

## Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Thomas Boyd S17286

f34NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

9/25/10: rev'd 4/3/19

[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 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

[p 3]

State of Missouri Calloway County: SS

On this twentieth day of August in the year 1833 personally appeared in open court before the County Court of Calloway County now sitting, Thomas Boyd Senior a resident of said County of Calloway in the State of Missouri aforesaid, aged seventy-two years and upwards who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following statement in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832 –

I was born on the 10th of March in the year 1761 in York County Pennsylvania according to the uniform statements of my Father and to the registry of my age which I have seen in my Father's Bible – what has become of that Bible I cannot tell, but suppose it to be in possession of someone of my family in North Carolina, to which State I removed along with my Father and family when I was about eight years of age – My Father then settled with his family in what was then called Berk [sic, Burke] County close to the line of Rowan County – I remained there with my Father and mother until I was about fifteen years old when the British having landed in Georgia sent emissaries and officers to the Cherokees to excite them to war against the Americans in which they so well succeeded that the Cherokees became very troublesome on the head waters of Tennessee River and made an attack upon the frontier settlements of North and South Carolina on the waters of the Catawba [River], the Wateree [River] and Broad River and succeeded in massacring many of the inhabitants to repel these British and Indians a considerable force was raised of volunteer and drafted militia under the [command] of one General Rutherford [Griffith Rutherford] – a brother of mine having volunteered, in order to go along with him, I ran away from my father, being about fifteen years old, in the same company which was commanded by one Captain James Morrison our Lieutenant was named Samuel Carson, I believe we had no Ensign, our Colonels were Bakeman [probably Christopher Beekman of Rowan County] and Charles McDowel [sic, Charles McDowell] afterwards General McDowell – Joseph McDowel [sic, Joseph McDowell] was our Major – these troops were raised in all the frontier Counties – those who would not volunteer or drafted. It was either in the latter part of August or the 1st of September in the year 1776 that we set out with the whole force amounting to, I think, about two thousand men under the command of General Rutherford on the contemplated expedition<sup>1</sup> against the British and Indians – we started from Pleasant Garden in Burke County, at which point the troops had been ordered to rendezvous and we marched thence westward across the

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<sup>1</sup> Cherokee Expedition 1776-August 1, 1776 to November 1, 1776.

[http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution\\_cherokee\\_expedition\\_1776.html](http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_cherokee_expedition_1776.html)

French Broad [River] to the head waters of the Tennessee where the Cherokee Towns were situated – this was called one hundred fifty miles from the point whence we had set out – when we reached there we met with the Indians with whom we had two battles and after having burned their Towns, destroyed their crops, carried away their cattle and horses and killed a good many of the enemy and having taken about seventy prisoners we marched back home which we reached about the last day of November after an absence of three months and 12 days – in this expedition we took two British agents of the name of Scott & Hicks I was very young when I engaged in this expedition and took but very little notice of dates; I have been as particular as my recollection would permit and am very sure that so far as I state I am right. On this expedition we met at old Cowee Town a considerable force from South Carolina under the command of one General Williamson [Andrew Williamson]<sup>2</sup> – the next day while they were crossing the mountain to meet another division of our troops, they were attacked by a large Indian force supposed to amount to seventeen hundred men – the battle lasted about two hours and a half – we were posted about three miles off and could hear the firing and fearing the South Carolinians might be defeated about 250 of our men, having volunteered for that service, were detached to relieve the South Carolinians, of whom I was one; but by the time we came in sight, we discovered the Indians retreating at a considerable distance – when we got up we found that the South Carolinians had lost 17 men killed and 14 wounded in the action – I did not see any dead Indians but saw much blood on their trail – this action took place between the old Cowee town and what was called the Overhill or Valley Towns – the South Carolinians, though they succeeded at last in driving the Indians by means of two small swivels which they had brought on horses, yet were supposed to have had the worst of the battle – on our return from this Cherokee expedition as it was called, we were discharged in writing by our respective captains and I had mine too but have long since forgotten what became of it. About a year after our return from this expedition upon a report that the same Indians had again become troublesome, I along with 2 or 3 other men, was sent by order of the same Colonel McDowell to a Fort called Davidson's Fort on the head of Catawba River, where we staid thirty days – whilst we were there preparations were making for an attack upon the Indians, but before their maturity the Indians came in and sued for peace which put a stop to warlike preparations and rendered a longer stay at the Fort unnecessary – whilst at the Fort we were attached to a Company which was at the Fort commanded by one Captain Smith and which was composed of men from different parts who had been sent there like us – I cannot say the exact day upon which we set out on this service nor the day we returned – all I remember is that we started late in the fall and were absent thirty days –

