

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of James Black R886

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

[Punctuation partly corrected]

State of South Carolina} SS.

Abbeville District }

On this twentythird day of October One thousand eight hundred and fortyfive personally appeared in open Court before the Hon'ble Edward Frost presiding Judge of the Court of Common Pleas and General Sessions for the District and State aforesaid James Black 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 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated.

That he was draughted as a rifleman private in Roxbridge [sic: Rockbridge] County in the State of Virginia in the month of April of the year seventeen hundred and eighty one, about the time Tarletons Horse came to Virginia South of the Blue Ridge [probably raid on Charlottesville by Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton's Legion, 4 Jun 1781], under a Cap'n [Charles] Campbell, who was shortly after taken sick & went home. a Cap'n William Moore [pension application S5787] then took command of the Company, he was a brother of And'w Moore Member of Congress he does not recollect the names of the field officers, except the adjutant whose name was John McCandless. he was marched to Charlottsville to oppose Tarleton. he was then marched to other points and was kept in constant active service in the Virginia Rifle Corps or Regiment until the surrender of Cornwallis at York [19 Oct 1781]. he was not in any battle or engagement with the enemy. he was stationed near the french forces when they shot hot balls & set fire to a British vessel in the Potomac [sic: HMS *Charon* in York River during the Siege of Yorktown, 9 Oct]. he does not exactly know how long he was in service but believes that he served seven months continuous duty [see endnote], and that service in the Virginia Riflemen as a private, having never at any time held a commission. he also says that from defect of memory he cannot particularly state the different points he was at, neither does he recollect any field officers of the Riflemen except John McCandless who throughout the service acted as adjutant. after the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, he was detailed as an escort to the British prisoners taken at Yorktown whom he conducted or marched to Winchester where he was verbally discharged from service, having as he believes served fully seven months. he further says that he does not know of a living witness whose evidence he could obtain to testify to his service, neither has he any documentary evidence to produce. he here subjoins the affidavit of his neighbor Christian Razor [pension application R8599] who was at the surrender of Cornwallis, but was not in the same corps or Regiment, and unknown to each other at that period, but from the repeated conversations he has had with Mr Razor on the subject of the surrender he is satisfied that Mr. Razor must have have present on that occasion. Mr. Razor is an old man of credibility and veracity and his affidavit is subjoined to support this application

He the applicant in answer to the Interrogatories required to be propounded by the Act of Congress 7 June 1832 states or answers as follows

- 1st. Born in Augusta County Virginia within four miles of Staunton, in the year 1761.
2. Has no Record of his age, relies upon his memory
- 3 Roxbridge County, Virginia. Has since lived in Abbeville District State of South Carolina, where I now live.
- 4 He was called into service by being drafted.
- 5 Gen'l. Washington, Gen'l. Lafayette &c. does not recollect either continental or Militia Regiments or the names of Officers commanding them. the general circumstances of his service he has already stated to the best of his belief and recollection.
- 6 He never received a written discharge, it was verbal.
- 7 Gen'l. Geo W Hodges, Col Douvald Douglass, Rev'd G W Huckabee, Major M. L. Williams, Dr. Paul Connor, who can testify as to my character for veracity, and their belief of my services

as a soldier of the revolution.
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.
Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid. [signed] James Black

[The following is identical in wording to the deposition signed by Black in support of Rasor's pension application.]

State of South Carolina } SS.
Abbeville District. }

I Christian Rasor do solemnly swear that I have been personally acquainted with James Black the within applicant for a pension for thirtyeight years last past, that he is a citizen of credibility and veracity that he and myself have had frequent conversations relative to our Revolutionary services in the service of the United States in the Revolutionary War and particularly in relation to the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. altho I did not know the applicant at that time being in different companies and regiments from each other, yet I am confident that he must have been at the surrender of Cornwallis from many little details of facts which I knew positively to be true and to exist, for instance the frame work in which the French heated their hot balls, the quantity of facines [sic: fascines], the rough made baskets to be filled with earth in constructing entrenchments, the position of the American forces, the surrender of the British, the march of the prisoners &c all confirm me in the belief that James Black was a Revolutionary Soldier and that he was at the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown in the War of the revolution

Sworn to 29th Oct'r 1845

[signed] Christia Rasor

[The following is in the file of Christian Rasor:]

Pen off Dec'r. 10 45

Sir The claim of James Black asserted for the first time without assigning any reason for delaying [from passage of the law in 1832 until 1845] while the means of proof were constantly & rapidly diminishing by death has been examined & disallowed The Dep't. has no information of any rifle corps authorized by the laws of Va organized in Rockbridge Co. 1781 and served 7 mo continuously - the militia were classed & served in tours of 3 mo only - The Line & State troops were regulars under enlistment which were first organized in 76 and filled as occasion required by draft or new enlistment - It is perfectly clear that the service he describes is not that of the militia man or enlisted soldier under Va. authority If there was a company of Riflemen in that County it was of course a component part of its militia subject to the service prescribed by law. If it be true that he was out but once then it is true that his tour did not exceed three months —

In the case of Christian Rasor it is apparent that his first tour was curtailed by the incidents at Petersburg in the spring of 81 and that his other did not exceed 3 mo. The utmost he could have been required to serve in both was 6 mo and if it fell short a single day he is not entitled — Having delayed his application to this late hour he will be required to rebut the presumption raised by that delay with satisfactory evidence that he served at the least 6 months. This may be done by comrades and a certificate of the Clerk of Culpepper shewing that the designated officers were in commission in 1781 for that County
Thos. L. Speisin Esq'r Abbeville CH. S.C

NOTE: In his own pension application (S5787), Capt. William Moore stated that his company did not serve continuously from early June until after the surrender of Cornwallis. The first tour against Tarleton was for three weeks, and the next was from 15 Sep until some time in Dec 1781.