

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension Application of Boston Ollis R7796

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Tennessee } SS.

Morgan County }

On this 1st day of May 1834 personally appeared before Andrew Derrick a justice of the County Court of pleas and quarter sessions for the county aforesaid Boston Ollis a resident Citizen of the County and State aforesaid, at the house of the said Boston Ollis who from old age and bodily infirmity is unable to get to a court of record, said Boston Ollis is blind and believes himself to be ninety years of age not having any record of his age; 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 in the revolutionary war, the day or year from old age and consequent loss of memory cannot now be recollected by this applicant, but it was in the Spring season of the year about two years before Charleston was taken by the Brittish army [on 12 May 1780]. it was at Charleston South Carolina under the following named officers to wit to wit Captain Davidson, Ensign Moore their Given names not now recollected from causes above stated the Colonel or Majors name cannot now be recollected from the cause aforesaid but it was the 5th Regiment of the State line of South Carolina troops and under the command of General Lincoln [Benjamin Lincoln, who took command of the Southern Army on 3 Jan 1779]. he applicant was taken from his aforesaid Ridgement of infantry and attached to the Artillary Service to manage the cannon. applicant continued in the Service aforesaid at Charlestown under the command of the said General, until Charlestown was taken by the Brittish army. applicant made his Escape with others from Charlestown to keep from being taken a prisoner by the Brittish. applicant and the company with them went by Georgetown for Orange County North Carolina applicant & his aforesaid Company was followed by some torrys from Georgetown and was overtaken at a causway in their Road where each side of the Road had been ditched and the dirt thrown up, and had an engagement with said Torryes. One of their company was shot dead they Killed four Torryes and made their escape into Orange County North Carolina the length of time applicant had been in service was not less then Twenty two months though applicant cant tell the precise length of time from causes above stated, the whole of which time applicant served as a private in state line of soldiers of South Carolina - the whole of which service was rendered at Charlestown as aforesaid applicant received no discharge for this Tour of duty as Charlestown was taken by the Brittish and this applicant made his escape to prevent being taken prisoner applicant was some time in Orange County aforesaid when he again enterd the service of the united states a substitute for Henry Cook. the day or year from causes above stated cannot now be recollected by applicant enterd the service under the following officers. to wit Captain Lillard Colonel Oneal. Marched to Salsbury [sic: Salisbury NC]. was stationed at Salsbury a short time then marched to Rroodgeleys Mill [sic: Rugeley's Mill] South Carolina. was there a short time Joined General [Horatio] Gates, Marched a mile and a half or two miles had a battle with the Brittish Army [Battle of Camden, 16 Aug 1780]. this Battle commenced early in the morning and lasted untill near nine oclock. the Two Armys having come in or near fireing distance the night before , and the americans having lain on their arms all night. General Gates was defeated. this was near Camden South Carolina applicant has always ever sence heard this Battle called Gateses defeat. the American army being defeated a greate many killed & taken prisoners applicant made his escape from said defeat and made his way back to Orange County North Carolina and consequently received no discharge. applicant served this Tour as a private not less then Two months. applicant continued at home some short time the length of which cannot now be collected, but he again substituted for a certain Aaron Sharp. the day or year cannot now be recollected by applicant from causes above stated, but he enterd the service under the following named officer to wit Captain Trace Colonel O'Neal Marched to and joined the army at Charles Ford on the Catawber [sic: Catawba] River was stationed at said Ford some short time was then marched up the River to Baty's Ford, and there had a battle with the Brittish Army in

