

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of James Roper R8996
Transcribed by Will Graves

f80NC¹
1/19/10: rev'd 12/12/20

[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.]

[pp 25-27: The document posted on these pages is an undated form from the War Department returning papers submitted by the veteran in connection with a claim made under the act of June 7, 1832. In the summary of the submission by the veteran, the War Department refers to the veteran having claimed 6 months service as a private at an unstated time under General Weatherford (someone has marked through the name Weatherford and suggested Rutherford) in Captain Pernoy's Company; 9 months service also at an unstated time under General Butler, Colonel Moor and Captain Coleman; and service in 1781 for 5 months under General Butler and Captain Dickerson. The summary also indicates that the veteran stated his age as 77 years and that he rendered the service while residing in Caswell County North Carolina. This summary proves that there was an earlier submission by the veteran but those documents are not included among the documents in this file. It creates ambiguity, however, as to the veteran's age as in his extant application transcribed below he claimed to be 87 years old.]²

[p 30]

State of Kentucky Simpson County Sct. }

On this 21st day of January 1833 personally appeared in open Court before the Justices of the Simpson County Court for the aforesaid County now sitting James Roper a resident of the aforesaid County of Simpson & State of Kentucky aged Eighty seven years, and now in his Eighty Eighth year, 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 the 7th 1832.

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

That in the first campaign he was a volunteer & enlisted under Captain Andrew Pernoy [sic, Andrew Perney]³ in Caswell County & State of North Carolina & that he with the other

¹ This file contains applications from two different veterans. Most of the documents in the file relate to the application of James Roper R8996 but some relate to James Roper S7413. I have separated them into separate transcriptions.

² Thanks to Bill Roper for calling several significant transcription errors and omissions to my attention as well as the ambiguity that arises from the veteran's conflicting statements as to his age as reflected in his first submission to the War Department.

³ Again thanks to Bill Roper for suggesting this officer might be Captain Andrew Vannoy (Vanoy). Bill has done extensive research relating to Caswell County, NC and notes that there is clear evidence that Captain Andrew Vannoy lived in Caswell during at least part of the Revolution. He has never encountered, however, a family named Perney/Pernoy or any likely variation thereof in that area. Although Vannoy served mostly as a Continental officer early in the war, he resigned his commission in 1778 and accepted a captaincy in the Rowan County Militia under

volunteer militia had then marched from Caswell Court House under the said Captain Pernoy across the Pedee River [Pee Dee River] in North Carolina, the Wateree [River] in South Carolina thence across the Santee River thence across the Saluda [River] thence to a little town called Cambelton in the said State of South Carolina, near the Savannah River which is the dividing line between the State of South Carolina & Georgia, here at this town Cambelton, the North Carolina militia had been put under General Wetherford [sic, Griffith Rutherford?], and after remaining at the latter named place sometime, General Wetherford dismissed the North Carolina Militia & this affiant received a regular discharge in writing from his Captain Pernoy & then he returned to his residence in Caswell County North Carolina as aforesaid:

In this 1st Campaign this affiant served a term of six months, but owing to the defacing hand of time & laboring under a painful Paralysis which has tormented him during the last Ten years of his sorrowful pilgrimage here below, it is now impossible for him to state with any certainty the day of the month or the year he volunteered & enlisted under Captain Pernoy as aforesaid; or the day of the month nor the year that he was discharged by Captain Pernoy at Cambleton as aforesaid.

The 2nd Campaign he served then he volunteered under Captain Spill Coleman [sic, Spillsby Coleman] in Caswell County North Carolina & he with the other militia were marched under said Coleman from Caswell Courthouse N. Carolina to Wilmington in North Carolina, near the coast he thinks, when he & the other Troops arrived at Wilmington, they were then put under the command of one General Butler [John Butler] who was then the commanding General of the Army at that place, and one Colonel Moore [William Moore] was the Colonel of the Army at the same Town. This affiant states at Wilmington he received a regular discharge from the said Colonel Moore at Wilmington in writing & his 2nd Campaign he recollects distinctly of serving a tour of nine months & that again he returned to his residence in Caswell County. But as to any further particulars respecting the time of his enlistment, the time of his discharge or any other of the circumstances that were incident to this Campaign, at this long distance of time, and suffering under the disease as already stated, it is now entirely out of his power to do.

The 3rd Campaign he served in, he volunteered & enlisted under Captain Edward Richardson & with the other volunteers were marched from Caswell Court House under Captain Richardson and after marching a short distance Captain Richardson's volunteers & other militia joined the brigade which was commanded by General Butler thence they were marched to Raven Town or Meazavin Town [Moravian Town?], from thence to General Greene's [Nathanael Greene's] Main Army which lay across the Haw [River], & about the same time, a Brigade joined General Greene from North Carolina, commanded by General Eaton [BG Thomas Eaton of Halifax County, NC]; from across the Haw, General Greene ordered the Main under his command, to march to Guilford Courthouse, near which place, Lord Cornwallis lay with the Main British Army. After General Greene had marched the Main American Army to Guilford C. House in the Evening. General Greene that night encamped his troops & lay all night at Guilford Court House and early the next morning, Genl. Greene put his army in motion for the purpose of attacking Cornwallis in his camp: But after Genl. Greene had marched a mile or so from Guilford Court house North Carolina He Greene called his Army to a halt & prepared for battle. The first line of battle in front consisting of the North Carolina militia under Generals Butler & Eaton & as to the other lines of Battle this affiant does not now recollect. About the time General Greene had his Army arrayed for Battle Lord Cornwallis came up with his troops, and a desperate combat ensued. This affiant states as well as he can now recollect that it was about one

Col. Francis Locke. See,

https://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/nc_patriot_military_privates_r.htmlhttps://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/nc_patriot_military_captains.html

or 2 o'clock of the day P. M. when this battle began between the American General Greene and the British General Cornwallis, the Battle lasted for some time with various success on both sides and at the last General Greene had to retreat & leave the Battle ground in the possession of Cornwallis. At this Battle this affiant lost a most valuable horse, bridle & saddle, and his Coat worth \$10 in specie & the horse saddle etc. were worth at the least \$80 in specie and as well as this affiant can now recollect this Battle near Guilford Court House was fought sometime about the middle of March 1781 [March 15, 1781] within a short time after this battle was fought this affiant received a regular discharge from Captain Dickerson [Nathaniel Dickerson] in writing & he returned home again to his residence, in this 3rd Campaign he served five months.