It was I suppose in '80 in July that one Colonel Brian [Samuel Bryan] a Tory from the forks of the Yadkin [River] in Rowan County having raised a considerable force from amongst the Tories set out to join Cornwallis at Camden – upon this emergency volunteer troops were raised amongst the patriot Americans of Burke, Rowan, Mecklenburg and other Counties to the amount of about 1200 men who under the command of Colonel Matthew Loke [sic, Matthew Locke] of Rowan County marched sometime in the month of July '80, what day I cannot recollect, in order to attack Brian and his Tories – after having proceeded about 120 or 30 miles south into South Carolina we overtook Brian's Troops together with some British horse at a place called hanging rock [August 6, 1780]<sup>3</sup> – after an action which lasted about three hours we succeeded in defeating the enemy having killed a large number and having lost but eleven man –

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<sup>2</sup> See, [http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/SC\\_Revolutionary\\_War\\_Known\\_Battles\\_Skirmishes.htm](http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/SC_Revolutionary_War_Known_Battles_Skirmishes.htm) and search for actions listed during the period from August 1, 1776 to August 12, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution\\_battle\\_of\\_hanging\\_rock.html](http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_hanging_rock.html)

In this expedition I was a volunteer in Captain Robert Holmes' Company of Burke County NC whence we marched: one Rowland Alexander was our Ensign – Captain Holmes' Company was not in the engagement – I in company with some few others having been sent forward to inform the patriots of our approach -- joined ourselves to our friends in the battle and then had a full share of the fight – after being absent three weeks our company returned, but without being discharged – about twenty days before the battle at Hanging Rock there had been a battle at Ramsours Mills [Ramseur's Mill, June 20, 1780] in Rutherford County in which I was not engaged, I was absent at the time toward the Moravian Towns, after some money for my father and knew nothing of that battle until it was over – our friends lost a great many fine men there – I was myself well acquainted with several patriot Captains who fell in that engagement – As soon as we had returned home from Hanging Rock, having procured horses, we were organized into ranging companies under the same officers, the object of which was to watch the Tories and the British that were then laying in Charlotte Mecklenburg County NC under the command of Cornwallis and to suppress Tory parties and protect the friends of America – whilst we were engaged in the ranging service we were continually active sometime our own company was alone in some part of the Country and at others all the ranging Companies would get together – during this service we had a skirmish at one Doctor Alexander's where there were about 3 or 400 British engaged in getting out oats – they had a field piece – we amounted at that time to but about 50 or 60 – we made an onset upon them whilst they were unprepared and not expecting us and succeeded in spiking their cannon with bayonets and rushed through them firing on them as we passed, and made our escape before they could recover from the surprise this was about ten miles from Charlotteville [sic, Charlotte ?] – our headquarters was about 12 miles from this British at Charlotte – at mills the names of which I do not recollect – this skirmish was September '80 – apples were ripe then – after Ferguson's defeat at King's Mountain [October 7, 1780] and Tarleton's defeat at the Cowpens [January 17, 1781] the British retreated into winter quarters to South Carolina about this time a party of Tories having defeated Captain Cunningham's Company of Rangers near Ramsours Mills Cunningham succeeded in making his escape to our camp. One Major Provard of the Rangers took two companies one of which was Captain Holmes' to which I belonged amounting in all to about 60 men and went in pursuit of the Tories – we overtook them about 3 miles from Ramsours Mills, I was ahead of the detachment as a spy along with 2 or 3 others and when we were discovered by the Tories who were not so far in advance as I had expected – we pursued and took three of them prisoners – the rest made their escape: our detachment returned back to camp—we continued ranging all that winter and kept patrollers out every night – until the spring when the British returning crossed the Catawba at Baeties Ford [sic, Beatties Ford] on the 17th or 18th of February – we were then under the command of one General Davidson [William Lee Davidson]<sup>4</sup> of force did not amount to more than 6 or 700 men – we attempted to dispute the passage of the River with the enemy, but being protected by their cannon which were placed on a high hill opposite to us they succeeded in driving us from the Ford and made good the crossing: we fought them as well as we could – we retreated and formed again on a hill about a half-mile from the Ford where we made a stand – here Davidson was killed and many of the men: owing to a heavy rain that wetted our rifles we were unable to make a good defense and were driven from the field – our troops dispersed and a part of them retreated to Torrens and stopped there out of the rain – but the enemy's dragoons

