

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of William Conner S30955

fn18NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

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State of Kentucky, Montgomery County

On this 4th day of March 1833 personally appeared before Silas W. Robbins Judge of the Montgomery Circuit Court sitting in open Court being a Court of record, William Conner of the said County aged about 70 years, who for the purpose of obtaining the benefit of the Act of Congress of the 7 June 1832, makes the following declaration. That he was born as he has been informed in the County of Isle of Wight in the State of Virginia, but removed to the County of King William in the same State before his remembrance in which last named County his father died, -- he can remember seeing his father's coffin, but has no particular recollection of anything else; directly after the death of his father, his mother removed to the neighborhood of her sister in the County of Fauquier in the same State, where she resided a few years and died and his brother then came from Surry County North Carolina, and took him home with him -- he was then about 10 or 12 years old as he was informed and after being there a short time he heard that Independence was declared. He does not know when he was born, but thinks he was between 12 & 13 years old when he heard Independence was declared -- probably he was fully 13 years old -- first the Regulators began their depredations and then the Tories commenced -- In the latter part of June 1779 as he thinks he volunteered into a Company of mounted Infantry in the said County of Surry in North Carolina, he joined at the Court House, under Captain Joseph Phillips -- the name of the Lieutenant was Richard Varnum [Vernon, Varnel, Varner?], who got killed in the battle at King's Mountain or rather wounded there & died directly after the battle. -- Colonel Martin Armstrong was the Colonel of the County and it was by his direction that the Company was ordered out -- when he volunteered he thinks he did not exceed 16 years of age -- There were other Companies formed at the same time -- one under the Command of Captain Underwood -- one under Captain Sheppard and probably one under a Captain Kirby & -- Major Winston commanded the whole-- his given name Joseph (he was called Joe). The whole Battalion was then taken out on duty against the Tories who were doing much mischief in North Carolina. -- After a party warfare for a considerable time but he cannot say how long, Major Winston marched his Battalion to King's Mountain -- Col. Campbell [William Campbell] who was from Virginia took the command of all the forces that assembled at the Moravian town which was in Surry County, where he was in command above Winston. They were afterwards joined by Colonel Cleveland [Benjamin Cleveland], Colonel Shelby [Isaac Shelby] and Col. Williams [James Williams] & others. He was in the battle of King's Mountain and was there commanded by Colonel Campbell. He thinks there were 200 British & Tories killed in the Battle and several hundred Prisoners were taken -- Colonel Ferguson [Patrick Ferguson] who commanded the enemy was killed -- so also was Col. Williams of the patriot Army. -- several of the Tories were tried

and hung and one by the name of Baldwin made his escape but was afterwards killed. After the battle of King's Mountain all of Colonel Campbell's men returned home, but Captain Phillips' Company was not discharged as the Tories continued to annoy the Country and all though his company was sometime a day or two at a time at home, yet they were not discharged but were constantly ranging through the Country to keep down the Tories until several months after the battle of King's Mountain (which was in the fall of the year 1780) they were marched down to a place called Colson's at the junction of the Yadkin & Rocky River, where a large party of Tories were assembled and their defeated and but for an accident in the pilot in missing the way, every Tory would have been taken. -- General Rutherford commanded our forces at Colson's. He thinks that this was in the summer season -- after scouring the Country in the neighborhood of Colson's -- Captain Phillips' Company returned to Surry where the company was dismissed, but in the course of a few days (at any rate not more than a month) he volunteered under Captain Joe Cloud in Surry County and was marched to a place called Hawfield where an attack was made on the British Army under Cornwallis -- Winston was the Major and the whole was under command of General Green [sic, Nathanael Greene]-- there was no general engagement, but only a skirmish, and the American army retreated -- the Hawfield skirmish is also known as the skirmish of Whitesell's Mill [sic, Wetzel's or Weitzel's Mill]-- retreated to some Iron Works-- then the skirmish of the Wetzel's took place, between a portion of Greene's Army and militia and Cornwallis' Army and the Americans were driven in at the Weitzel's -- this last skirmish may have been prior to the Hawfield one -- he is not certain. Colonel Lee [Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee] commanded the Cavalry. -- the most of the militia from Surry County then returned home and he amongst the rest and was dismissed, but in three or four weeks he volunteered again under Captain Smith -- (he thinks his name was Minor) for 12 months and was constantly out on scouting expeditions through the Country and went as high up as the hollows of the Yadkin River and sometimes he was on the borders of South Carolina. During the time he was out he had several runs after a celebrated family named Fanning, who were wealthy and celebrated Tories. After being a few months under Captain Smith, they were ordered to march down to Wilmington where the enemy had a strong Army -- mostly Tories and in going down he was transferred from Smith's Company to Captain Wright's -- (his given name, he thinks was Daniel) and on their way, small parties would go foraging and frequently got into skirmishes with the Tories -- however we went on down -- a Major Grimes (he thinks of Rowan County) was then the commander of the Battalion -- Winston being on some other station -- there was a Captain Polk & a Captain Kimmons [sic,?] also along with their companies. When Grimes' Battalion came near Wilmington, there were several other Battalions and Regiments who joined -- Before the attack was made on Wilmington the enemy were strongly reinforced and the attack proved entirely aborted [?] and before returning home news came that Lord Cornwallis was taken. -- from the vicinity of Wilmington, the Army disbursed and one, two or three Companies would go together to the most noted Tory places of rendezvous, but they had become weak and would disburse before we could reach them.

