

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of William Bigham S1497

f23NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

8/28/10: rev'd 8/6/18

[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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[State of Tennessee, Bedford County]

On this Sixth day of November in the year of our Lord 1832 personally appeared in open Court before John L Neill, Saml Phillips [Samuel Phillips] & John B Armstrong, Esquires gentlemen justices of the peace appointed to hold the court of pleas and quarter Sessions for Bedford County in the State of Tennessee for November Term 1832 of said court, now sitting William Bigham a resident of Bedford County and State aforesaid, aged Seventy-five years Eight months and thirteen days, who being first duly sworn according to law doth make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed the 7th of June 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated to wit That he entered the service of the United States as a volunteer in a Company commanded by Captain Robert Erwin [Robert Irwin] in Mecklenburg County and State of North Carolina and was marched from that place against the hostile Cherokee Indians, about the first of August 1776,¹ that Captain Erwin's Company was attached to a Regiment commanded by Adam Alexander who was under the command of General Rutherford [Griffith Rutherford] – he states he was marched to a place called the middle Settlements in the Cherokee nation but the Enemy had all fled, and the Americans set fire to their towns and burned them down and was then marched on to the Valley Towns where the Americans killed one Indian and took some prisoners among them was two white men one by the name of Scott and was marched back home to Mecklenburg County North Carolina where he says he was honorably discharged about the first week of November in the same year after serving a tower [tour] of duty of three months. He further states that afterwards to wit soon after the Siege of Charleston [Charleston South Carolina fell to the British on May 12, 1780] he again volunteered under Captain Reed [George Reed] as one of the minute men and was marched in pursuit of Tories on the Yadkin River he states the Tories they were in pursuit of had been routed by another Company of Whigs – he was then marched to Ramsowers Mill [Ramsours Mill]² in Lincoln County in the State of North Carolina and from that place was marched back home and dismissed until further orders. He states that afterwards he was called again in the service under the aforesaid Captain Reed and was marched to a Regiment commanded by Colonel Robert Erwin who was under the Command of General Sumpter [sic, Thomas Sumter] and marched immediately on to the Hanging Rock in

¹ http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_cherokee_expedition_1776.html

² http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_ramseurs_mill.html

South Carolina, deponent states he was in a battle [Hanging Rock, August 6, 1780]³ at that place between the Americans commanded by General Sumter and the British and Tories commanded he thinks by an officer of the name of Turnbull, on the 6th day of August 1780 – in which battle he received a wound in his left thigh by a ball passing through it and he was told by Doctor Knox [James Knox] who dressed his wounds, that a small part of the thigh bone was knocked off, he said he was then placed in the Hospital where he remained about five weeks but was not fit for actual Service until after the defeat of Tarleton [Banastre Tarleton] by General Morgan [Daniel Morgan] and his Army,⁴ making a term of Service of more than eleven months. He further states that after that he was called into Service by Captain Brownfield [John Brownfield] who succeeded Captain Reed – Reed having been killed at the battle before mentioned at the hanging Rock, and was marched to the Shallow Ford of the Yadkin River in Rowan County and from that on to Stokes County and from that to Guilford County all in the State of North Carolina and about this time he thinks when they were on the South fork of the Yadkin, that a Proclamation was issued by some officer of the United States stating that, all those who would continue in service six weeks longer it should be good for a tower of three months he says he served out the six weeks and then volunteered for three days with others expecting an engagement between General Greene & Cornwallis, and was afterwards discharged; making a term of service in all seventeen months – and more, but that he only claims a pension for seventeen months actual service, and that he cannot recollect the precise periods of the war when he served.

Interrogatories by the Court

Int. 1st Where and in what year were you born?

Ans. I was born in York County State of Pennsylvania on the 19th day of February in the year 1756, agreeable to my Father's record.

