

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of Nathaniel Watson S3454

fn20NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

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[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 errors to my attention.]

State of Tennessee, Monroe County

On this 30th day of May 1834, personally appeared before me Enos Hooper one of the Justices of the peace in and for said County Nathaniel Watson, a resident of said County, aged from 90 to 95, 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.

He was born as he has always understood, on Appomattox River in Virginia, where he lived till four years old when his father moved into Surry County N. C. In what year applicant was born he does not know, having no record of his age; never having any education – being unable to read or write. His exact age he has already remarked he does not know. His youngest child, of seven, is about 50 years old. He was living in Surry County North Carolina when called into service and lived there ever since till between 20 or 30 years ago when he moved into the adjoining County of Blount Tennessee where he lived till 12 or 14 years ago, since when he has lived in said adjoining counties Monroe and Blount, with his children, and now resides in said Monroe. There was one short period during which he moved into Georgia and South Carolina, where he lived – perhaps a year – and then returned to said Surry, before he came to Tennessee.

Applicant's memory is so much impaired by old age and that he cannot state his services as distinctly as he could wish but to the best of his recollection he served as follows.

In the early revolution, he cannot say what year, while living in said Surry County, when matters were in great confusion as to who would hold on for King George and who would be for America, he took what was called, he thinks, the state oath. Not long afterwards the Whigs formed into companies in accordance with, he thinks, the orders of Governor Alexander Martin. The Tories were not formed into parties at first, but afterwards, when they found they would have to take the oath to be for America, or would be taken prisoners, that they left their homes in many instances and formed into parties and did great damage when they got opportunity. In the year 1777 or 1778, he supposes, from the best he can remember, he was in service in the cavalry under Captain Absalom Bostick of militia against the Tories for several terms of three months. Indeed

he was in service several years off and on against the Tories, being some times out longer and sometimes shorter periods. Once or twice while in Bostick's company for terms of three months he was in the minute service having taken an oath to be ready at a moment's warning – and in several tours he was out nearly all the time. Two years he acted as Sergeant – during which time he had a man hired to attend to his farm, and was himself from home, and saw little satisfaction during the time. He did one years service as Sergeant, he is well convinced. But, though he can remember old events much better than recent occurrences, and can tell many things which occurred, he cannot well distinguish the different periods (and their length) of his service. Applicant remembers helping to take a large number of Tory prisoners from Ramsour's Mill to Salisbury jail and afterwards from there to Guilford jail, to keep them from the British. He enlisted under Joseph Tate, a recruiting officer, for during the war and received a bounty of eight dollars, but Tate died in a few days after he enlisted and applicant never went into service after the enlistment – but returned to his own troops. This is the only time he ever enlisted. He was out the campaign to King's Mountain and was in the battle there. He was not obliged to go, and did not go with his own company; but under Captain William Meridy [sic, William Meredith] the only Colonel he knew in this Campaign was Colonel Cleaveland [sic, Benjamin Cleaveland]. He was not out this tour more than a month or five weeks, and don't know that any one hired him, or whether he went without – but he never got anything – and never got any compensation during the war, except eight dollars from Tate. He helped to take two or 300 prisoners, Tories, from King's Mountain on to the Moravian town in North Carolina and there kept them under guard. Applicant was at the battle of Guilford, under the command of Captain Bostick. There he was for the first time with General Greene's [Nathanael Greene's] Army. After the defeat at Guilford he went on homewards; and very soon afterwards he went as Sergeant under Captain Robert Hill down to Wilmington, where the British went off in their ships. Our men came ashore. This was a three months tour. Captain Bostick stayed at home this tour; why, applicant cannot say. This is all the service applicant remembers; though he served in various tours against the Tories which he has not particularized and cannot distinctly remember. In those tours they took many Tories prisoners and killed several. Applicant was very large and stout, had a large sword, and two large pistols. His services were unanimously sought in the difficulties with the Tories and he was not backward in going. He is convinced he served three years of actual service, and always in the cavalry. At Guilford battle he had his horse shot from under him, and Governor Martin promised him as good a horse, or 30 pounds, but he never got either. He was well acquainted with the Governor having known him well when he was a lawyer in Salisbury. Applicant claims for two years – one year a Sergeant and one year a private of cavalry & always in militia.

Applicant received a discharge from Captain Bostick for three months, one from Captain Hill for three months, and one from Captain Meredith for how long he don't know.

He is known to the following persons in his neighborhood who can testify to his character for veracity and their belief in his service as a revolutionary soldier, John Hooper, John Smalling, Samuel Smalling, Baptist McNabb.

He has no documentary evidence, and knows of no person who can testify to his service. He is utterly unable to attend in court by reason of infirmity.

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 before me the day above written.

S/ Nathaniel Watson, X his mark

S/ E. L. Hooper, A Justice of the peace for Monroe County, Tenn.

[Jesse Leming, a clergyman, and Henry Monroe gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[The following transcript was made from an extremely faint document and doubtless contains more than the normal numbers of misinterpretations -- use with care.]

State of Tennessee Monroe County: Personally appeared before me Enos Hooper an acting Justice of the peace in and for said County Nathaniel Watson the same person who was qualified to the Original Declaration to which this is an amendment and who being duly sworn according to law depose and saith as follows by way of amendment.

That by reason of extreme old age and the consequent loss of memory, he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his service: but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than the periods mentioned below and in the following grades.

In the year 1778, he served two tours of three months in the Cavalry, in the office of Sergeant under Captain Absalom Bostick of militia against the Tories, ranging along the Yadkin River through that section of County.

Soon afterwards in the year 1778 or early in 1779, he thinks he served one tour of three months under Captain Robert Ralston of County in the militia -- and in similar service.

In 1780 he was in service five weeks in the trip to the King's Mountain battle under Captain William Meredy [sic, William Meredith], as a private of Cavalry. In 1779 or early in '80 he went under command of Captain Robert Hill of County as a Sergeant down to Wilmington, and was gone three months. He got the office of Sergeant on the representation [?] of Captain Bostick who stayed at home, making in all 13 months and one week -- 9 months as Sergeant and 4 months and one week as a private of cavalry which he claims a pension. He always lived in Surry County North Carolina during the service, and rendered all his service in that County (except when he occasionally crossed the line) with the exception of the 2 tours to Kings Mountain and Wilmington. The foregoing service is all for which he claims: though he is convinced it does not embrace all, as his memory has greatly failed him. Various skirmishing parties of which he was a member he omits as he cannot particularise the time, he was in service or the date. Captain Bostick was a great deal in service, and applicant is convinced he served under him more than what is stated. He was in actual service the terms mentioned above.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 15th of July 1834

S/ E. C. Hooper, JP

S/ Nath'l Watson, X his mark

[Watson gave another statement in which he restates his services attempting to give more details as to the precise times of his services, but the digital image of it is almost entirely illegible and this transcriber has made no attempt to decipher it.]