

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Benjamin Copeland (Coplin) S21122

fn28SC/VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

6/3/11

[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. 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 fails 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 errors or omissions to my attention.]

State of Tennessee Bedford County: Benjamin Copland [sic, Copeland] this day personally appeared before me James Reed an acting justice of the peace in and for said State & County aged about 70 years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his Corporal oath make the following declaration in order to obtain a pension under the act of Congress passed 7 of June A.D. 1832.

I was born on Indian Creek in Cheraw district State of South Carolina. I have no record of my age, but believe myself to be about 70 years old – at the age of fifteen I volunteered under General Lincoln & served from first of January 1780 to the 15th of May same year, & was at the siege of Charleston on the 11th May 1780. After the vacuation [evacuation ?] of Charleston [May 12, 1780] as the British advanced up to the upper parts of South Carolina I volunteered under Captain Littleton Isbell & Lieutenant John Houston & Colonel Sumpter [Thomas Sumter] and marched immediately for Rocky Mount & on our route on the 12th of July 1780, attacked a large body of Tories & British whom with one Huck [Christian Huck¹] & Colonel Ferguson of the British militia was taken prisoner in a farm owned by Ms. Williamson by interseping [sic, intercepting ?] them at both ends by posting the Horse at one and & the foot at the other – We on the 30th of July 1780, attacked the Rocky Mount² & on the next day after burying the dead proceeded on to the hanging rock³ & arrived there in time to take part in that battle, which was fought on the 7th day of August 1780. The Prince of Wales's Regiment were nearly all killed as well as many Tories under Colonel Bryan [Samuel Bryan] from North Carolina.

About the middle of August 1780 we captured a British Post⁴ [Carey's or Cary's Fort August 1780] on the Wateree River by throwing a hot ball, & therewith about one hundred prisoners I was one of the guard appointed by Colonel Sumter to carry them to Salisbury Jail North Carolina which we did in this engagement we took a great deal of clothing, food & other nutions [sic, munitions?] of war, which we however found on our return from Salisbury to rejoin Colonel Sumter had been all recaptured by Tarleton & Sumter's whole Corps entirely dispersed on the 17th day of August 1780⁵. I was in actual service with Sumter from the first of July 1780

¹ http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_williamsons_plantation.html and <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/hucksdefeat.htm>

² http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_rocky_mount.html and <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/rockymt.htm>

³ http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_hanging_rock.html and <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/hangingrk.htm>

⁴ http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_careys_ferry.html [places this engagement on August 15, 1780] and <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/carysfort.htm> [places the engagement on August 9, 1780].

⁵ August 18, 1780 http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_fishing_creek.html and

up to his disbursing & defeat, on the date above stated. I then immediately joined Colonel Washington's regular Regiment of horse (to wit) on the 20th of August 1780, & was with him at the taking of Rugeley's Fort better known by the name of Rugeley's Mills,⁶ which was done by causing a pine log to be made to resemble a cannon this achievement as well as I can now remember was performed about the last November or first of December 1780. I after this transaction remained in the service of my Country in Colonel Washington's regular Regiment until we were disbanded at the end of the War; having neither home or father or mother I continued in the Army as above stated, one term of service after another; and was with both Washington & Sumter in all of their principal engagements – I further state that I have no documentary evidence to produce nor do I know of any person whose testimony I can procure who can testify to my service, and I hereby relinquish every claim to any pension or annuity whatever except the present & do most solemnly declare that my name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any State in the United States.

I also state that my poverty & weakness, sickness, and other bodily infirmities are so great that I am entirely unable to go to the Court House of this County which is at least 22 miles from my place of residence, to prove up this claim & and therefore compelled to prove it up in this manner.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 2nd of September A.D. 1834

Attest S/ James Reed, JP

S/ Benjamin Coplin, X his mark [sic]

[William Martin & Benjamin Comings [sic, Cummins?] gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[John Paxton & G. M. Haywood also gave a standard supporting affidavit.]

State of Tennessee Bedford County: SS

Benjamin Coopsland this day personally appeared before me James Reed an acting Justice of the peace in and for the State and County aforesaid who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following Declaration as an amendment to the one heretofore made viz. on 2nd day of September 1834 and here unto attached in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the Act of Congress passed the 7th of June 1834.

