

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Charles Riley R8824

VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 9 Dec 2014.

State of Virginia        }  
County of Middlesex } SS

On this 8<sup>th</sup> day of June 1841 personally appeared before me Edmund H Montague a justice of the peace in and for the county and state aforesaid, in my said county, Charles Riley a coloured man a resident of the county and state aforesaid aged eighty five 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 7<sup>th</sup> 1832

That he entered the service of the united states in the latter part of January 1800 under Captain Thomas Montague and he thinks Major George Bird and Col James Montague. he remembers distinctly that the last named gentlemen were field officers but at this late date he can not be positive as to their respective ranks That on one occasion he was sent express to the county of Caroline for a detachment of men under the command of Capt Thomas Dogward That is the spring of 1781 he assisted in the capture of a vessel belonging to one Richard Bird of Parrots creek which had been employed in furnishing the enemy with arms and provisions and that in August following he also assisted in the capture of another vessel employed on the Rappahannac [sic: Rappahannock] in the enemys service belonging to one Capt Gutridge that in the latter expedition he was commanded by a Capt Walker. That he was employed about a month in keeping guard over Richard Birds vessel after her capture and in the effort to catch the said Bird That he was a resident of the said county of Middlesex when he entered the service and performed the greater part of his duty in said county until a short time before the commencement of the siege at york town [28 Sep - 19 Oct 1781], at which time he was marched to Gloucester town and continued in service there until after the surrender of Lord Cornwallace [sic: Cornwallis] when he was discharged together with the other militia troops of Middlesex That he continued in service the whole time from January 1780 to about the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1781 sometimes sent in express between the troops in Middlesex and Gloucester and sometimes ordered out upon foraging services That he does not at this time remember whether he was ever under the immediate command of any of the officers of the regular army except at the siege of york when the troops were commanded by Gen'l LaFayette. That he never received a written discharge when he left the service and that he knows of no person now living who served with him that he served as a private. 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 or if any, only on that of the agency of the state of Virginia Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid

Charles hisXmark Riley

We Philip Montague a clergyman residing in the county of Middlesex and Erastus T Montague resident in the same county hereby certify that we are well acquainted with Charles Riley who has subscribed and sworn to the above declaration and that we believe him to be eighty five years of age that he is reputed and believed in the neighbourhood where he resides to have been a soldier of the revolution and that we concur in that opinion

[signed] P. T. Montague

E. Montague

Pension Office/ June 22<sup>d</sup> 1841

Sir [Hon R. M. T. Hunter, House of Representatives]

I have examined the claim of Charles Riley for a pension under the act of June 7 1832 and have placed his papers upon our files.

Mr. Riley alleges that he resided in the County of Middlesex Virginia, and that he belonged to the militia and was called out in Jan'y 1780 and continued in active service until Nov 1 1781. He further states that during the aforesaid period he was on one occasion sent on express to Caroline County: – that

upon another he assisted with capture of a British Vessel in the Spring of 1781, and also of another Vessel in Aug't following, and finally that he was employed about one month in keeping guard on said Vessels. From the foregoing statement it is apparent that Mr. Riley was not acting with any organized body of militia or under the authority or in accordance with any direction of the State. It is well known to this Depa't. that no such service in point of duration, was ever performed by, or required of the militia. Their terms were generally for 3 mo's and the same performed under the authority of law in the militia when regularly called out and embodied. [See endnote] If Mr. Riley rendered any such service he should state the number of terms he was called out; the period & place of service; the officers names and the length of said tours, accompanied by such proof as he can obtain. He should also present some reason for so long delaying to make an application. I have the honor

NOTE: It is well known from pension applications that although militia tours were usually limited by law to three months each, militiamen were often called out for extended periods along the vulnerable Eastern Shore of Virginia. Moreover, the pension law of 1832 does not require that the service had to be in the "militia regularly called out and embodied."