which the americans was defeated. applicant understood that General Caswell was killed in this Battle he saw his commander, who the other soldiers informed him, that his Name was Caswell said General before the Battle came on was riding a grey horse. applicant never saw his commander after the Battle was over. and he was informed that he fell in Battle. [See note below.] applicant was marched back, Orange County, and there honorably but verbally discharged by his said Captain Trace. applicant served in this Tour not less then three months as a private. applicant was at home some short time when he again volunteered and joined General Washingtons Army near Hillsborough and entered the service of the united states under Colonel Rose Captains Name from causes above stated cannot now be recollected he was again attached to the Artillery to manage the cannon was marched to york [Yorktown VA]. Was in the seige of York [28 Sep -19 Oct 1781], and was an artilleryman during the seige. applicant saw Lord Cornwallace surrender himself to General Washington. Saw Lord Cornwallace take his sword by the point and hand the hilt to General Washington. Received it in his had Some short time handed the sword back to Lord Corn Wallace in the same manner that he had received it from him in — [See note below.] from cause above stated applicant does not now recollect the date of the day or year on which Lord Cornwallace surrender but it was in the fall season of the year applicant was marched as a guard over the prisoners from York to Winchester where he was honorably but verbally discharged by Col Rose. applicant cannot from causes above stated now recollect the precise length of time applicant was in service this Tour but applicant believes that it was not less then seven months and was a private. applicant does not know the date of the year he was born in, not having any record of his age, but he was born in Jenuary and came to america when he was about thirty years of age and was in america one of two years before the commencement of the war. applicant was living in Charlestown South Carolina at and before he enterd the Service of the united states as a private in the state line of South Carolina, as above stated - applicant lived in Orange County North Carolina at and before the entering the several other Tours of duty as above named. applicant has lived every sence the revolutionary war in the States of North Carolina and Tennessee and now lives in Morgan County Tennessee the first time applicant enterd the service he enlisted in the state line of troops of South Carolina the second and third times applicant enterd the service he was a substitute. the first time he substituted for Henry Cook and the second time applicant substituted was for Aaron Sharp and the last time applicant enterd the service was as a volunteer. applicant was acquainted with General Lincoln at Charlestown South Carolina, with General [John] Butler General Gates Col ONeal General Caswell Col Rose & General Washington during his other services and Divers other officers who's Names he cannot now recollect from causes above stated applicant states, that the first tour of his services was rendered at Charlestown, that he continued at Charlestown untill Charlestown was taken that he made his escape from there to keep from being taken a prisisoner - that on his way to Orange County North Carolina he had an engagement with some Torryes. that one of his Company was killed & they killed four Torryes & made their escape. that he was in Gateses defeat near Camden that he was in the Batle at Batyes Ford on the Catawber River where the americans was defeated that was in the siege of york & saw Lord Cornwallace surrender his sword. that he served to Guard the Brittish prisioners from York to Winchester, that he never received any written discharge from the service applicant states he is know to the following persons Citizens of Morgan County and residing in the Neighbourhood of applicant who can certify as to his character for veracity and a soldier of the revolution Charles Asher James Asher William Clift George Park Rolling Kettrell Jonathan Dildine William Clift John M Staple. applicant states that from bodily infirmity he is unable to get to a court of record. applicant further state that there is no clergyman residing in his neighbourhood and therefore it is out of his power to obtain the Certificate of one applicant has no dockumentary evidence of his service and dont know of any person liveing by whom he can prove his [two illegible words] service. he hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or anuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the pension Roll of any agency in any state
Boston hisXmark Ollis

NOTES:

I could not identify Capt. Lillard, Col. O'Neal, Capt. Trace, or Col. Rose.

There was a Beattie's Ford on Catawba River, but no engagement is known to have occurred there. Gen. Richard Caswell did not die there or in any action. Ollis may have been thinking of the battle at nearby Cowan's Ford on 1 Feb 1781, where Gen. William Lee Davidson was killed.

Washington's army was not at Hillsborough NC, and Ollis's vivid description of the surrender at Yorktown is completely wrong. Cornwallis did not attend the surrender ceremony, but delegated the task to his second-in-command, Gen. Charles O'Hara. Washington declined to accept the sword, directing that it be surrendered to his own second-in-command, Gen. Benjamin Lincoln.

On 29 May 1839 Barbery Ollis, age 80 in the previous Jan, applied for a pension stating that she married Boston Ollis in Orange County on 4 Dec 1781, and he died 9 Mar 1834 at the home of Charles Asher, the husband of her daughter, Barbery Ollis. She also listed the names and dates of birth of their children and stated that she was blind. Barbery Ollis Asher also submitted an original register of her own children.