That about the last of December 1779 at the age of sixteen years I ran away from home Cheraw District South Carolina and went to Charleston South Carolina and after being there a few days viz. on the first day of January 1780 as well as I can recollect I volunteered under General Lincoln at which time we were in daily in expectation of an attack on the City by the British under the command of Sir Henry Clinton. To what company or Regiment I was attached or who were then commanders I cannot at this distance of time remember owing to extreme old age and the consequent loss of memory and impaired powers of my body and mind – I was transferred to one or two different regiments & companies during my service at this place. At the end of my first term of service viz. on the first day of April 1780 I volunteered again under the same General Lincoln at Charleston South Carolina during the pendance of the siege of the City of Charleston about which time as well as I can now remember the Governor ordered all the militia of Charleston and the neighboring Country to rendezvous at that place forthwith for the defense & [indecipherable word] the country was on the eve of destruction almost – but few obeyed the call under these circumstances I was induced to re-volunteer and served one and a half months more until the 15th of May of the same year as stated in my previous declaration

<http://gaz.jrshelby.com/fishingcreek.htm>

⁶ December 4, 1780 <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/rugeley.htm> and
http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_rugeley_mills_2.html

hereunto annexed. When I left home in the first instance I set out with a determination to join General Lincoln and calculated on finding him at Savannah and found out by some disbanded militia of North Carolina on the way home that he was at Charleston South Carolina to which place I proceeded and joined him as above stated.

After my last term of service was over at Charleston I volunteered under Colonel Sumter who about this time viz. 1st July 1780 raised a body of men in the defense of his country – we were in all the battles and under the officers in the order of time set forth in the previous declaration hereunto annexed and immediately after my service was over as is therein stated viz. on 17th day of August 1780 I joined Colonel Washington and was with him at the taking of Rugeley's Mills as stated in my previous declaration hereunto attached & annexed which as well as I can now recollect was on or about the first December 1780; About the last of December 1780 our Regiment of about 70 men with Colonel Washington at our head & about 200 militia were detached and marched 40 miles the first day & on the next day surprised a body of Tories at Ninety Six⁷ about 150 we took prisoners and killed & wounded about 40 without any loss on our side. About the middle January 1781 we fought the Battle of Cowpens⁸ [January 17, 1781] near Pacolet River under the command of General Morgan in this battle we had about 10 or 12 men killed & 50 or 60 wounded. We took prisoners & killed & wounded altogether about 700 men besides to pieces of Artillery & several baggage wagons & Dragoon horses besides several small arms. Our Regiment pursued Tarleton several miles when a majority of them finally escaped. We then marched directly for Dan River Virginia and Lord Cornwallis with an expectation of overtaking & destroying I Army commenced a pursuit and were stopped at Catawba River just after we had crossed by a heavy rain which had just fallen the night before about the last January 1781 as soon as the River fell viz. in about three days Cornwallis continued his pursuit of us & closed in our rear; that we had several skirmishes with each other. Our whole Army under General Green [Nathanael Greene] joined at Guilford Court house on the 7th or 8th of February not being able to do so after their previous separation on the route and after some refreshments proceeded on to Dan River Virginia we thence marched across the Dan again and fought the battle at Whitesells mills⁹ on Reedy fork Creek we lost 50 men killed & wounded in the battle which was fought about 6 or 7 March 1781, we thence went to Guilford Court house¹⁰ & there on 14th March [sic March 15, 1781] engaged with Lord Cornwallis & were beaten after a battle of about 2 hours we then retreated to Reedy fork Creek & crossed it & went on to Speedwell's Ironworks 8 or 9 miles from the Battleground. We lost several horses & 2 or 3 ammunition wagons in this rencountre & the two cannons previously taken by Morgan about the 20th Cornwallis left Guilford & we [word obliterated and illegible] a pursuit of him immediately afterwards & on the morning of the 28th arrived at Ramsey's Mills on Deep River a short time after the enemy had left there where we found many of their dead and a good deal of provisions such as beef &c which we ate hastily. We about the first of April after discharging all the militia set out from Deep River and in 18 or 20 days we camped at Log town, we thence went to Hobkirks Hill a few days afterwards about one mile from Camden where we were stationed

⁷ Veteran appears to be describing the action at Hammond's Store on December 29 or 30, 1780 http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_hammonds_store.html and <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/hammondsstore.htm>

⁸ http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_cowpens.html and <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/cowpens.htm>

⁹ Weitzell's Mill or Whitesell's Mill: March 6, 1781 <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/weitzell.htm> and http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_weitzells_mill.html

¹⁰ http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_guilford_courthouse.html

