

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of William Smith S1723

fn64NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

2/28/11

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Also, the handwriting of the original scribes often lends itself to varying interpretations. Users of this database are urged to view the original and to make their own decision as to how to decipher what the original scribe actually wrote. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. Folks are free to make non-commercial use this transcript in any manner they may see fit, but please extend the courtesy of acknowledging the transcriber—besides, if it turns out the transcript contains mistakes, the resulting embarrassment will fall on the transcriber. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading fails to catch all misinterpretations. I welcome and encourage folks to call those and any other errors to my attention.]

State of Tennessee County of Lincoln: SS

On this 16th day of October 1832 personally appeared in open court before William Edmiston, George Waggoner & Samuel Buchanan justices of the court of Pleas and quarter sessions now sitting, William Smith a resident of the County and State aforesaid, aged seventy 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.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers, and served as herein stated, viz.,

That sometime in the spring of 1776, he being then but fourteen years of age, he volunteered his services to the then Captain John Sevier and was received under the following circumstances.

Men being called for, he, with others, went from a settlement on Watauga River, where he then resided with his widowed mother, to Wammas [?] Fort to be inspected by an officer whose name he does not now remember. But he recollects that during their ride he killed a buck; and that on the inspector objecting to him, on the ground of his youth, one of his companions, more advanced in years, related that incident, the inspector thereupon received him; remarking that "if the boy can kill a deer, he certainly can bring down an Indian."

He was then placed, as a private, under the command of Captain Sevier, whose Lieutenant was Jonathan Tipton, and served a term of three months, in Garrison, at Fort Watauga. The then Captain James Robinson, with a small company, were also in Garrison during the same time, and at the same place. And while there the Fort was attacked by Cherokee Indians, who were, repelled without loss to the Garrison.

He would here state that for this service he was paid in money by his Captain; but for all the services subsequently rendered his country, by him, he has never received anything whatever. And that ever after, he furnished his own equipment, viz. arms and horse; for, after this, he was always mounted, and himself and comrades provided their own subsistence in the best way they could, there being at no period of his service any commissary attached to the troops with whom he served.

During the summer and autumn of 1779 he served from four to six months (– the precise time he cannot tell; because, having no documentary references, he has to depend solely upon his

memory which he dares not rely upon to furnish him with particular dates, —) as a Lieutenant under the immediate command of Captain, (afterwards General) Landon Carter. He was appointed to office by the then Colonel John Sevier, who was the commander of the forces raised in Washington County (then North Carolina) or by his recommendation, he cannot say which. The troops, under command of Colonel Sevier, rendezvoused at Lick Creek on Nolichucky River; at which place they were to have been joined by Colonel Campbell of Virginia; but there learning that hostile Indians were on their march towards the settlements, they marched to Big-Creek of French Broad [River], up Long Creek, to Boyd's Creek, & after crossing it and proceeding about three miles, they met the Indians, gave them battle & defeated them. They then returned to Great Island (since called Sevier's Island) in French Broad River, and there staid about eight days, subsisting principally upon hickory nuts, walnuts and grapes. At the expiration of that time they were joined by Colonel Campbell, who took the command, and they then marched back to the battle ground, up Boyd's Creek, thence to Little River etc. to the Tennessee [River], & crossed at the Virginia line and entered Chota, — where they remained several weeks — thence through sundry Indian towns, & back home and were disbanded. The principal officers present were Colonel Sevier, Colonel Campbell, Majors Jesse Walton, & Jonathan Tipton.

Sometime in the Summer of 1780, Captain Valentine Sevier appointed him and in some in his company, and they joined Colonel Isaac Shelby, who was then on his way from Sullivan County to unite with Colonel McDowell. They marched in a few days and joined that officer at a [word overwritten and illegible] house where he & his troops lay encamped near a Creek, the name of which he does not remember. Shortly after he was detached under Shelby & Colonel (since General) Clarke [Elijah Clarke], of Georgia, to surprise an enemy's post, in front, which was accomplished after marching all night. The post he remembers was commanded by Captain Patrick Moore, who surrendered it without resistance in a very short time after it was demanded. There was with him a volunteer called Captain William Cocke, who was sent to the Fort with the flag, and who soon after left the detachment.

In a short time after this affair, Shelby & Clark, with their commands, were detached to observe the movements of the enemy, who was in force in the country under the command of Major Ferguson. [Patrick Ferguson]. It was some time while roasting ears were plenty that they had a battle with a portion of that officers troops near Wofford's Iron works; and that on the whole of the enemy's forces coming up, the Americans retreated. This declarant remembers that in this action Colonel Clarke was wounded in the neck by a sword, lost his hat and returned to McDowell's camp bareheaded; and that a Major Burrell Smith of Virginia, who along to Clark's command, was killed.

A week or two later he was engaged in the battle of Enoree [River], at Musgrove's mill, in which action the British Colonel Ennis was said to be shot in the shoulder. In about one month after this event this declarant returned to his home, and while preparing to again joined the Army was thrown from his horse, badly hurt, and never again served under Colonel Shelby.

Another term of service he rendered in the spring of the year 1780 as follows. He volunteered as a private, under the above named Colonel Clarke, in a company commanded by a Captain Dooly, in Washington County North Carolina, and marched through the upper parts of North & South Carolina, and crossed the Savannah River about 60 or 70 miles above Augusta in Georgia thence proceeded to Augusta, and were principally employed in harassing, taking and killing known Tories whenever they could be found; from thence they returned home, through the upper parts of Georgia & South Carolina; being at this time, to the best of his recollection, in service about two months.

