

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Matthew Nail (Neal) S14004

fn32Ga/SC/NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

rev'd 1/24/09 & 10/24/16

[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.]

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Alabama [Madison County]

In the Circuit Court of Madison County held at Huntsville on the first Monday after the fourth Monday in October 1832 his Honor William J. Adam presiding -- There personally appeared in Open Court Matthew Nail resident of said County aged 77 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.

Affiant was born at the 24th [could be 21st] day of May 1755 in the State of Virginia, Amherst County. He does not recollect his age when he entered into the service of the United States but well recollects that the first service he performed was at Fort Charlotte¹ on the Savannah River under Captain Caldwell who commanded said Fort, the other officers not recollected. After leaving said Fort in which he acted as a volunteer, he again volunteered his services in the militia under Captain Joseph Nail [Joseph Neal] (the line of troop not recollected) who commanded the Fort which was called Nail's Fort² [Neal's Fort] on Broad River in Georgia. During his residence in said Fort, Affiant had many skirmishes with the Indians in which we were always successful. When Affiant left said Fort, he went into South Carolina to visit his mother whom he had not seen for two years. While there, a call was made for volunteers & Affiant again volunteered under Major Ross [Francis Ross] and Colonel Watson [Samuel Watson] & was taken to Augusta Georgia from thence to the mouth of Briar Creek³ & was attached to General Ashe's [John Ashe's] Army which was shortly after our arrival attacked by the British & Tories who proved successful & Affiant & many others fell into the hands of the

¹ <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/fortcharlottesc.htm>

² August 25, 1778 at Nail's Fort, Georgia - In August, Capt. Joseph Nail gathered most of the local settlers into Nail's Fort when the Creek Indians attacked their settlement. The fort was built on the north side of the Broad River, at Deep Creek. It was for protection against Indian attacks.

On the 25th of August some Cherokee attacked Nails Fort on Broad River in Georgia, but were beat off. They stole all the horses, wounded Sampson Bunn, killed nine milk cows and cut out their tongues. The Indians killed 20 settlers before the remainder fled into the fort. The Indians tried to capture the fort but was unsuccessful. Later that month. Col. Andrew Williamson brought a 500-man South Carolina militiamen to Georgia to protect the frontier from future Indian attacks. Quoted from <http://www.myrevolutionarywar.com/battles/1778s.htm> (viewed 1/24/09). See, also: "A native of Virginia, Joseph Nail erected his fort on the north side of the broad river at deep (Deer?) Creek, some twenty-six miles from the rivers mouth." Quoted from <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/WEBB/1998-05/0896008802> (viewed 1/24/09).

³ March 3, 1779. <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/briercreek.htm> & <http://www.myrevolutionarywar.com/battles/790304-briar-creek/>

British & Tories as prisoners of war. We were marched from thence to Savannah from thence in boats to near the Tybee Island lighthouse⁴ where we were put on board of a prison ship on which we were confined about five months during the most of which time we underwent a scene of suffering too intolerable to be born or long to describe. After being released from the prison ship by the British themselves we were brought to a place called Ebenezer about 25 miles above Savannah. Shortly after our arrival at the last named place myself & three others gave them the slip & got into a boat & crossed the River and went to Genl Huger's Army which lay about 45 miles from said River. Shortly after our arrival at his Army, Genl Huger gave me a pass to go home being low in health & much emaciated from suffering where I remained that winter unable to do service. In the following spring, Affiant volunteered under Genl Clarke [Elijah Clarke] from Georgia who passed through our neighborhood with about two hundred men. When Genl Clarke left the neighborhood, he marched to the Enoree River in order to attack a band of British & Tories who were stationed there. We were interrupted before daylight by some of their spies. At daylight we charged on some of the spies & picket guard in which we were successful and took some prisoners. We kept the field & while we were remaining under arms we were attacked by the British & Tories from the station & fought with the fearful odds of about four to one against us but we were again successful & killed & took about a hundred of the British & Tories.⁵ After taking the prisoners to the Barracks, being worn down & naked I got leave to visit my Brother on Nolichucky [River] over the mountain to get some clothes & recruit myself a little. After some short time, Affiant substituted himself to go down to Genl Marion's [Francis Marion's] camp on Santee River. After arriving at said camp, I remained there scouting & skirmishing about two months. I returned home where I acted as spy to a Fort called Morgan's Fort⁶ in defending the frontiers against the Indians & continued in that capacity of a the close of the war during which time Affiant lost the whole of his property which consisted of a good horse, saddle & bridle & rifle gun which in those days was considered a tolerable good patrimony for a young man to have. Affiant not knowing the benefit of discharges never applied for nor obtained one. Affiant has no documentary evidence and those of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to his service.

