

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Declaration of John Kersey S1679

f16VA

Transcribed and annotated by Roy Randolph

March 09, 2012

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading. A bracketed question mark [?] indicates that the word or words preceding it represent(s) a guess by me. Not all the material in the Pension File is included in the transcription.]

State of Tennessee, Warren County

On this the 5th day of February 1833 personally appeared in open court before the honorable James C. Mitchell the presiding judge of the Warren County Circuit Court now sitting, John Kersey, a resident of the county of Warren and state of Tennessee aged 75 years who being first duly sworn according to law doth, on his oath, make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of an Act of Congress passed 7th June 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated. In the latter part of 1774 or of the first part of 1775 it was believed by the citizens of Virginia that Lord Dunmore meditated some violence against them to oppose which a great number of the militia were called into the service and ordered to march towards Williamsburg in that state. Applicant was called into the service by what he understood to be a draft in Charlotte County in Va. and was attached to Captain Josiah Mourton's [sic, corrected to Morton throughout] company. He was mustered into the service at Prince Edward Courthouse. There was about 60 men in the company he does not recollect the lieutenant or ensign's name. Morton then marched the company to a place called Old James Town near Williamsburg in Va. On their march to this place they were joined by various other companies all destined to the same place. Col Hubbard, his given name he thinks was James¹, and Major Overstreet whose given name he does not know commanded the troops. When they reached their place of destination they ascertained that his lordship had left Williamsburg and gone aboard of one of his majesty's ships of war. They remained at James Town and sometime and until all apprehensions of danger as he supposed had subsided where after having served eight weeks he was discharged in writing by Captain Morton. He thinks this tour was performed in the latter part of the summer or 1st part of the fall from the circumstance that the soldiers would frequently take green corn from the farms they passed.

In the latter part of 1775 as well as he can recollect he was—by the return of Lord Dunmore and his ordering a larger number of the Loyalists from the western part of Virginia to Norfolk—again called into the service by draft in Charlotte County Virginia. He was mustered into service at Charlotte Courthouse in Captain John Harvey's [sic, Harvey's] company of which Gideon Spencer was the lieutenant. Does not recollect the name of the ensign. At the same time two other companies were called out from Charlotte one of them was commanded by a Captain Morton. Does not recollect the name of the other. They were marched from Charlotte Courthouse to Petersburg. There they were joined by several companies from Louisa [?] and Mecklenburg and from Petersburg they were to have marched, as he understood to Williamsburg or Norfolk as the exigency of circumstances might require. They were to have received as he understood general officers at Petersburg but about the time they reached there Lord Dunmore and his Loyalists were repulsed at Norfolk and retreated all together in his majesty's ships. Shortly after this the officers at Petersburg were ordered to march their

companies back home and discharge them. His company marched back to Charlotte Courthouse and he was there discharged by his captain in writing.

Just before the battle at Guilford in 1781 it was thought that Cornwallis would attempt to cross the Staunton River at Coles Ferry to oppose which all of the militia of Charlotte and Campbell counties were ordered out and to rendezvous at Coles Ferry. At that place applicant entered the service for the third time. The soldiers were commanded by Col Hubbard. The company he was attached to was commanded by Captain Dudley Basdel. A few days before the battle at Guilford it was ascertained that the British army would not attempt to cross the river at Coles Ferry. Then Col Hubbard verbally discharged all of the militia there. Applicant returned home to Charlotte after having been in the service four weeks. Col Hubbard went on and joined the army and was in the battle at Guilford [Guilford Courthouse, March 15, 1781] in which his horse was shot by a cannon ball².