Some weeks after Cornwallis was taken we returned home, but was not there long before he was called on to fight the Tories in the Chestnut Ridge in Surry County -- he went out again under Captain Cloud, and killed four Tories and dispersed the balance -- this was in cold weather, in the winter of 1781 or '82. This was the last time he was out -- he was not at home after he returned under Captain Wright more than a week or two before he went out under Captain Cloud in the last expedition. Altogether he served at the least 30 months.

He knows of no record of his age and he never received a written discharge that he remembers but was certainly out under some one and when at home he was what was called a Minute man to be called on at a moment's warning. About 41 or '2 years ago he removed from Surry County to Kentucky, Fayette County and from the latter place about 24 years ago he removed to this County, since which he has lived a short time in the adjoining County of Clark & the remainder in this County. He knows of no one by whom he can prove his service nor has he any documentary evidence of the

same. He is well acquainted with the Rev. John Craig and James McCullough & with many others in his neighborhood.

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 & subscribed the day & year aforesaid.

S/ Samuel Howard, Clk

S/ William Conner, X his mark

The Amendatory declaration of William Connor to his original declaration made on the 4th of March 1833 for the purpose of obtaining a pension under the law of the 7 June 1832.

He states that, being a young man when he volunteered in June 1779, of whom the Company principally consisted, he entered the service as the Company was raised to protect the Whigs from the depredations of the Tories and to disperse or take all the Tories prisoners that they could & disarm them. He with the rest of Captain Phillips' Company were constantly on duty except sometimes for a few days at a time, when he would get a permit and visit his relations for a few days at a time, but he did not follow any civil pursuit but considered himself as in service even when on a visit to his friends as he was only there by the special permission of his officers. The time for which he volunteered was indefinite, the purpose was all he had in view, which was to render his Country's service by protecting its friends and punishing its enemies. -- However this he can say that to put every day together that he was absent from duty (that is actual service) from the time he first entered service until after his return from the battle of King's Mountain, it could not be more than two months – though even that absence was by special permission as before named and not by reason of his service having expired, for it should be remembered that in '79, '80 &c the Tories were exceedingly troublesome in the part of North Carolina in which he lived and several companies were always kept on duty to keep them in check – hence he always considered it as one tour of duty from the time he entered service until after his return from King's Mountain. True, he was sometimes engaged in guarding the Tories and suspected persons after they had been taken, but this was by command of his superiors as stated in his former declaration so as soon as they returned from King's Mountain the company was not discharged until they scoured the Country for some weeks. But after the return from King's Mountain, he was several days at home during the winter by the permission of his Captain and probably every day added together might make a month – but never more than a week or so at a time – he was still though in service under Captain Phillips. He now after most mature reflection thinks that the battle at Colson's spoken of in his original declaration must have been in the summer of 1780 and before the battle of King's Mountain – for he very well remembers that he was under Phillips at both places and in March 1781, he was under Captain Cloud, for although he was not at Guilford Court house when the battle was fought there, yet he was in service and had been for some weeks under Captain Cloud – Phillips' Company was dismissed he now thinks sometime in January 1781, in Surry County, though after returning from King's Mountain, Phillips' Company did go to the neighborhood of Colson's again & after returning from the latter place was discharged in January 1781. About the first of February 1781 (he cannot state the precise day) he volunteered under Captain Joe Cloud as stated in his original declaration. -- he thinks the skirmish at the wheatfields was before that at Hawfield or Weitzel's Mill as the former was on Easter Monday and the latter was in warmer weather, though the small grain was not yet right. -- he thinks he returned home to Surry County and was dismissed about the first to the middle of June 1781.

In a few days he volunteered again under Captain Minor Smith; this was just about harvest or the 25th of June – he volunteered under Smith for 12 months, and was constantly out in service, mostly scouting, until towards the last of October or probably sometime in November (for he well remembers that the potatoes were generally dug and in stacks & frost was considerable) when he went down to Wilmington and whilst on the way down he was transferred from Smith's Company to Captain Daniel Wright's as Smith had too many & Wright not enough, and whilst in the neighborhood of Wilmington, news came of the capture of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, which created a great sensation & rejoicing

in the Camp. He thinks that it was as late as the last of January before they returned to Surry County and were dismissed by Captain Wright.

He did in a week or two (say the middle of February, for he knows it was excessively cold) volunteer under Captain Cloud a second time, but for no definite. And was in actual service under him only about 15 days then returned home & was discharged as the Tories and their free Negro confederates were then completely beaten and overcome in our part of the Country after that had no further difficulties.

He claims:

1st under Captain Phillips from the 30th June (at least) 1779 to the 15th of January 1781 – say 18 ½ months

2nd under Captain Cloud from the first of January 1781 to the first of June same year – 4 [months]

3rd under Captain S. Smith & right from the 25th June 81 to 25th January 1782 – 7 [months]

4th under Captain Cloud a second time – ½ [month]

30 Months

If you deduct every day he was at home by permission of his officers it will not exceed at furthest 3 months.

Kentucky, Montgomery County

This day William Conner, the person herein named, came personally before the undersigned a Justice of the Peace for said County and made oath to the truth of the facts stated in this amended declaration. Given under my hand this 9th January 1834.

S/ J. H. Wells, J. P. M. C.

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$80 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for two-year service as a private in the North Carolina militia.]