

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Joshua Spears R9965

fn37NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

3/4/11

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Also, the handwriting of the original scribes often lends itself to varying interpretations. Users of this database are urged to view the original and to make their own decision as to how to decipher what the original scribe actually wrote. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. Folks are free to make non-commercial use this transcript in any manner they may see fit, but please extend the courtesy of acknowledging the transcriber—besides, if it turns out the transcript contains mistakes, the resulting embarrassment will fall on the transcriber. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading fails to catch all misinterpretations. I welcome and encourage folks to call those and any other errors to my attention.]

South Carolina Sumter District Claremont County

On this 8th day of November in the year of our Lord 1834 personally appeared Joshua Spears before the Honorable John S Richardson one of the associate justices of the court of Common Pleas and General Sessions for the State of South Carolina, Joshua Spears a resident of the County, District and State aforesaid who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832. That he was living in Craven County South Carolina in the year 1779. That on or about the first of February of that year he was drafted for a three months tour – that sometime in the month of February he marched from Craven County to Augusta Georgia in a Regiment commanded by Colonel Matthew Singleton, the Captain Joseph Hill commanded, the company to which deponent belonged, and that three companies marched from Craven (now Claremont) County together to Augusta and were there placed in the Regiment of Colonel Matthew Singleton, the General commanding the whole forces was ___ Williamson [Andrew Williamson], There was some few Regular Soldiers in the camp for some time but deponent is unable to recollect the names of the officers. The American forces encamped on this side of the Savannah River opposite Augusta. The other side of the river was in possession of the Tories and British – though the Deponent to the best of his recollection believes there was but few of any British in the neighborhood of the American camp. Nothing was ever done by the Americans as long as deponent remained in the camps, except some stragglng Tories were occasionally taken on the other side of the River in Georgia. At the expiration of the 3 months (in the month of May) the term for which the Regiment under Colonel Singleton was drafted – the Colonel (Singleton) requested of the General the discharge of his Regiment. Instead of discharging the Regiment the General (Williamson) had Colonel Singleton placed under arrest and his sword taken from him. The Regiment being highly irritated and their term of service having expired marched off without a discharge, and reached their homes in May. In July I removed to Iredell County North Carolina. In the month of January 1781 the deponent was drafted for a three months tour under General Davidson, ___ Locke [Francis Locke] was Colonel and the Captain of the company to which deponent belonged was Samuel Reed. About the last of January Captain Reed's company joined General Davidson near the Island Ford on Catawba River. The Regiment under Davidson after our junction with it marched down the

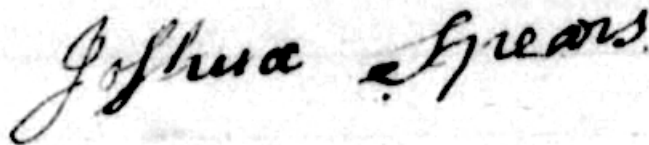
Catawba River to Beatties Ford – Cowan's Ford¹ is about two miles below Beatties Ford, and we were posted there to prevent the British Army from crossing in pursuit of General Greene's Army our sentinels were on the back of the River and when they fired on the British crossing, the Regiment about three hundred men were formed on the banks and kept up the fire on the British until some of their infantry were entirely across the stream. General Davidson in the act of ordering his men to retreat was shot and Colonel McCauley from Georgia with our Regiment was also killed. The Regiment was left under the command of Colonel Locke and retreated about six or seven miles near to Mrs. Torran²'s. At the suggestion of the Captain Reed, Caldwell etc. the Colonel continued our retreat to Mrs. Torran's. We had been there but a short time before we were surprised by the British Dragoons under Colonel Tarleton. After making some resistance the Regiment was utterly dispersed. Several were killed. The remainder separately in small companies escaped to their homes. The deponent had been at home about one week – when his Captain Reed, and another Captain Caldwell who had both escaped at Mrs. Torrans, collected their companies and marched after some Tories under the command of __Marlow, but we did not overtake them – Towards the last of March, a few days more than two months (say two months) from the time of my draft under Davidson we were discharged from the remainder of the three months by Captain Reed. I received a written discharge but lost it in a short time. In the summer of 1781 I was out under Captain Reed for 2 or 3 weeks at a time, but never were embodied by any competent authority and the services were entirely voluntary.

In September 1781 I was drafted for two months in a Regiment commanded by Colonel Pasley [sic, Colonel John Paisley] as well as deponent recollects. The Captain of the company to which deponent was attached was __Beverly. Our company marched from Iredell County about the last of September and joined Colonel Paisley on Haw or Deep River Deponent does not precisely recollect. There was but one Regiment and that under Colonel Paisley. The Tories were embodied in the same neighborhood on the same River under a Colonel Fanning [sic, David Fanning] – we had but one skirmish with the Tories – we marched and counter marched on Haw and Deep Rivers until the expiration of the two months when we were discharged. I received a written discharge for two months service which has been lost. And the Deponent certifies that he cannot find a surviving witness who can state his personal knowledge of Deponent's services – and that James Parsons the clergyman in Deponent's neighborhood is now in Charleston and will not return before the adjournment of this court.

