

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters](#)

Pension Application of William Higgins S16155

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 14 June 2011.

The State of Ohio Highland County SS:

On this 31st day of October A.D. 1833 personally appeared in open court before the Court of Common Pleas of said county now sitting William Higgins a resident of said County aged 88 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. And first this applicant states that he was born in the City of London in the year of our lord 1745 on the 11th day of November. Has no record of his age That he lived when called into the service of the United States in Loudon [sic: Loudoun] County in the State of Virginia – After the close of said war he returned to said County where he resided many years – after which he moved to Hampshire County in said state of Virginia where he remained about 12 years & then moved to Highland Count in the State of Ohio where he has lived ever since.

That he entered into the Virginia line on Continental Establishment [sic] as a substitute for one George Russ who enlisted in said line for during the war [see endnote].

That in the month of March AD 1780 [see endnote] he entered said line as a substitute for said George Russ in the county of Loudoun above named under Captain Houseley [probably William Owsley of the Loudoun County Militia] & in the regiment commanded by Colonel Francis Payton [sic: Francis Peyton]. Soon after he joined said company & regiment he marched to Staunton where said regiment remained about three weeks after which they marched to Charlottesville & on our way to that place joined that division of the American army commanded by General Steuben [see endnote]. We remained at Charlottesville & in the vicinity of that place upwards of three months. On our way from Staunton to Charlottesville I was sent out with ten others as a foraging party & whilst we were out we were surprized by a party of British & had a scirmish with them. I was several times knocked down & once stabbed in the thigh with a bayonet but the majority of our men escaped. When we left Charlottesville we marched to Hanover & remained there & in the vicinity of that place until the first of October AD 1781. About three weeks before the surrender of the British Army under General Cornwallis at Yorktown [19 Oct 1781] I was transferred to the Company Commanded by Captain Kirkpatrick in the regiment commanded by Colonel Cole – our company & regiment soon after marched towards Yorktown to join the American Army – on our way Captain Kirkpatrick was severely wounded in the head by one of his own men who discharged his musket at the Capt & shot out his eye. After this accident Captain Lamb took the command of the Company. I was at the taking of Yorktown & after the surrender of the British I marched under the command of said Captain & Colonel to guard some prisoners to Albemarle near Staunton Virginia. I was unwell at this time & had been for some time previous & received in consequence of my ill health a furlough from my captain which specified that I was to go until my health was restored & I was in the service of the United States from the time I entered as a substitute until I was discharged on furlough nineteen months at least.

This applicant further states that he knew Generals Washington – Anthony Wayne – Lafayette – Charles Lee [dismissed by Congress in Jan 1780] – & many other revolutionary officers but does not now recollect their names. That he never received a written discharge from the service except his furlough above spoken of. That John Powers Allen Trimble John Jones Amos Danthan Jacob Weaver Matthew Creed John Smith & many others of his neighbours will be willing to testify as to his good character for veracity in his neighbourhood & as to their belief of his services as a soldier of the revolution. That he had sundry documents in his possession relating to his service in the revolutionary war but that he put them into the hands of Colonel Francis Payton after the close of the war & was never able to recover them. That he knows of no living witness by whom he could prove his service in said war

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present & declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state. That there is no clergyman residing in his neighborhood & in consequence thereof that it would be very inconvenient for him to procure a certificate in all respects similar to that required by the war department &c &c

[signed] Wm Higgins

The amended declaration of William Higgins in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832

