

## Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of William Pelham R8080

Martha Pelham

f42SC

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 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

[p 10]

State of Tennessee Warren County

On this 18th day of April A.D. 1834 personally appeared in open Court before William McGregor, Francis Smartt & Philip Hoodenpill [?] Esquires the Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions for Warren County now sitting William Pelham, a resident of Warren County in the State aforesaid aged about Eighty years who first being 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 (viz.)

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers & served as herein stated viz.: He entered the service in the spring of the year 1778 (the precise day nor month recollected) by a draft for three months. The company to which he was attached was commanded by Capt. William Gordon [sic, possibly William Gadsden], Gaven Gordon [Gavin Gordon] the brother of Capt. was his Lieut. & Thomas Brannon [Thomas Brandon] & Brandon his Col. Commandant. During the three months Draft very little service was rendered being the whole time stationed on Tiger [Tyger] River in South Carolina. At the expiration of the three months Draft he volunteered for the Term of twelve months. At this time & when he was drafted he lived in what was then called Union County in South Carolina & was then about 23 or 4 years old. At the time he was transferred to another company of which George Avery [sic, Georg Aubrey] was Capt. & Thomas Wood Lieut. & Thomas Brandon & Brannon his Col. commandant. About this time, the Tories & Indians were committing & had committed great depredations on the citizens of South Carolina & his Company was ordered by General Sumpter [sic, Thomas Sumter] to be stationed at some point on the Indian line to protect the frontiers. His company was accordingly stationed between the mouth of Tyger & Broad Rivers near to a place known by the name of Otterson's Station. His Company was engaged in actual service on the Scout marching back & forth on the line sometimes within the Indian borders & sometimes on the South Carolina side for the space of eight months & was on the scout when Forgason or Ferguson [Patrick Ferguson] was defeated on Kings Mountain [October 7, 1780]. On one of these scouting expeditions he was shot by a Tory or Indian about 1 mile from Otterson's Station in the right shoulder while swimming the Tyger River. His company was surprised by a larger company of Tories & Indians whilst asleep on an island up the River. The wound was a severe one & had nearly proved fatal. He was disabled from service for several months during which time he was left at the Station. As soon as he was able to carry his musket again he joined the same company again which in the meantime had still been on the scout etc. was never in any

regular Engagement. His whole service consisted in such skirmishes with the Indians & Tories as was incident to guarding the frontiers of South Carolina. About three months after his return to his Company he was discharged by his Capt. His whole Term of service lasted about 12 months. He has lost or misplaced his discharge. He never supposed that it would be of any value to him & therefore did not take particular pains to preserve it nor has he any old Documentary evidence of his services nor does he know of any person who can testify to his services. He has moved about several times since & he supposes his comrades in arms are nearly all if not white all day it. He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a Pension or he except the present & declares that his name is not on the Pension Roll of the Agency of any State. Sworn to & subscribed the day & year above written.

S/ William Edmondson, Clerk

S/ William Pelham, X his mark

Interrogatories propounded by the Court

1<sup>st</sup> Where and in what year were you born?

Answer: I was born on Big Pedee [River] in South Carolina near the Anson Court House about the year 1750.

2<sup>nd</sup> Have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

Answer: I had a Record of my age in a Testament: I lost it together with my Discharge

3<sup>rd</sup> Where were you living when called into service: where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live?

Answer: I was living in Union County in South Carolina when called into service. I moved thence & settled on Edisto River in the same State, not far from my former residence about 8 years soon after the war was over I moved from there back to Union again hats to Burke County in North Carolina & thence to Warren County where I live at this time

4<sup>th</sup> How were you called into service; were you drafted; did you volunteer or were you a substitute, and if in substitute, for whom?

Answer: I was first Drafted for three months and afterwards volunteered for twelve months.

5<sup>th</sup> State the names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops when you served, such Continental and militia regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service.

Answer: in addition to those mentioned in my Declaration, I knew General Sumter & General Greene. The facts of my knowing knows more officers & being unable to speak particularly of Continental & Militia Regiments is explained by the additional fact that my whole service was confined to scouting & spying & guarding the frontiers at a distance from the Main Army. The general circumstances of my service are detailed above in my Declaration.

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

Answer: I did receive a Discharge from Capt. George Avery & before stated & lost or misplaced it as before stated.

7<sup>th</sup> State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighborhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief in your services as a soldier in the revolution.

Answer: William Travis, James Ussery, John Smithson, James Lance & others the whole neighborhood

[Archibald Prater, a clergyman, and William Travis gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[p 4: On July 1, 1850 in Cannon County Tennessee, Martha Pelham, 83, filed for a widow's pension under the 1836 act stating that she is the widow of William Pelham, a revolutionary war pensioner; that she married him January 10, 1798 in the County of Roane Tennessee; that they were married by John Caston Esquire; that there is no record of their marriage; that her husband died in Cannon County Tennessee in September 1836; that at the time of his death he left the following nine children: Rebecca aged 51, Fanny aged 48, Polly aged 45, Susan aged 39, Isham page 36, Tempey aged 34, Levi aged 32, Alexander aged 28 and William aged 26; and that she remains his widow. She signed her application with her mark.]<sup>1</sup>

[p 5: The widow's application is supported by the affidavit of William Travis and Archa Prater (ages not stated) who give testimony almost word for word identical to the testimony of the widow, including listing the couples' children by their names and ages and then add: "that they have lived from their boyhood days near the said William Pelham, they knew him while in the Army in South Carolina, also when his service ceased, and have been living in the neighborhood where the said William Pelham deceased died for the last 55 years, and have known him as the husband of the said Martha from the time of their marriage to the time of his death...."

*Archa Prater*

*William Travis* ]<sup>2</sup>

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$30 per annum commencing March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1831, for service as a private for 9 months in the South Carolina militia.]

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<sup>1</sup> In her application dated July 1, 1850, Pelham's widow says this about the battle in which her husband was wounded: "...that he was in the battle Called Mustgroves Mills [sic, Musgrove's Mill], which Battle was commenced at what was called Seven Rocks [? Irvin Rocks?] and that he was wounded in the Right shoulder in said Battle...." The veteran's application, however, make it very clear that he was not at the Battle of Musgrove Mill, nor did he claim to be. He states clearly that he was wounded by a Tory or Indian while swimming the Tyger River at the same time that a larger body of Tories and Indians was attacking his company upstream while they slept. That description does not remotely fit the Battle of Musgrove Mill.

<sup>2</sup> Will Graves could not find any evidence that either of these men filed for a federal pension for service in the Revolution.