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<sup>4</sup> The veteran's dates are off regarding this service. The British crossed the Catawba River at several fords on February 1, 1781. General William Lee Davidson was killed while opposing the British crossing at Cowan's Ford on February 1, 1781. [http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution\\_cowans\\_ford.html](http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_cowans_ford.html)

coming up in the pursuit cut a great many to pieces – I was not amongst those who went to Torren's [Tarrant's Tavern, February 1, 1781]<sup>5</sup> the detachment to which I belonged without stopping retreated to Caldwell's Mills on the little Yadkin [River] the place appointed for our meeting – many fled home – Cornwallis was at the head of his Army at Beatties Ford and the many British Army said to be 7000 strong was there – we expected to be repulsed but hoped to have made a more gallant resistance – Colonel Locke [Francis Locke] and Colonel Davy [sic, William Richardson Davie] and I think a Colonel Martin<sup>6</sup> were present at Beatties Ford Martin was of Surry County & Locke was from Rowan – the British marched on from the Ford to Salisbury and having stayed there a few days, went forward across the Yadkin by the Moravian Towns to Guilford – our Troop followed the British Army which remained sometime in the Country, until we met the American Army under General Green [sic, Nathanael Greene] on the Haw River sometime in the last of February or first of March some days after this it was reported that one Colonel Pyles [sic, Doctor John Pyle] having gathered 300 Tories in order to go down and join the British and had got a commission Colonels Washington [William Washington] and Lee [Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee] having been ordered to march with a detachment to attack I volunteered to march in this a detachment – we marched down to the settlement on Haw River where Pyle and his Tories were posted and our Colonels having sent a messenger in advance to Pyles informing him that Tarleton with his men was approaching in order to receive him and conduct him and his men to the Lord Cornwallis (in this our Colonels represented themselves and their troops to be Colonel Tarleton & forces) as soon as Colonel Pyles received the message, falling into the deception, mustered his men on the side of the road in order to receive the supposed Colonel Tarleton, when our Colonels moved up with their mounted men (leaving the infantry some little distance behind in order for battle; of whom I was one) and having passed on until they got to the upper end of Colonel Pyles line and then facing to Pyles line, amidst shouts of long live King George from both parties, our troops drawing their swords attacked the Tories and cut them down – Washington, himself cut out the eye of Pyles – a great slaughter was made of the Tories whilst they were crying out that they were friends of King George – Colonel Pyles was killed on the spot – a son of his who lost his eye in that surprise is now living in Illinois where I saw him a few years since –<sup>7</sup>

After the defeat of Pyles we returned to the Camp of General Greene between Haw and Deep Rivers – a few days after this perhaps 4 or 5 days a party of North Carolina Rangers were ordered out to reconnoiter and having got into a long lane, the British & Tories were posted in ambush at the other end of the lane and also on each side of the lane in the fields – and we had got into the lane they fired upon us and killed 2 or 3 men when we retreated about 200 of us was out that time – we were used upon that occasion as if it had been Indians – we returned to camp and a few days afterwards were discharged – when I say we were discharged, I mean the North Carolina militia, which had been in service from the time of the battle at Hanging rock without intermission until that day. We were discharged just 4 days before the battle of Guilford, and I could hear the firing at the battle on my return home – We were discharged by order of General Greene by our commanding officers Colonel Locke & Colonel Martin our discharges were in writing but I have long since lost mine – we were discharged in an old field on the Haw River. I

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution\\_tarrants\\_tavern.html](http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_tarrants_tavern.html)

<sup>6</sup> Probably a reference to Lt. Col. John "Jack" Martin of the Surry County Regiment of militia.

<sup>7</sup> February 25, 1781. [http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution\\_battle\\_of\\_haw\\_river.html](http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_haw_river.html) [also known as "Pyle's Defeat" and "Holt's Race Paths." Contrary to the veteran's claim William Washington and his cavalry were not at this engagement. Henry Lee commanded the Whigs forces there.

ought to remark that although I belonged to Captain Holmes' Company all this time yet I was not under his command more than half of my time, as I was often employed as an express and as a spy. Just before the battle of Kings Mountain General Charles McDowell wanting to send an express to the lower lines which were facing the British at Charlotteville, the object of which was important (as I supposed) and his rider not being willing to go General McDowell sent him to me and I took charge of the message and went down to the lower lines and delivered the express to the commanding officer there – after this a board of war or something like it was held and General McDowell obtained from the board a certificate of my service as express on the occasion alluded to which he sent me – I had that certificate not many years ago, but when I left Kentucky to come to this Country I burned it along with a bundle of what I supposed to be useless papers – I mention this because I have some reason to believe that the proceedings of that board were returned to the war Department and that my name may be found reported as I state. Captain Holmes was my Captain, never appeared before that board or as I have been advised all of our Company's names would have been returned to the war Department. About one month before I was discharged I received from General Davidson at Captain's Commission to command a Company of Rangers for twelve months. The Company was raised at home for me but as I was to serve out the time where I was before I should take command, the war ended very soon after, I never took command and there was no use for the Company. My Commission has shared the fate of my other old papers – the reason for our troops being discharged, was that they had been long and arduous service – that we were nearly naked and besides the Virginia militia had joined General Greene which I will place could be supplied.

