

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of David Williams S3578

f18NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

5/6/08 rev'd 10/21/14

[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 'indcipherable' 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 8th of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

State of Tennessee, Rutherford County: Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions August Term 1832

On this 23rd day of August, 1832, personally appeared in open court before V. D. Allen, Samuel Jones & Henry Trott the justices of the court of pleas and quarter sessions for said County of Rutherford now sitting, David Williams, a resident of the said State of Tennessee & County aforesaid, aged 78 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 his residence was always in North Carolina until the year 1799 when he removed to the State of Tennessee & settled in the County of Rutherford where he has ever since resided. In the year 1780, he believes in the last of July, but cannot state the day, he volunteered for three months in Captain Trice's [James Trice's] Company, in which John Taylor was Lieutenant, & Joseph Ellison Ensign. Said Company was attached to the command of General Butler [John Butler]. Applicant was orderly Sergeant in Trice's Company. He was, at the time he volunteered, a resident of Orange County North Carolina. He entered the service at Hillsboro whence the troops under General Butler commenced their march, in which he remembers to have passed through a corner of Guilford County, & to have crossed the big Yadkin [River] at Moore's ferry in Rowan County. From Moore's ferry he marched with General Butler down the Yadkin to the mouth of Rocky River. The troops waded the Rocky which came up to their waists. In their march thence to Rugly's Mill [Rugeley's Mill] (so-called as he thinks) they crossed two creeks one called big Linch [Lynches], & the other little Linch [Lynches], & joined the Main Army under General Gates [Horatio Gates]. Colonel Collier [John Collier] joined them soon after they left Hillsboro, & held command of the Regiment in which applicant served. Collier was a large, rough looking Irishman, familiar in his manners & easily approached. Applicant does not remember to have seen General Marion [Francis Marion], but it was understood in the Army that Gates had sent him with Colonel Horry & others to destroy all the boats between the British Army & Charleston, to prevent the retreat of the British. He does not remember that General Gates ever came into the Camps of a volunteer militia; but DeKalb did, & he remembers to have seen him. The march of the Army was very laborious, particularly so, near Camden. Provisions were very scarce. The night on which the battle [August 15, 1780] commenced in which Gates was defeated their only rations were molasses & a very small quantity of flour. The Army under General Gates, on their defeat, were dispersed in every direction. In making his retreat, applicant with many others passed through a swamp [Gum Swamp] about a quarter or half mile from the battleground. They were aiming to return to their camps, but just as he had crossed the swamp the British passed before them going on to the American camps; & he then saw the defeat was final & irretrievable, & made his way homeward in the best possible manner. He did not arrive at his home in Orange County till the first of November 1780, being delayed through fear of the Tories. Before his arrival home he had separated from all his companions, except Robert Breeze who started with him from the defeat. Applicant served as orderly Sergeant as long as he remained in Service in this his first campaign.

Gates' defeat he believes was on the 16th day of August, 1780.

In January 1781, applicant cannot state the day, he with almost all the Whigs in his section that could perform duty, volunteered under General Butler, with the understanding that if they would serve until after the general engagement with the British, it should be counted a three months tour. They first marched a few miles below Harrisburg, thence back through Hillsborough to the high rock ford on Haw River, where they joined the Main Army under General Green [Nathanael Greene]. On their return through Hillsborough, applicant remembers that the enemy had been there, & completely plundered the adjacent country. There was not a cow to be seen. When they got to the high rock ford, the River was swollen, & the Army went up it a few miles, & crossed on a bridge at Troublesome iron works. Between Hillsborough and high rock ford, they were stopped by a rise in a Creek called, as he believes, Eno, which they waded when nearly waist-deep. They marched from Troublesome iron works to Guilford court house, crossing several creeks running into the Haw. Applicant was in the battle at Guilford court house which took place, as well as he can remember, on the 15th of March 1781. The American Army retreated to Troublesome iron works, where applicant was permitted to return home, but did not, as he recollects, receive a written discharge. During this term of service, he was still orderly Sergeant, but in Captain Thompson's [Thomas Thompson's] company, in which John Whitsett was Lieutenant, Ensign's name not now remembered. He belonged to the Regiment commanded by Colonel Taylor. He remembers to have seen Captain Lee of the horse, just as the general engagement was coming on. That he had previously been in a skirmish with the enemy which brought on the battle. He rode along the lines of the American Infantry, seemed in a great rage for battle & told them it would be sufficient if they would stand to make only two fires: there then appeared to be blood on his sword.