ourselves. About the 25 or 26th while we were at our breakfast we were attacked by Lord Rawdon.¹¹ General Green soon had our troops formed for battle but the enemy being too strong for us we were forced to retreat, our Corps was ordered by Green to turn the right flank of the enemy and to charge in the rear which we accordingly done and had taken about 250 prisoners whom we had to let loose again after seeing our Army were about retreating we lost out of our Regiment 3 men & took 50 prisoners, after this the British returned to Camden & we went back in about 4 miles of our former position our loss was about 300 men. Soon after this battle after detaching to Marion a reinforcement, General Green marched us across the Wateree River and took such post as he thought would from time to time be necessary to prevent any succor from going to Camden, we thence went to Ninety Six¹² about 20th or 25th May to open an attack on that place then under the command of Colonel Cruger and after several days siege about 20th of June we were pursued by Rawdon & crossed the Saluda River & retired to the Enoree [River]. We after halting and refreshing ourselves returned and offered Lord Rawdon battle at Fort Granby but he would not venture an attack. We marched about 7 miles that evening & encamped. The next day the state troops & cavalry & I amongst was ordered to march towards Charleston & the rest of the Army was moved to the Hills of Santee. General Green with the main Army and our Regiment included reached the Santee Hills a short time afterwards and remained there until the last of August following. We then under General Green proceeded to the Eutaw Springs about 50 or 60 miles from Charleston and attacked the enemy and Colonel Stewart in this Battle¹³ [September 8, 1781] our Regiment in conjunction with the Delaware troops commanded as well as I can now remember by a Captain by the name of Kirkwood we marched at 4 o'clock in the morning & soon after the battle began & we repulsed them in all quarters until many of them took shelter in a garden full of thick shrubs & bushes & our Colonel viz. Washington was while commanding us and attempting to dislodge them from that place was taken prisoner after being wounded and his horse shot from under him. After this battle was over we returned to the Santee Hills again and the British went to Moncks Corner. About the middle of November General Green marched all the cavalry and about 200 or 250 infantry to Dorchester in which detachment our Regiment was included – at which place we had a small skirmish and lost 8 or 10 man killed & 4 or 5 taken prisoners. The British then retreated to the quarter house¹⁴ on Charleston Neck we a few days afterwards joined the main Army under Colonel O. Williams [Otho Williams] at Round O¹⁵ under whose command they were previously left by General Green at Santee Hills we reached Round O about 10th of December 1781 which includes all my service. This is the best narrative I can at this late date make of my services, my discharges being lost or mislaid or destroyed.

I do most solemnly swear that I served as a militia man private three months from the first January to first April 1780 & [words obliterated and illegible] months more from first April 6 [words obliterated and illegible] in the same capacity at Charleston – And I served one month and 18 days as a militia man private under General Sumter from first July till 17th of August 1780. I also served under Colonel Washington from first August 1780 up to the time he was

¹¹ http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_hobkirks_hill.html and <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/hobkirk.htm>

¹² <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/ninety-six.htm> and

http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_ninety_six.html

¹³ http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_eutaw_springs.html and <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/eutaw.htm>

¹⁴ <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/quarterhouse.htm>

¹⁵ <http://gaz.jrshelby.com/roundo.htm>

taken prisoner at the Eutaw Springs which is 13 months I also served in his Regiment after he was taken prisoner three months more until December 1781 & that all my different discharges have been lost or misplaced & that they cannot be found.

I do solemnly swear that by reason of old age and other infirmities & the consequent loss of memory that I cannot positively swear as to the precise length of my service but to the best of my recollection I served not less than the periods mentioned below and in the following grades viz. I served as a militia man six months in a private capacity and in the order of time as stated in my previous declaration hereunto attached and for at least 14 months if not more I served in Colonel Washington's Regiment of horse of the Virginia line & all of my discharges proving my service are lost, mislaid or destroyed for which I claim a pension.

I was not during the above service in any civil pursuit.

Sworn to & subscribed before made this 15th day of October 1834

Attest: S/ James Reed, JP

S/ Benjamin Copeland, X his mark

State of Tennessee Bedford County: This day Benjamin Coapland personally appeared before me James Reid an acting justice of the peace in and for said County and made oath that the foregoing declaration with all its different amendments and the 2 statements in tabular form showing his services as a Revolutionary Soldier thereunto annexed are all true and correct, and that they contain all the testimony he now has to offer or knows of in support of his said services and that he honestly & dutifully performed all the services therein stated, and that all of his discharges which a [word runs off the page and is illegible] copy all of these particulars have been lost, destroyed or mislaid so that they cannot be found & that he claims a pension for 64 months as a militia private and 14 months as a private under Colonel Washington.

Sworn to and subscribed this 12th day of January A.D. 1835 before me

S/ Benjamin Copeland, X his mark

State of Tennessee Bedford County: This day Benjamin Coopland personally appeared before me James Reed Justice of the Peace in and for said County & made oath that the preceding Declarations contain the best statement he can make of his services as a revolutionary Soldier & that they are true & that he has no further proof to offer & that his discharges are all lost & that he knows of no person alive by whom he can prove up his claim to a pension & that he claims a pension for six months in the militia service & 14 months under Colonel Washington all of which she avers he did truly, dutifully & honestly discharge as set forth in the two preceding declarations and the two tabular state of his different tours of service thereunto attached he further states that he is as confident that he served a great deal longer in the militia than is herein stated impaired state of his mind recollect the precise dates or circumstances sufficiently well to make oath to such service & therefore claims pay for no more than what he has above stated.

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

S/ Benjamin Copeland, X his mark

[fn p. 18: on January 17 1838, the applicant filed an application for transfer indicating that he had moved from Maury County to Giles County Tennessee and wishes his pavement to be made in Pulaski instead of Nashville.]

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