

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of David Royster S11327

VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 21 Aug 2015.

State of Virginia } S.S.
County of Goochland }

On this 20th day of May 1834 personally appeared in open Court, before the Court of the County of Goochland, now sitting, David Royster, a resident of the County of Goochland and State of Virginia aged seventy two 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 I entered the service of the United States under the following named officers, and served as herein stated. I was drafted in the militia of Virginia, as a private soldier, in the army of the Revolution, in the county of Goochland; the day month or year I cannot recollect: I was under the command of Capt'n. Wm. H. Miller [William H. Miller] of the county of Goochland, and was marched to the barracks in the County of Albemarle, to guard the British prisoners, at that place [captured at Saratoga 17 Oct 1777 and kept at Albemarle Barracks from Jan 1779 till Feb 1781]: at that place & at that time, Col. James Taylor [sic: Francis Taylor] had the principle command; Lieutenant Col. [William] Fontaine was also one of the officers in command, at that place. I remained there four weeks, and was then discharged & returned to the county of Goochland: sometime thereafter, the day month or year I cannot recollect, I was again drafted into service under the same Capt'n. Wm. H. Miller, and was again marched to the same barracks; where the same officers, Col. Taylor & Col. Fontaine were in command, at the said barracks, & again remained there in service four weeks; when I was again discharged & returned to the county of Goochland; the first tour was in the summer season, & the second in the succeeding winter; which winter is remembered by all persons then, & now living, & called the cold winter; being the coldest weather known in Virginia [1779-1780]. Some time thereafter, when [Gen. Benedict] Arnold came to Richmond in Virginia [5-7 Jan 1781], being the time called & known as Arnolds invasion; the day month or year I cannot recollect, I was again drafted & ordered into service, under the command of Capt'n. Stokely Towles & marched to Richmond & there under the command of Col. Charles Fleming; when we reached Richmond we found the Warehouses & others had been burnt & the enemy gone; from thence was marched to Maubin Hills [sic: Malvern Hill 15 mi SE] below Richmond & was there commanded by Col. John Nicholas; after remaining at Maubin Hills a few days, was marched from thence to Charles City Courthouse, where the enemy had just surprised a party at that place [8 Jan 1781] & killed a young man named Ballard Smith; from Charles City Courthouse was marched to Williamsburg & there put under the command of General Thomas Nelson & remained there a considerable time; the precise time not recollect: from Williamsburg was marched to Sandy Point, & at Sandy Point was under the command of Major George Lee Turberville; remained at Sandy Point several weeks till the term expired for which I was drafted, which was three months; was then discharged & returned home to the county of Goochland. While at Sandy Point, one of the enemies vessels was taken; I was one of the party that went in an open boat to attack the enemies vessel. – Some time thereafter, the day month or year I cannot recollect; but it was at the time of Philips invasion, as it was termed [Gen. William Phillips, Apr 1781], I was again ordered out under the command of Capt'n. Stokely Towles & marched to Richmond, from Richmond down to four mile creek; & marched & counter marched down & up James River for some time; a portion of the time at Richmond & at Bottom's Bridge: during that time Cornwallis came to Manchester & committed many depredations, in burning tobacco &c. [sic: Phillips and Arnold, 30 Apr]; we were in Richmond when Gen'l. LaFayette arrived in Richmond with his command [29 Apr]; at that time I was under the command of General Thomas Nelson: while we were at Fort Powhatan below Richmond [about 35 mi SE of Richmond], I well recollect the following named officers were these – Col. Nathaniel G. Morris [S36178] who commanded the Goochland Militia of which I was one of the privates; Col. John Pleasants of Henrico; Col. John Taylor of Caroline; Col. Holt Richardson [Holt Richeson]; Major

Ragsdall [probably Ragsdale] & sundry others: we were in no action. After the expiration of three months the term for which I was detailed in the last mentioned tour, I was discharged & returned home to the County of Goochland, where I arrived a few days before the enemy under the command of Cornwallis passed through Goochland County; being the time that Cornwallis went to Elk Hill in the County of Goochland [7-14 Jun 1781]. In the first tour herein before stated I served one month, in the second tour one month, in the third tour three months, & in the fourth tour three months, making in the aggregate eight months that I served in all the different tours that I was in service, during the Revolutionary war. And I further declare that I have no documentary evidence in my possession, nor do I know of any person living whose testimony I can procure to prove my service, except John Woodson [pension application S6434] of the County of Hanover by whom I expect to prove a portion of my service. I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present, and declare that my name is not on the Pension Roll of the Agency of any State whatever.

Question by the Court. 1. – Where and in what year were you born?

Answer. In Goochland 10th May 1762

Question by the Court 2. – Have you any record of your age, and if so, where is it?

Answer. No record except a register in the old family Bible which is in the possession of my brother Francis W. Royster

Question by the Court 3. – Where were you living when called into service, where have you lived since the Revolutionary war, and where do you now live?

Answer. When called into service, in Goochland County. Since the war in 1788. I moved into the county of Hanover & remained there till 1815 when I again moved into the county of Goochland, where I now live in Goochland County about three miles from the Courthouse.

Question by the Court. 4. – How were you called into service: were you drafted, did you volunteer, or were you a substitute? And if a substitute for whom?

Answer. Drafted

Question by the Court. 5. State the names of the Regular Officers, who were with the troops, where you served; such Continental & Militia Regiments as you can recollect, and the general circumstances of your service?

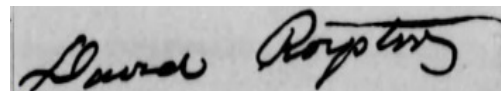
Answer. At the Albemarle Barracks – Col James Taylor & Col Fontaine, in the 3^d. tour at the time of Arnolds invasion Col Charles Fleming Col John Nicholas Gen. Thomas Nelson. Major Lee Turberville: at the time of Phillips invasion – Gen. Thos. Nelson – Gen. La Fayette – Col. Nat. G. Morris – Col John Pleasants – Col John Taylor – Col Holt Richardson, Major Ragsdall – I saw no Continental Regiment except Gen La Fayette's. The Militia Regiments were commanded by first one & then another of the Officers named. I was in no action during the War.

Question by the Court. 6. – Did you ever receive a discharge from the service, and if so, by whom was it given & what has become of it?

Answer. I never received any discharge in writing: was discharged verbally by the different officers in command when any tours expired

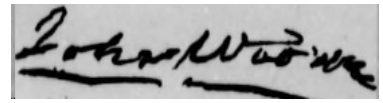
Question by the Court. 7. – State the names of persons to whom you are known in you present neighborhood, & who can testify as to your character for veracity, and their belief of your services as a soldier of the Revolution.

Answer J Woodson, Charles Rogers, Doct. John Morris, Benjamin Anderson and many others Sworn to & subscribed, the day and year aforesaid

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "David Royster". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

I John Woodson of the County of Hanover hereby certify that I am well acquainted with David Royster, who has subscribed & sworn to the foregoing declaration; that I served the same tour of duty mentioned by Mr. David Royster at the Albemarle Barracks & well recollect that Mr. Royster as stated by him served the tour at said Barracks in the winter tour. I also served another tour with said David Royster at

the time of Arnolds invasion & well remember David Royster served that tour. I also well remember that the said David Royster served another tour as stated by him at the time called Philips's invasion. I also served another tour with said David Royster at the time called Leslie's invasion. I also was with the said David Royster at the time Cornwallis came to Richmond

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature appears to read "Robert Woode" and is underlined with two horizontal lines.