In April after the battle at Guilford applicant was again called into the service by draft. He entered the service in Charlotte County State of Virginia. He was attached [?] to a company commanded by Captain Samuel White. Gideon Spencer was the lieutenant. There was sixty odd men in the company. He was mustered into service at Charlotte Courthouse from which place they were marched to Prince Edward Courthouse where they were joined by Captain Jaminson's [sic, probably William Jameson] Company from Charlotte and diverse other companies from other parts of Virginia. Here they remained about two weeks and within which applicant's Captain, Samuel White, withdrew from the service and Captain John Coldwell assumed the command of the company. From Prince Edward they were marched to the Rackoon [sic, corrected to Raccoon throughout] Ford on the Rapidan River in going to which they crossed James River at Cartersville and also went by Louisa Courthouse. At this time Lord Cornwallis was in the southern part of Virginia and the troops at the Raccoon Ford were to join the army under the command of the Marquis de la Fayette and General Wayne the vicinity of that place and there to watch and restrain the motions of Lord Cornwallis. Not meeting with those generals at the Raccoon Ford they stayed there waiting for them about two weeks. They not coming there the companies crossed the river and went to an old field about four miles from the ford which he thinks was in Culpepper County. Here they remained about a week and then marched back to the old camp at the ford re-crossing the river. There was about 4 or 500 of the Va. militia. They remained there two or three days when the Marquis de la Fayette joined them with a numerous army supposed to amount to 8,000 or 9,000 men. Lafayette marched them from the ford about three miles to a mill where they were joined by General Wayne and his army on Sunday. From the mill they were marched across the Pamunka [sic, Pamunkey] River crossing at Brock's Bridges from thence above the river to a magazine, which he thinks was in the lower part of Orange County. Here Lafayette ordered two companies of men to be taken from the militia some from each company to remain and guard the magazine. Applicant was selected for that purpose as well as the lieutenant of his company and others of the same. He was then attached to a company commanded by Captain Anderson whose given name he does not recollect. The other company was commanded by a Captain Upsher the lieutenant of his company was Gideon Spencer. De la Fayette & Wayne marched the balance of the army on in the direction of Gloucester & Yorktown on the York River. Applicant remained at the magazine until sometime in August when after having been in the service upwards of

four months he was discharged in writing by Captain Anderson. He then returned to his residence in Charlotte. This ended his military service. He served in all a little more than eight months. He claims only eight months service.

He was born in Hanover County state of Virginia in April 1757.

He has no record of his age. He states it from the information of his parents.

During the Revolutionary War he lived in Charlotte County State of Virginia his father having moved to that county when he was a child. Sometime after the Revolution he moved to Franklin County Va. near to Callaway's Iron Works and lived there about fourteen years. He then moved to this Warren County State of Tennessee where he has since resided.

He was always drafted into the service.

He frequently saw the Marquis de la Fayette. He always saw him on horseback in company with two *aides de camp* all three of whom were mounted upon white horses. He saw General Wayne & he knew General Lawson. There was various regular officers with the troops after Wayne & Lafayette joined them. The regulars were always marched before. Applicant was not long in the army with them and being an humble private had but few opportunities even to learn the names of the regular officers, as they were strangers to the militia with whom he marched. There were Continental and Militia regiments in army but he cannot from memory state them by name.

He received three written and one verbal discharge. The first time he was discharged at Old James Town by Capt James Morton. The second time he was discharged by Captain John Harvey at Charlotte Courthouse. The third time he was verbally discharged by Col James Hubbard at Coles Ferry on Staunton River and the fourth time he was discharged by Captain Anderson at the magazine on the Pamunka [sic, Pamunkey] River. These discharges have been lost for many years. Applicant did not think that he would ever have any use for them and consequently took no care of them. He does not know when or where they were lost nor how.

He has no documentary evidence of his service nor does he know of any person living by whom he can prove them.

He is known to Isham Perkins, Jonathan Parris, Peter Vougn [sic, probably Vaughn], a clergyman by the name of Clumma Sullivan, Waldoo [sic, probably Waldo] Cuttler, Thompson Newby and diverse other persons in the neighborhood where he at present lives and who will as he believes testify as to his character for veracity and of their belief of his services as a soldier of the Revolution.