He hereby or 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 in this Union. Affiant does not know precisely when he entered the service nor when he quit, but knows in all his service he must have served some five or six years.

S/Matthew Nail, X his mark

Sworn to & subscribed the day & year aforesaid in open court.

Witn: S/ John L. Wilson

[John T. Nelson, a clergyman, and William H. Robertson gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

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Amended declaration of Matthew Nail

On this 19th day of August 1833 personally appeared in open Court, in Madison County Alabama, before Samuel Chapman, Judge of the County Court of said County Matthew Nail, who being duly sworn, deposeth and saith, that, by reason of old age, & the consequent loss of

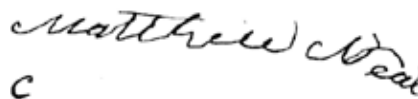
⁴ September 10, 1779. <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/tybee.htm>

⁵ Applicant is describing the battle of Musgrove Mill. August 19, 1780. <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/musgrovesmill.htm> & http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_musgroves_mill.html

⁶ The best I can determine, this fort was located somewhere on the Ogeechee River in Georgia.

memory, he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his service during the revolutionary war but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than the periods mentioned below, & in the following grades. For one month he served as a private & a volunteer under Capt. Caldwell at Fort Charlotte on Savannah River in South Carolina. For two years he served as a private in a volunteer company commanded by Capt. Joseph Nail his brother, at Nail's Ford on Broad River in the State of Georgia. For six months he served under Lieut. Kirkendall, as a private & volunteer, -- the Capt. whose name affiant does not now recollect, from sickness or from some other cause was unable to turn out. Lieut. Kirkendall took command of the company -- his field officers, whilst in this last mentioned company, were Major Ross, Col. Watson & General Ashe, -- one month after he joined this Company he was taken prisoner at Briar Creek by the British & Tories, & was kept a prisoner for 5 months, when he made his escape. For one month he served as a private in a volunteer company commanded by Capt. Thomas Johnson in a troop of horse commanded by General Elijah Clarke in South Carolina -- For 2 months he served as a substitute in the place of one Jacob Vance, in a militia company commanded by Capt. George Doharty -- the Regiment commanded by Col. Sevier or Savaier -- the whole commanded by General Marion, on Santee River in South Carolina. For 5 months he served as a private in a spy company at Morgan's Fort on Nolichucky River, then in the State of North Carolina. The applicant states that he believes he has served longer than the periods above named, but that he would prefer being under the time, then over. He states that by reason of his old age, his debilitated & worn out frame & the consequent loss of memory, he is wholly unable to state the time or even the years in which he served -- & that under such circumstances as to require this, would be to require of him the performance of an impossibility. As before stated in his original declaration, he has no documentary evidence of any of his terms of service, nor does he know of any living witness by whom he can prove the same, as they have all paid the debt of nature, which he himself must shortly pay & is therefore compelled to rest his claim to a pension upon his own statement which is substantially true, as far as he is in perfect memory serves him. -- that standing upon the brink of eternity he has no inducement to state a falsehood, or commit a fraud upon a government for which he has endured so much toil, pain & fatigue to establish & which he trusts will continue to exist & prosper long after his frail & worn out body will have been consigned to its mother Earth which must shortly be. -- In answer to the 3 interrogatories (part of the same prescribed by the War Department) & which by the department he is instructed are not satisfactorily answered -- he states that he has no documentary evidence, or record of his age he only knows from tradition that he was born on the 24th day of May 1755 in the County of Amherst in the State of Virginia. That when he was first called into service he was living in the County of Wilkes in the State of Georgia -- during the other terms of his service he was living in Ninety Six District & in Camden District in South Carolina. Sworn to & subscribed the 19th day of August 1833.

S/ Matthew Neal

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matthew Neal".

C

S/ Rich'd B. Purdon, Clk C. C.

[John T. Nelson, a clergyman, William H. Robertson and William H. Odom gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[On April 30, 1836 in Madison County, Ala., Catherine Nail gave testimony that she is the widow of Matthew Nail, that he died June 10, 1835, leaving her his widow; she surrenders his pension certificate and prays to be allowed whatever she may be entitled to under the law. She signed this document with her mark.]

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$80 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service as a private in the Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina service.]