

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Philip Higdon S10839

NC

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 9 July 2021.

Georgia } On this twelfth day of December 1834 personally appeared in open Court
Madison County } before the Justices of the Inferior Court for said County now sitting as a Court of Ordinary, Philip Higdon, a resident of the County & State aforesaid aged eighty 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 7th 1832, that he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated. That in the month of October 1789 [sic] he volunteered for a three months tour to serve in Charleston South Carolina I rendezvoused at Chatham Court House N. Carolina from which place he marched in a company of Militia commanded by one Capt George Hearn & Lieutenant Douglass to Charleston, arrived at Charleston & principally served in working on the fortifications preparatory to an expected attack from Sir Henry Clinton [at Breach Inlet on Sullivans Island, 28 Jun 1776], that after serving out his three months tour he was about to start home & met other detachments of Militia coming in from other quarters to take their place when deponent substituted to serve another three months tour in said City in the place of one Philip Brantly whose company was commanded by one Capt. Blecher & whose Ensign (not recollecting the Lieutenant) was by the name of Cato Riddley [or Cato Riddle]. Deponent states that the Militia were associated with regular Troops in working on the entrenchments & other defences [siege of Charleston SC], the whole were Commanded by Gen'l [Benjamin] Lincoln, & recollect to have heard of & seen among the troops a Col Lytle [Archibald Lytle BLWt74-500] & his brother, a Captain, a Col Armstrong a Col. Malbudy [sic: Marquis Francis de Malmedy] — that after serving out this last mentioned Tour of three months he was discharged & rec'd a discharge from Col. Armstrong, which is lost. Shortly after he left Charleston he heard that it surrendered to the British [12 May 1780]. Deponent then with a number of the discharged Militia made their way for home and in the first part of June 1780 at Salisbury he & others again Volunteered for another three months tour to serve against the Tories who in consequence of the fall of Charleston had suddenly risen up in the Country for the purpose of overrunning North Carolina. That one Gen'l or Col Butler [Gen. John Butler] was in command & deponent thinks & believes he was attached to a company Commanded by one Johnson, who, as well as deponent now recollects was a regular Capt. [sic: see first endnote] & his reason for thinking so is that he marched his company toward South Carolina, & in August, joined Gen'l. [Horatio] Gates near Camdin & was attached to the regulars. deponent states that he was in the battle which terminated in said Gates' defeat [Battle of Camden, 16 Aug 1780] & had a brother shot down by his side [see second endnote]. In his retreat on his way home he & a number of other militia men, among whom were a Col Knowls [Maj. John Nall?] & a Lieutenant Hackney, were taken prisoners by the Tories commanded by a Doc't. Pyles an old man, who was a Col & his Son a Majir. [See third endnote.] That while prisoners marching with the Tories they were overtaken by Col Lee & a battle immediately commenced & the prisoners & Tories being all in the same company the slaughter was indiscriminate. Several of the prisoners were killed among the number was the unfortunate Col Knowls. The Tories were routed & many of them killed & deponent & those prisoners that escaped were retaken. He has no documentary testimony, nor does he know of any one by whose testimony he can prove the above services

He hereby relinquishes his 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. In answer to the Interrogatories required by the War department he States 1st. 2d. He was born in Chatham County N.C. 1754, month not known, as he has no record of his age. 3d was living in Chatham County N.C. lived there four years after the War then moved to Georgia & now lives in Madison County of said State 4 He volunteered in his first & third tour & substituted in the Second. 5th. He was with regular troops both in Charleston & at Gates' defeat & has mentioned all the names of officers recollecting in the body of his declaration 6th. He rec'd a discharge at Charleston from one Col Armstrong but it is lost 7th He mentions the names of Joseph

Sanders, Sam Williford and William M. Lane who will testify to his veracity & good behavior & their belief of his services but not their knowledge of them Philip hisXmark Higden

The State of Alabama } On this the 20th day of April 1840, personally appeared before me
Franklin County } John A. Noor Judge of the County Court of said County Philip Higdon a
Resident of the County & State aforesaid aged 80 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. he served six months under Capt. Lytle, and Col. Lytle, That he does not recollect the day or the month owing to defect of memory caused by extreme old age, but it was in the year 1779 that the Claimant entered the service of the war of the Revolution and remained in service until the termination of the war in 1781 [sic] making at least fifteen months that the Claimant was in Actual service — the first engagement was upon Ashley River near Charles town South Carolina under Capt Lytle & Col Lytle the next engagement was at the battle of Gates' defeat under Capt Joseph Johnson, Col. John Nalls Gen'l. Butler and Gen'l Gates were officers present in this engagement. The next engagement was upon Alamance River North Carolina here the claimant was prisoner taken by the enemy. at this point Col. Nalls was killed [sic: see fourth endnote] the Claimant was from Chatham County North Carolina when he entered the service. The Claimant was drafted for three months, Volunteered for three, and served as a substitute three months. afterwards the Claimant served for three months as substitute in Capt. Alexander Clarks' Company ~~three months~~ and Capt William Gholson's Company three months. The Claimant marched through North Carolina The Claimant does not recollect certainly which Continental regiment he belonged to, he has no documentary evidence.

