: Affidavit given by Jesse Grimes of Wilson County, Tenn., aged 64, who testifies that he was born in NC; has lived in Wilson County some 30 years; has known Mark Murray ever since he (Grimes) was born near Murray in NC; has frequently heard Murray talk with his fellow soldiers in the Revolution, Jethro Harrell⁵, James Harrell, Joel Harrell, Henry Kent, Jesse Rawls and William Rawls, all of whom were in the same company as Murray. "... Have been with them all when I was a boy at log-rollings & house raisings & have heard them joke one another about their campaign exploits. Henry Kent was a small man, & they were accustomed to run a joke upon, saying that he wished to get behind Mark, if they should get into a battle, & Mark declared that he would be breastworks for no man. Mark Murray is now somewhere in the neighborhood of 100 years of age, according to witness's understanding of these years. He has been a man of irreproachable character, a man whose veracity & honesty I have never heard anyone impugn. I live near him now. He is unable to work. His family assists in taking care of him, are all poor. He does not travel about much now. He is well thought of by his neighbors. Could not say if the companions in arms of Murray ever mentioned the time they were mustered into service & Time discharged. Have heard Mark Murray often say Mark had two sons in the battle of New Orleans, & in connection with their war experience have heard him speak of his...." This document is undated but the clerk's attestation is dated July 27, 1853.]

⁵ In a subsequent affidavit, Jesse Grimes says the names of Mark Murray's companions in arms were James Howell, Jethro Howell, Henry Kent and Joel Howell. See fn p. 59