And the Deponent does hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and he declares that his name is not on the Pension Roll of any Agency of any State.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid before the Honorable John S Richardson in open Court
S/ J. S. Richardson

S/ Joshua Spears

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joshua Spears". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

¹ Cowan's Ford, February 1, 1781 http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_cowans_ford.html and <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/cowansfd.htm>

² Sic, Tarrant's Tavern or Tarrant's Lane or Torrences Tavern, February 1, 1781 http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_tarrants_tavern.html and <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/torrences-mkr.htm>

[John China and Robert Bradford gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

Interrogatories proposed by the Honorable J S Richardson one of the associate Judges of the State of South Carolina, in open court, to Joshua Spears an applicant for a pension under the Act of the United States of June 7th 1832

Interrogatory 1st Where and in what year were you born?

Answer. I was born in Craven (now Claremont) County in the State of South Carolina in the year of our Lord 1759

Interrogatory 2nd Have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

Answer. My age was recorded in the family Bible and the leaves on which the same and the ages of other members of the family were recorded have been torn out.

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

Answer. I lived in Craven County South Carolina when I served my first tour of 3 months under General Williamson near Augusta. I removed to North Carolina in the summer of 1779 and having served 2 tours in that state returned to South Carolina in 1782 and have ever since resided near the place of my birth in Craven (now Claremont) County South Carolina.

Interrogatory 4th 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 drafted in all my tours of service

Interrogatory 5th 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. There were no Continental or Regular Troops in conjunction with the militia regiments in which deponent served except for a few days when he was under the command of General Williamson at Augusta. He recollects the names of regular Officers except one called Lieutenant bull, but does not know whether he that was a real or fictitious name – there were more than one Regiment at Augusta under Williamson, but from the great lapse of time and failure of memory Deponent does not recollect how they were entitled or the names of their officers – as to the general circumstances of his services the deponent refers to the within Declaration by which it will be seen that he served altogether 7 months.

Interrogatory 6th 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 received no discharge at the expiration of my first tour in the State of South Carolina under General Williamson near Augusta in Georgia. General Williamson attempted to detain the Regiment after the expiration of their Term of Service. General Williamson was odious to the soldiers from the then suspicions of his Toryism which were afterwards confirmed – and the Regiment marched off without a discharge. The other discharges I received word lost immediately after they were given.

Interrogatory 7th 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. Robert Bradford, John China, Jeremiah Pitts, Larkin Jennings etc.

[fn p. 13]

South Carolina Sumter District: In the matter of the application of Joshua Spears for a pension

under the Act of the Congress of the United States of June 7th 1832.

Joshua Spears comments before me, and being sworn maketh oath, that from the great lapse of time and the loss of memory resulting from his old age being now nearly seventy-six years of age, he feels unable to give much further information, on the portions of his Declaration objected to by the War Department.

In relation to his three months term of service near Augusta on the opposite side of the Savannah River, he remembers that General Lincoln once visited the encampment and that one man was killed from the discharge of Cannon on that occasion – As to the Regiment leaving the encampment without the permission of the General (Williamson) the Deponent states that at the expiration of the term for which the Regiment was drafted, the (Colonel Matthew Singleton) applied for the discharge of the Regiment. That the General placed Colonel Singleton under arrest in consequence of said application – that General Williamson was then and had for some time been suspected of disaffection to his country – that it was reported and believed among the Soldiers that the General had his washing done at the house of a Tory on the other side of the River – and had correspondence with the enemy – that the said General Williamson intended to march his troops into Georgia and their lead them into an ambuscade or in some way betray them to the British and Tories. That General Ash [sic, John Ashe] had but a short time before on Brier Creek had his whole Corps dispersed by the British and Tories, and designedly as was generally believed by our Regiment – and that it was the intention of General Williamson to lead his troops to a similar defeat – Your deponent is not entirely certain but he believes as well as his memory serves him that General Williamson – afterwards became a confirmed Tory. The Deponent was then young and thoughtless – and paid slight attention to matters not connected with the routine of his military duties. Colonel Singleton was tried in Charleston and acquitted. And lived as he before had done a neighbor to the Deponent and the Deponent has often heard the said Colonel pronounce General Williamson a Tory. In the beginning of the year 1781, I was drafted in Iredell County North Carolina to which state I had removed for two months term of service. The name of the Captain Samuel Reed. We were drafted (as it was reported) to join General Morgan – who was marching from the defeat of Tarleton at the Cowpens – our company afterwards joined General Davidson – and were with him when he was killed in attempting to prevent the British under Cornwallis from crossing the River (Catawba) at Cowan's Ford. Our Colonel (McCauley) was killed at the same time – we then retreated to Mrs. Torrans and on the same day we were dispersed and routed by the dragoons under the command of Tarleton. The action was in the month of February 1781. The Deponent and company with 4 or 5 others – returned to his own neighborhood. The whole company with the exception of one or 2 reached home in squads of 4 and 5 – and were placed again under the command of Captain Reed under whom they remained acting against the Tories in that section of the country – who were numerous and had become troublesome: – The Deponent remained the full two months in this term of service – and a week or two besides – Such was the condition of the country at that time that the citizens thought not whether drafted or not were often in duty. The Deponent was absent constantly four months in scouting parties after the Tories in the neighborhood. He claims for nothing but the seven months for which he was regularly drafted and which he fully served.

Sworn to before me this January 17th 1835

S/ John Hemphill, NP

S/ Joshua Spears

[A note in the file indicates that the claim was rejected because the veteran failed to prove that requisite 6 months service.]

[fn p. 12: letter sent from Jacksonville Florida dated August 16, 1856, to the Commissioner of pensions from Anderson Spears, who represents himself as the son of Joshua Spears