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 only on that of the Agency of the State of Georgia [illegible word] Claimant afterwards was transfered from the roll of Georgia to that of Huntsville Alabama, This transfer was made the 24th February 1840, to take effect from and after the 1st of March 1839. This said Claimant applied for his pension in 1834 or 1835, but then had no Witness to prove his services. upon his own oath of service he received a Certificate the Original of which is now in his possession of which the following is a true copy

"War Department Revolutionary Claim

I certify that in conformity with the Law of the United States of the 7th June 1832 Philip Higdon of the State of George was a private in the War of the Revolution is entitled to receive thirty dollars per annum during his natural life, commencing on the 4th March 1831 and payable semi annually on the 4th March and 4th September in every year

{Seal} Given at the War office of the United States this 23 day of January one thousand eight hundred & thirty five

examined and counter signed Mahlon Dickerson
J. L. Edwards Commissioner of pensions acting Secretary of War"

under the Certificate above set out the Claimant received thirty dollars annually up to the 4th March 1839. he has not received his pension since that time, owing to the fact of not knowing at what point to apply for his pension until lately, when he received a Certificate of Transfer as follows,

"War Department Pension office 24th July 1840.

Sir. In conformity with the regulations of this Department you have this day been transfered from the Roll of Georgia to that of Huntsville Alabama to take effect from and after the 4th March 1839.

Mr. Philip Higdon I am Sir, Respectfully Your Obedient Servant
U. S. Pensioner J. L. Edwards Commissioner of Pensions

care of William Dickson Esq'r.

Buzzard Roost Alabama"

The Claimant received his discharge at the close of the Revolutionary War, which he can not now obtain,

it being lost or misplaced. He was born in the year 1760, he has no Record of his age, he was born in Chatham County North Carolina, he was living in same County & State when called into service. The Claimant several years after the Revolutionary War moved to Georgia resided there about three years and then moved to South Carolina, where he resided several years, thence he removed to North Carolina where he remained five or six years, and thence he moved to Tennessee where he lived about three years, thence he removed to Georgia where he staid five or six years, and then he moved to Alabama, where he has lived about three years, and where he now resides. Philip hisXmark Higdon

The state of Alabama } Also personally appeared before me John A Noor Judge of the
Franklin County } County Court of said County & State, Richard Strong, who is a Resident
of the State of Tennessee, in the County of Hardin, who being first duly sworn upon the whole Evangelist
of Almighty God the truth to speak in relation to his knowledge of the services of Philip Higdon a
Pensioner in the Revolutionary [one or two illegible words] states that he was a soldier of the Revolution
in War with the said Philip Higdon at Gates' Defeat and other Battles set forth in the declaration of said
Philip Higdon that he knows Philip Higdon aforesaid did serve in said War as a Private for at least fifteen
months, and that he knows of his own knowledge that the facts & statements set forth in the declaration
above of the said Higdon are true Richard hisXmark Strong

NOTES:

Many of the officers mentioned by Higdon cannot be identified, but the "Johnson" referred to by Higdon may have been Joseph Johnson acted as captain of the Chatham County Militia at the Battle of Camden, according to Richard Bishop (W18598), Burgess Clark (W2758), Daniel Higdon (W25769), George Pearson (R8042), Thomas Steel (S7603), and others. This appears to be the same Joseph Johnson, himself who stated in his pension application S7093 that "in the year 1777, he received a commission of Lieutenant" in the Continental Army "and served as such... until the end of the war." In fact, however, virtually the entire Continental Line of North Carolina was taken prisoner at the surrender of Charleston. The few regulars who remained free were in the company commanded by Capt. Edward Yarborough (W4776) attached to the militia regiment commanded by Lt. Col. Henry Dixon.

The first name of the brother killed at the Battle of Camden is not given, but it may have been Charles. A Charles Higdon was listed along with Philip Higdon as grandsons in the will of John Brantley dated 12 Aug 1777. See also the pension application of Daniel Higdon (S25769) of Chatham County, relationship unknown.

The Lieut. Hackney said to have been captured by Col. Dr. John Pyle soon after the battle of Camden appears to have been Capt. Joseph Hackney. According to his pension application (S6973), Hackney and his entire company were actually captured by Pyle on 19 Feb 1781, and they were immediately taken to Hillsborough and put into irons on 27 Feb. It is not likely that Pyle would have had prisoners with him during the engagement with Lt. Col. Henry Lee on 25 Feb 1781, since Pyle was expecting to join the fast-moving Legion of Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton. Pyle's troops mistook Lee's Legion for that of Tarleton, giving Lee an advantage that resulted in what is commonly called "Pyle's Massacre."

Maj. John Nall was actually killed at Lindley's Mill on 13 Sep 1781.

On 8 Sep 1838 Philip Higdon applied to have his pension transferred to Franklin County, Alabama, where he had moved because "his only son removing from the state of Georgia to Alabama, the son being desirous his father would accompany him the father Philip Higdon wishing to go with his son and having no relatives left behind did not wish to be left so disconsolate." Redeford Higdon, presumably his son, vouched for the identity of Philip Higdon and stated that he had moved to Alabama in Oct 1837.

On 27 Oct 1840 Rebecca Higdon, widow of Philip Higdon, acknowledged receipt of his pension up to the day of his death on 8 Aug 1840.