Applicant returned home from the campaign last mentioned sometime in April 1781. From that time until the fall of the year, he was almost constantly engaged in providing provisions for the Army; & in skirmishing with the Tories, in the excursion against the Tories he was successively commanded by Colonel Taylor, Col. Jesse Benton, Captain William Williams, his brother, & by others.

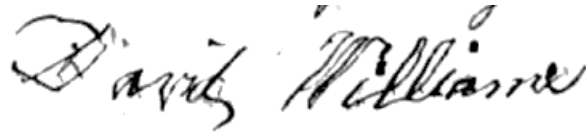
In September 1781, as he believes, at the least it was in the fodder pulling time, applicant furnished a horse & volunteered in the company of cavalry which marched from Hillsboro under the command of Colonel Taylor for the purpose of rescuing the Whig prisoners (among them was Thomas Burke, Governor of North Carolina) who had been taken by the Tories [September 12, 1781]. They went a circuitous route, crossing Haw River, as he believes, at Woody's ferry, & had a smart conflict [September 13, 1781] with the Tories at Lindley's Mill on Cane Creek. The American company of cavalry was about 200 in number, & were in that action ostensibly commanded by Colonel Mabin [Robert Mebane]. The Tories were thought to be 400 in number. Of the Whigs 5 or 6 were killed & several wounded. Of the Tories 30 or 40 were killed. The Tories retreated carrying off the prisoners previously taken, & the Whigs buried the dead of the enemy. They pursued the Tories in the direction to Wilmington about 30 miles, they then encamped three or four days, & retreated to the left of the direction to Wilmington, crossing Cape Fear River at Averett's Ford. They were camped several days, the company being then about 400 in number. Thence they marched down the Cape Fear to Brown's ferry, where they recrossed & rested a day or two, & were reinforced with a company of cavalry 4 or 500 strong under the command of Colonel William Moore. Thence they directed their course down the River to Livingston Swamp in pursuit of the Tories. At Livingston Swamp they had a skirmish with the Tories backed, as was supposed, by about 300 British commanded by Major Craig. A retreat was, on the outset ordered by their commander, which was considered by every brave American as cowardly & shameful. They had tied their horses about 200 yards in the rear of the place where they first formed for battle. When they had retreated to where the horses were tied Colonel Mebane & Brown, with about 150 men, gave the enemy a sharp returning fire, which threw them into some confusion & prevented their pursuit. Applicant remained with Mebane & Brown, the rest of the Americans retreated in confusion, though there had not been one of them killed. It was said that the enemy lost a few. The Whigs afterwards rendezvoused at Captain Lucas's, 18 miles from Livingston's Swamp. Applicant was

then, about the last of October 1781, dismissed without any written discharge. He entered the service in this horse company with the understanding that if he should serve in it six weeks it would be equal to & discharge him from three months service in the infantry. This was the last term he served in the revolutionary war.

Applicant 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 & year aforesaid.

S/ David Williams



S/ J R. Laughlin, Clk

[William Eagleton, a clergyman, and Jonathan Currin gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

The following interrogatories were propounded to David Williams the above named applicant for a pension in open court by the court on the day & year aforesaid the said Williams being on oath.

1st When and in what year were you born?

Answer: I was born in Orange County North Carolina on the 27th day of May 1754, as taken from a family record kept by my father.

2nd Have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

Answer: I have a record taken from my father's record

3rd Where were you living when called into service: where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live?

Answer: When called into service, I lived as stated in my declaration, in Orange County North Carolina, & continued to live there 17 or 18 years after the war, when I moved to Rutherford County where I now reside.

4th How were you called into service; were you drafted; did you volunteer or were you a substitute, and if in substitute, for whom?

Answer: I was never drafted. I always volunteered when my country needed my services.

5th State the names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops when you served, such Continental and militia regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service.