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. Sworn to and subscribed in open court this the day and year aforesaid. John Kersey (his mark)

[Clumma Sullivan, a clergyman, and Jonathan Parris gave the standard affidavit of reputation for veracity, age and belief in the neighborhood of Revolutionary War services.]

State of Tennessee Warren County

The amended declaration of the foregoing named John Kersey who is an applicant for a pension and who has presented to the War Department the accompanying declaration for a pension. This applicant, John Kersey, by way of amendment to his original declaration now states in addition to the facts therein stated that he was drafted into the service the third tour he served and claimed compensation for in his original declaration in the year he thinks of 1781 at least it was just before the Battle at Guilford and was in the service and served as a private soldier that tour four weeks and in the manner and under the officers stated in his original declaration which he now says is correct and adopts and refers to for a more particular detail of his services during that tour. This applicant further states that from his own knowledge or recollection he cannot state the year in which he served the last tour it being the four months tour claimed for and particularly described in his original declaration. He is certain that he entered the service at the time stated in his original declaration and could from the history of the Revolution give the year during this tour. The last are set forth and claimed in this applicant's original declaration. And shortly after they were mustered into the service they were marched to Prince Edward Courthouse as told in his declaration. They remained there for some time during all of which they were exercised by General Robert Lawson. After they left there this applicant does not think he was attached to any particular regiment nor does he believe that there was any field or general officers with the Virginia militia. If there was any he has no certain recollection of it. He has some indistinct recollection that a Col Tucker was with them but is by no means certain of it. General Lawson was a lawyer and applicant understood when he left Prince Edward that he was to follow them and take the command of the Virginia militia but he did not do so while applicant remained with the army. Major Overstreet he does not recollect his given name marched them from Prince Edward Courthouse and commanded them until applicant was sent to the magazine. He does not think there was any colonel with them.

John Kersey (his mark)

State of Tennessee Warren County

This day John Kersey, the above named applicant, appeared before me, John Duncan, an acting Justice of the Peace in and for the county of Warren and made oath that the facts stated in the foregoing amendment to his original declaration for a pension are true to the best of his knowledge and belief. Sworn to and subscribed before me this the 1st day of July A.D. 1833.

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$20 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service as a private for 6 months in the Virginia militia.]

¹ Mr. Kersey speculates the given name of the officer he identifies as Colonel Hubbard is James. Later in his declaration he simply identifies this officer as Colonel James Hubbard with no caveat. At least three other veterans from Charlotte County, Virginia, William Scott (pension S7461), Thomas Clark (pension S17888) and Elijah Clark (pension S10448), mention serving under Major William Hubbard in 1779. J. T. McAllister in his *Virginia Militia In The Revolutionary War*, lists William Hubbard as a captain and a major in the Virginia Militia from Charlotte County. No James Hubbard is listed in McAllister. (J. T. McAllister in his *Virginia Militia In The Revolutionary War*, Hot Springs, Virginia, McAllister Publishing, 1913, § 258.). Based on these references it is likely the Colonel Hubbard mentioned here is William Hubbard, a captain in 1777 and, according to McAllister, promoted to major in 1780.

² St. George Tucker, a major in General Robert Lawson's Virginia Brigade at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, notes in a letter to his wife after the battle that, "Major Hubbard, of Col. Mumford's regiment,

had the skirt of his surtout shot away by a cannon ball, and his horse slightly wounded by the same.” Major Tucker and Mr. Kersey are, no doubt, addressing the same incident and the same officer. (Reference: “The Southern Campaign, 1781, From Guilford Court House To The Siege Of York, Narrated In The Letters From Judge St. George Tucker To His Wife,” *The Magazine of American History With Notes and Queries*, Volume VII, edited by John Austin Stevens, Benjamin Franklin DeCosta, Henry Phelps Johnston, Martha Joanna Lamb, Nathan Gillett Pond, New York and Chicago, A. S. Barnes & Company, 1881, p. 40.)