This affiant further declares that from the best information he has that he was born in the latter part of June 1745 in Caswell County North Carolina & he was also raised in said County & State aforesaid. That in consequence of his parents having no education & could not write their own names there was no record made of this affiant's age nor of any of the rest of his parent's children & that this affiant has no education himself & cannot write his own name.

He further states that some time after the Revolutionary war had ended, he moved from Caswell County North Carolina, to Chester County or Chester District South Carolina, and lived in said County & State with his family about six years and as well as he can recollect and from Chester County South Carolina, he removed with his family to Logan County Kentucky & in which state he has resided for the last 27 years of his life, that the County of Simpson in which he now resides was cut off as part of Logan & formed into a County in 1819 by an act of the Legislature of Kentucky.

He further states that he served in all three years in the service of his Country during the Revolutionary war, and that he received six regular discharges from the superior Officers of the Army. That he put all his discharges in a small bag & preserved them, until he was about to move with his family from Caswell North Carolina to Chester County South Carolina, and this Bag with his discharges in it was put into the bottom of a chest and on traveling from the former place, to the latter, a space of two hundred miles, the bottom of the chest bursted and consequently this affiant lost all his discharges & after the war was over he did not know that they would ever be of any benefit to him & therefore he only endeavored to preserve them as curiosities, until now he is informed that they would be of essential use to him as the best kind of evidence of his Revolutionary services But however be this as it may this affiant declares that he has not only lost his Discharges, but that he has almost lost both his mind and memory, so much so, that he will not pretend to give a detailed account of the other three campaigns in which he served during the Revolutionary War, and that he has detailed as well as he can recollect, at this far remote period as many of the principal particulars of his services in the Revolution as he can, for he cannot state them within regular order.

He further states that he has no documentary evidence at this time of his services, and that he does not know of any person now living, whose testimony he can procure who can testify to his services. That the persons whose names are attached to the subjoined Certificate beginning with Eli Briant & ending with William Owings, with whom he is well acquainted he believes who can testify as to his character & veracy [veracity] in his neighborhood & their belief of his services are stated by them at large in their Certificate aforesaid.

That he never has received anything from the Government of the United States for his horse bridle and saddle & Big Coat lost at the Battle near Guilford Court House as is he herein before stated, though he never craved or demanded any compensation from his Country.

And further 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.

S/ James Roper, X his mark

[Richard Owings, a clergyman, and Preston P. Holcomb gave the standard supporting affidavit. In addition they stated: "And we do further certify that the said James Roper is a man greatly afflicted with the Paralysis and has been so, for many years past and in consequence thereof, his body is greatly emaciated, his hands are in a continual tremor, his hearing extremely bad, his voice greatly shattered, his speech indistinct & discordant, his memory has in a great measure left him in his mind is so impaired by age and disease that we believe him utterly incapable of narrating any transaction with any kind of clear method or order or at least of detailing all the circumstances appertaining to any one thing."]

[p 28: On October 10, 1840 in Simpson County Kentucky Mary Roper, 74 filed for a widow's pension under the 1838 act stating that she was the widow of James Roper deceased; that her husband was born and raised in Caswell County North Carolina and he enlisted under Captain Nat Dickerson; that she was born in Fauquier County Virginia April 22, 1766 that her parents moved to Caswell County North Carolina which she married James Roper in 1788; that her husband died November 18, 1835 at which time he was drawing a pension of \$66.66 per annum for his services in the revolution; that her husband resided in the state of Kentucky about 36 years and that he resided in Simpson County Kentucky at the time he drew his pension and died in said County; and that she remains his widow.]

[p 21: On the 24th day of May 1841, James and Elizabeth Ponds of Sumner County, Tennessee, testified that they were well acquainted with James Roper deceased in the State of Kentucky and in Caswell County North Carolina and with his wife Mary Roper; that they lived together as man and wife; that they believe James and Mary were married at John Adams' in 1788; Elizabeth Ponds testifies that she believes that when the battle of Guilford was fought in March 1781 she was 13 years old and afterwards in her 16th year she married her husband James Ponds and had 2 children; that the said "Mary Roper, then Mary Neal⁴ was in the habit of visiting this affiant's house on Moon's Creek in Caswell County North Carolina and that the said James Roper asked this affiant leave to court to the said Mary who was a poor orphan girl and had no settled home of her own, which was granted, the said James Roper done as he requested, and in a short time afterwards they the said Mary and James were lawfully and publicly married at the house of John Adams a cousin of said Mary Neal... Said James Roper was at that time overseer for one Ringy Harrison [?].⁵"]

[p 40: Is a form indicating the reason the application of Mary Roper was rejected as follows: "Cause of rejection not found on printed list of 1852."]

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$66.66 per annum commencing March 4, 1831, for service for 20 months in the North Carolina militia as a private.]

⁴ The War Department interpreted this as Mary Neel and the notes in the file indicates that she was his second wife. The notes do not indicate any information relating to his first wife.

Ringy Harrison