The State of Ohio Highland County

Personally came before me a justice of the peace of said county William Higgins who being duly sworn deposes & says that in the county of Loudon in the State of Virginia in the month of March AD 1780 he was put by his master into the Militia of the State of Virginia ~~by his master~~ James Lewis as a substitute for one George Russ who had been drafted (this applicant by reason of his old age & loss of memory can not say for how long a period the said George Russ had been drafted but thinks it was one year) that his said master received for the substitution from George Russ a negro man to work a year for him & two hogsheads of tobacco. That he entered the company commanded by Captain Houseley & the regiment commanded by Colonel Francis Peyton. That he marched first to Staunton where they remain about 3 weeks thence to a place called Levin's Orchard in the vicinity of Charlottesville where they remained nearly three months having join Steuben's Division of the American army. About that time a proclamation was issue by the Virginia Government that all militiamen under a certain draft who would enlist for the war should receive a Discharge from the Militia tour & receive bounty in money & land. That his applicant under this proclamation at Lewis's Orchard received the bounty money from Col. Peyton & certain commissioners whose names he does not now recollect. was discharge from his militia duty after serving not less that four months & enlisted in the Virginia State troops for during the war. He was then under the command of Captain ~~John~~ Stubblefield Major [John] Willis & Colonel [William] Russell – that Col. Peyton was a militia officer, the Couty Lieutenant [sic: County Lieutenant] of Loudon County & that he rec'd the bounty money from his hands when he enlisted though the other commissioners were standing by at the time – from the time of his enlistment until he received his furlough he served in the state line of Virginia for fifteen months at least and in all his service taken together he served not less than nineteen months. That he has lost his discharge rec'd after his militia tour & his other papers were destroyed or lost as he has stated in his declaration. That the original Declaration made by this applicant is in other respects strictly correct so far as his old age & loss of memory will permit him to state. That he has made the subject his study since his Declaration was returned & during that time it has been brought to his recollection & he is now satisfied that he first entered the Militia of Va as he has stated – He served in the artillery

[signed] Wm Higgins

Subscribed & sworn to before me this 15th day of November AD 1834

The State of Ohio Highland County SS.

Personally came before me a magistrate of said County Margaret Higgons wife of William Higgons who has subscribed & sworn to the above declaration – aged [blank] years who being first duly sworn says that she has known the said William Higgons from March 1780 to the present time That from March aforesaid she frequently saw him said Higgons in Captain Housleys company of Virginia militia till some time in June following when this deponent & the said William Higgons were married at Loudon County in the State of Virginia. That when she married said Higgons she immediately followed him to the camp of the American army & followed the camp (until he was discharge or furlough by reason of his sickness). [See endnote.] That when they were married her said husband was a militiaman in Captain Housleys Company & in Colonel Peyton's regiment & so remained at Lewis' Orchard near Charlottesville for about a month afterwards when her said husband enlisted in the Virginia state troops & took the

bounty. He was then in Captain Stubblefields company. This deponent states that the said William Higgons also served at different times under Captains Kirkpatrick & Lamb but by reason of her old age & loss of memory she cannot state at what period he served under each of his said captains. That she was constantly with her said husband after her marriage until he was discharged which period of time was not less than 16 months & previous to her marriage the said Higgons had been in the militia service not less than three months. She recollects of being at Charlottesville Leesburg & Hanover & other places but cannot be more particular in her statements about times & places Margaret herXmark Higgins
Subscribed & sworn to before me this 15th day of November AD 183 [sic]

NOTES:

Gen. Baron von Steuben held an independent command in Virginia only briefly in the spring of 1781.

A size roll of noncommissioned officers and privates taken at Carter's Ferry (now Cartersville in Cumberland County) lists the following: William Higgins/ age 25/ height 5' 3½"/ dark hair/ black eyes/ fair complexion/ butcher/ born in London, England/ residing in Loudoun County where he enlisted on 19 Mar 1781 for the duration of the war. Sized on 28 May 1781. Note, however, the discrepancy between this age and that of the pension applicant.

Although there were many female "camp followers" in the Revolutionary War, Margaret Higgins is among the few whose names are known.

A document in the file states that William Higgins died on 11 Feb 1842 leaving no widow but the following surviving children: John Higgins, Thomas Higgins, William Higgins, James Higgins, George Higgins, Charles Higgins, and Elizabeth Lee. Other documents state that all were living in Highland County except for Elizabeth Lee of Scioto County OH.

Washington Doggett deposed that he had made the coffin for William Higgins, Sr., and that he had previously made a coffin in June 1839, which he thought was for the wife of William Higgins. William McReynolds deposed that he had sold the grave clothes and preached the funeral sermon of William Higgins.