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

Ans. I have a record of my age in my Bible taken from my Father's family Record

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

Ans. I lived in Mecklenburg County and State of North Carolina all the different times I entered the service of the United States and until after the close of the Revolutionary war. Sometime in the year 1800 or 1801 when I moved to Lincoln County North Carolina and remained there until the year 1816 when I moved to Rutherford County Tennessee and in the year 1817, I moved to Bedford County Tennessee where I have lived ever since and where I now live

Int. 4th How were you called into service; were you drafted; did you volunteer or were you a substitute, and if in substitute, for whom?

Ans. I was a volunteer the whole time of my service –

Int. 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.

Ans. I cannot recollect any Regular officer but Generals Green [Nathanael Greene], Gates [Horatio Gates], and Morgan, I only recollect the Regiments under Generals Rutherford, Sumter, and I saw the troops of Genl. Greene but do not recollect the numbers of the Regiments.

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

Ans. I did receive one written discharge but what has become of it I cannot tell – the other times

³ http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_hanging_rock.html

⁴ Veteran is making reference to the Battle of Cowpens, January 17, 1781

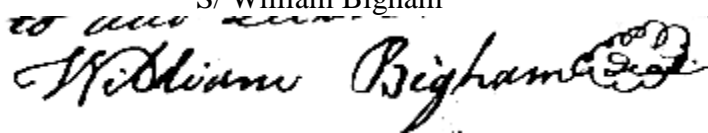
I only received a verbal discharge I think for that I did not think or know it would ever be of any service to make whatever to have a written one

Int. 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.

Ans. William Alexander, Abraham Talley, Wm M. Greggor, Josiah Duncan and the Reverend George Newton of Shelbyville

Deponent further states that he has no documentary evidence whatever, and that he knows of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify as to his Services except the accompanying Deposition of Richard Brown; and that he hereby relinquishes all and every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any agency in the United States. Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

S/ William Bigham

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William Bigham". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

S/ Jas. McKisick, CM

[George Newton, a clergyman, and William Alexander gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

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An amendment to the declaration of William Bigham made at November Term 1832 of Bedford County Court in order to obtain a pension under the Act of Congress of June the 7th 1832 State of Tennessee Bedford County }

Personally appeared before me the undersigned a Justice of the peace in and for the County and State aforesaid; William Bigham Senior who after being duly sworn agreeable to law, deposeth and saith that by reason of old age and the consequent loss of memory he cannot swear positively to the precise length of his Service but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than the periods below and in the following grades to wit – that he served not less than three months as a private soldier in Captain Erwin's Company as mentioned in the declaration above alluded to and upon his first tour under Captain Reed he served not less than three months and a half as a private Soldier; and upon his second tour under Captain Reed he served not less than Eleven months as a private Soldier as mentioned in his former declaration; and upon his last tour mentioned in said declaration he served not less than one month and fourteen days as a private Soldier, making in all a term of eighteen months and twenty-nine days served as a private Soldier for which he claims a pension. Sworn to and subscribed before me this 27th day of June 1833

S/ William Bigham

S/ Robert McCrorey, JP

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State of Tennessee Giles County } Personally appeared before me James S Haynes an acting Justice of the peace for said County Richard Brown⁵ aged seventy-six and some months and after being duly sworn deposeth and saith that William Bigham in the year 1776 at the time

⁵ [Richard Brown W1545](#)

citizen of Mecklenburg County and State of North Carolina served a volunteer in said State in the War of the Revolution at different periods and under different officers a term of nine months and that the said Bigham served as a minute man on various occasions and under different officers but the precise time of said terms of service deponent does not distinctly recollect, and further this deponent saith that the said Bigham was a faithful and active Soldier in said war of the revolution and from long acquaintance with said Bigham said deponent has no hesitation in saying that full credit is due to any statement he may make relative to his service as a Soldier of the revolution.

And further the deponent saith not

Sworn to and subscribed to before me June 6, 1833

S/ Richard Brown

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Brown". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "R".

S/ James S Haynes, JP

[Facts in file: veteran died June 24, 1842; there is no family data in this file.]

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$63.33 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for 19 months service as a private in the North Carolina militia.]