In March 1781 he joined Colonel John Sevier, at the greasy cove of Nolichucky River, in the capacity of an Ensign, in a company commanded by Captain Valentine Sevier, Alexander Greer Lieutenant, and marched into the middle settlements of the Cherokees, on the headwaters of Little Tennessee River and entered Tuckasejah [sic, Tuckasegee?] town, where they took a number of prisoners, and thence proceeded to a number of adjacent towns, burnt the houses, and destroyed all the grain they could find. He was in service, as he believes, about two months at this time.

Soon after his return from the last mentioned expedition – either in April or May 1781 as he thinks – he again joined Colonel Clarke on Watauga River, Washington County, as a private under a command of Captain duly as before, and marched through the upper parts of North, & South Carolina into the upper part of Wilkes County Georgia, recruiting men on the way as opportunity offered, – the object of Clarke being to take Augusta from the English troops, under command of Colonel Brown, who had it in his possession. Thence, after some weeks delay, they proceeded to invest Augusta, and finally took it. During the siege the American Captain Price was shot through the thigh, and died of the wound. They remained after the surrender of the Fort and place, about one month, and then returned home, he having been in the service at this time, to the best of his knowledge, about four months.

He thinks that it was in September 1782 that he again joined the standard of Colonel John Sevier for another expedition against the Cherokees. They were joined by a party of men under the command of Colonel Anderson of Sullivan County (then North Carolina) and after the junction, they marched to the Big Island in French Broad River; at which place it appearing that there were forty-two men without any Captain – a Lieutenant being the highest officer among them this declarer was appointed, by Colonel Sevier, to command them, and he acted as their Captain during the residue of the campaign; which to the best of his knowledge and belief was a term of about two months. From Big Island they marched to the upper Cherokee towns, – the Indians of which were then friendly – and procured to guidance, John Watts, a halfbreed Indian, and an Indian called Noonday, to conduct them to the towns of the hostile Indians. In this expedition some Indians were killed, & some of their towns burned. A white woman named Jane Ireland, who had some time before been taken captive, on Roan's Creek Washington County North Carolina, was brought in and delivered to Sevier, by the guide John Watts. A white man by the name of Samuel Martin, who had been taken prisoner at Nashville, was also brought in and surrendered to the commanding officer. After visiting various towns they proceeded to Chota, on the Tennessee River, where they friendly Indians and whites had a talk, and from there the troops returned home.

This declarer further states that in all the services herein detailed he volunteered; that he has no documentary evidence to offer, and that he knows of no person, whose testimony he can procure, who can testify to his service. His present place of residence is some three hundred to four hundred miles distant from Carter County, Tennessee, which was a part of Washington County, North Carolina, and the place of his residence at the periods of his services. Some of his Associates in arms emigrated to middle Tennessee, but all of them, so far as he knows, are dead. He never had a written discharge, and when he served as an officer, he served by verbal appointments of a superior; and to the best of his knowledge this was the practice of the country and period among volunteers.

He was born in Lunenburg County Virginia on the 17th day of February 1762.

The only record which he has of his age is in his family Bible, and his own handwriting, and was recorded many years since upon the authority of his mother.

After the war of the revolution he continued to reside in Washington County, on Watauga River, until 1789, when he removed to what is now Davidson County, Tennessee, and continued to live there, & in Rutherford County, Tennessee, up to the year 1807, at which time he moved to the present place of his abode, Lincoln County Tennessee, where he has resided ever since.

Among the persons known to him, who can testify to his veracity, and to their belief of the truth of the foregoing declaration, on the following persons, now present in Court – two of whom, Albert G Gibson and John Beaty are his immediate neighbors, and have been for more than twenty years, and one James Bright, a resident six miles distant – viz. Alfred G Gibson, a clergyman, John Beaty, a cultivator, and James Bright, clerk of the Circuit Court of Lincoln County, Tennessee. 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 the day and year aforesaid.

S/ William Smith

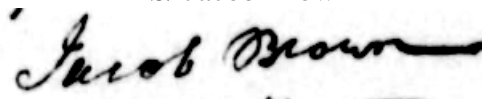


[Gilbert G Gibson, a clergyman, and James Bright and John Beaty gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

State of Tennessee Washington County: This day came before me Levi Bowers a Justice of the peace for said County Colonel Jacob Brown¹ aged about seventy-four years and made oath that during the war of the revolution he was acquainted with William Smith who was a resident citizen in this County. This affiant states that in the year 1782 on a campaign commanded by Colonel John Sevier against the hostile Cherokee Indians he the said Smith commanded a company as Captain according to the best of his knowledge and belief at this time and that said Smith now resides in Lincoln County West Tennessee as he is informed and believes.

Sworn and subscribed to this 12th day of March 1835

S/ Jacob Brown



State of Tennessee to Washington County

This day came before me Levi Bowers a Justice of the peace for said County, James Sevier² aged about seventy-one years and made oath that during the war of the revolution he was well acquainted with William Smith who was at that time a resident citizen of this County. That this affiant has no doubt resting on his mind but that the said William Smith did service on several campaigns having often conversed with him about them, that the said Smith in the year 1782 of the tour against the hostile Cherokee Indians commanded by Colonel John Sevier, commanded a company as a Captain to the best of my knowledge & belief that tour lasted about 2 months. The said Smith removed from Washington County to West Tennessee that the last time I saw said Smith he informed me he lived in Lincoln County and from information he still resides in said County.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 12th day of March 1835.

¹ [Jacob Brown W333](#)

² [James Sevier S45889](#)

S/ James Sevier

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James Sevier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then curves back under the name.

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$100 per annum commencing March 4th, 1838 for two-year service in the North Carolina militia as a cavalryman serving in various ranks.]