I left Burke County NC in the year '95 after having lived there from my early childhood until that time – thence I moved to Montgomery County Kentucky where I remained until 1826, when I removed thence to Calloway County Missouri where I am now live. I am in my 73rd year since the 10th of March last. My Revolutionary Services commenced in 76 when I was in my 15 years, so that taking my youth then and my old age now it ought not to be required of me to state facts with that precision and detail which would suppose a perfect memory: about the year and month in which my first services commenced I am confident that I have stated correctly and also as to the length of service in that expedition but as to the exact month and day on which my last services commenced I may have committed some error, but I am certain it was a few days after the battle of Ramsours and it continued until 4 days before the battle of Guilford – which I believe was on the 14th March '81 [sic, March 15th, 1781]. I am informed that it is necessary that I should state the exact day of the commencement of my services and of their ending. I cannot the more exact than I have been, and I hope that although my bad memory may affect the amount of my pension, it will not cut me out of a pension altogether. I do hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declare that my name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state. I knew whilst in service, General Greene, Colonel Washington and Colonel Lee of the Continental Army and was with them some time whilst the Army was in Guilford County NC these are all the officers of the Continental Army that I knew by sight. I parted with them, I think, just 4 days before the battle of Guilford, when the Virginia militia joined the American Army – I served in 1776 as a private safe from the 1st of August till the 12th of December as a private in an expedition against the Cherokees – Passing over small and abortive or unimportant services I served in the year 1777 at Davidson sport as a private from say the 1st to the last day of August in 1780 I joined as a private from say the 10th of July until the 1st of August on an expedition into South Carolina against the British & Tories under Brian – and without being discharged the company to which I belonged was

converted into a ranging company and in it as a private I continued to serve until 4 days before the battle of Guilford which took place I think on the 14th March 1781.

There was one Benjamin Robinson living in Kentucky some few years ago who was out with me in my first campaign: I know not if he did yet alive – but there is a Mr. John Hereford living in this County, who was a neighbor of mine in Burke County NC who though he was very young during the revolutionary war and did not himself serve, yet must either know that I was out or at least must have heard it spoken of there. I appeal to his testimony.

I am known to a good many individuals resident in this County but they generally live at some distance from this village and in my own neighborhood, as being old I have stirred about but little and accordingly have had but little opportunity to become known abroad. I am however known to Robert Dunlap and to the judges of the court residents of this County to whose testimony I refer myself with pleasure as to my character in all respects. I refer for the same purpose also to the Reverend Mr. McAfee a resident of this County to whom I am well known as I believe.

Subscribed & sworn to before me clerk of the County Court of Callaway County in the State of Missouri in Open Court this 20th day of August A.D. 1833  
S/ Irvine O. Hockaday, Clerk

S/ Thomas Boyd

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas Boyd". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "S/ Thomas Boyd".

[p 15]

John Hereford a resident of the County of Callaway aged about fifty-nine years who being duly sworn saith that he is well acquainted with Thomas Boyd the above applicant – that he was born and lived until he was twenty-three years of age in what was then Burke County (since Wilkes County) North Carolina that he lived within a mile and a half from said Boyd in Carolina and knew him there from his earliest infancy – this Deponent recollects very well that Thomas Boyd came to this deponent's house to get this Deponent's mother to make him a knapsack the said Boyd's mother having no daughters to help her though she had 7 sons – and has there was a hurry Mister Boyd got this deponent's mother to help him to fix – this deponent recollects perfectly when Mister Boyd started into the service and often heard from him whilst he was out – this deponent having at the same time a brother-in-law out along with Mister Boyd – this Deponent does not recollect the year or years when this took place but from his youthfulness and the general talk that it was during the revolutionary war – this Deponent does not recollect how long Thomas Boyd served, but from his earliest recollection Boyd was serving and he never returned until the war was considered to be at an end. This Deponent says that the country in which himself and Mister Boyd lived was a very hot one in those times – this deponent believes that Mister Boyd states truly his age in the foregoing petition. Mister Boyd and his whole family always sustained a character of perfect respectability at all times, and is Deponent has never heard a word unfavorable to any of them – this deponent further states that Thomas Boyd has raised a family who are all respectable, one of his sons being Colonel in this County now – this deponent further states that he recollects that just after the close of the revolutionary war Thomas Boyd was elected a Lieutenant in the first company that this deponent ever mustered in in Caroline – and this deponent further saith not.

S/ John Heryford

*John Heryford*

Subscribed & Sworn to before me clerk of the county Court of Callaway County in Open Court  
this 20<sup>th</sup> day of August 1833

S/ J. O. Hockaday, Clerk

[Robert Dunlap and Robert L McAfee, a clergyman, each also gave a supporting affidavit. ]

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$44.66 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for 13  
months and 12 days service as a private in the North Carolina militia.]