Answer: For answer to this inquiry I refer to the facts stated in my declaration.

6th Did you ever receive a discharge from the service, and if so, by whom was it given and what has become of it?

Answer: I never received any written discharge.

7th State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighborhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief in your services as a soldier in the revolution.

Answer: Samuel Campbell Esq., William Ledbetter, Jonathan Currin, William F. Lytle, Charles Niles, Colonel William Wade, Captain John Wade, John Motley, Benjamin McCulloch, & Major Burrell Gassaway

State of Tennessee, Rutherford County: Court of pleas and quarter sessions August Term, 1832

On this 23rd day of August 1832, personally appeared in open court before Verner D. Cowen, Samuel Jones & Henry Trott the Justices of the Court of pleas and quarter sessions, now sitting, for said County, William Mitchell,¹ Esq., who being first duly sworn, according to law, doth, on his oath, make the following statement as to his personal knowledge of the services of David Williams (the

¹ [William Mitchell S4221](#)

above applicant for a pension) in the war of the revolution.

Said Mitchell states that he was mustered into the service of the revolution with David Williams the above applicant under General Butler about the first of July 1780. He served with said Williams in that campaign until the termination of Gates' defeat. He was again mustered into service with said Williams in January 1781 & served with him during the Campaign in which the battle of Guilford was fought.

He served again with said Williams in the Cavalry under General Butler. Said Mitchell joined the forces a few days after the skirmish at Lindley's mill. He remembers well that said Williams was one that remained at Livingston Swamp with Colonel Mebane & Brown who stopped the pursuit of the enemy, while the Main body of the Whigs fled.

In the two first campaigns above mentioned he did not serve in the same company with said Williams, but was then personally acquainted with him, and knows that said Williams was always considered an active & brave soldier of the revolution on the side of the Whigs. He became personally acquainted with said Williams when they were first mustered into service together. He does not remember that said Williams was orderly Sergeant, he believes and in fact has no doubt but that he was, as stated in his declaration. And said Mitchell also fully believes that, after the battle of Guilford, & before the last campaign above mentioned for the purpose of rescuing the prisoners, said Williams was engaged in providing provisions for the Army & skirmishing with the Tories as by him in his declaration stated.

Sworn to & subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

S/ Wm Mitchell, Sr.



Amended proceedings & declaration of David Williams

State of Tennessee, Rutherford County, Circuit court, April term 1833.

On this first day of April 1833, in open court before me James C. Mitchell one of the judges of the circuit court for the State of Tennessee now sitting for the County of Rutherford personally appeared William Mitchell, Sr. and made oath, that the preceding statement heretofore made by him on the oath as to his personal knowledge of the services of David Williams (the preceding applicant for a pension) in the war of the revolution, is substantially true, and that said statement was by him said William Mitchell Senior subscribed & sworn to in open Court as it purports.

Subscribed & sworn to the day & year last aforesaid

S/ Wm Mitchell, Clerk

S/ Wm Mitchell

On this first day of April 1833 in open Court before me James C. Mitchell Judge as aforesaid, personally appeared David Williams who being duly sworn, deposeth & saith, that by reason of old age & 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: that one month & two weeks I served as orderly Sergeant in Captain Trice's company, John Taylor Lieutenant, Joseph Ellison – Ensign under General Butler; for two months & three weeks I served as orderly Sergeant in Captain Thompson's company, Whitsett Lieutenant in Colonel Taylor's Regiment & joined the Army of General Greene. The service in these two campaigns was on foot. For three months I served as a private & mounted gunmen furnishing my own horse, under Cols. Taylor & Benton & Captain Williams in various excursions after the Tories. For two months I served as a private & mounted gunmen, furnishing my own horse under Col. Taylor in Captain Thompson's company being the same company in which we fought the engagements at Lindley's Mill & Livingston's Swamp. For which service, in all nine months & five days, I claim a

pension.

Subscribed & sworn to this first of April 1833.

S/ David Williams

S/ Wm Mitchell, Clerk

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$41.66 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service for 5 months as a private in the cavalry and for 3 months and 5 days as a Sgt. of the infantry in the North Carolina service.]