

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of William Dawson S35883

PA [VA]

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Kentucky } To wit,
County of Bourbon }

On this day of the date hereof [2 July 1818] came before the undersigned one of the judges of the General Court for the State aforesaid and presiding Judge of the Circuit Courts in the eleventh Judicial District in the same State, William Dawson, who being sworn according to law did depose and say, that he is now a citizen of Bourbon County, and that he never resided in any other place than the United States since the commencement of the Revolutionary war, That he was enlisted in the continental Army in the Pennsylvania Line, as a private soldier, by Capt. Bourne [see endnote], some time between the battle of Bunker's Hill or Breed's Hill [17 Jun 1775] & that of Brandywine [11 Sep 1777], the precise date or year he cannot recollect; that said enlistment took place in Lancaster Pennsylvania – that his enlistment was then for the term of two years – and he was attached to the eleventh Regiment of Pennsylvania commanded by Colo. Webster – that he served the two years & was in the battles of Trenton [26 Dec 1776] & Brandywine with others. That he received a discharge from Capt. Bucher[?] when his time of service was out, at Lancaster Pennsylvania which he has lost. That he again enlisted in Salisbury North Carolina for the term of three years, the date not recollect but thinks it was shortly after the Battle of the Eutaw Springs [8 Sep 1781]. That said last enlistment was with Capt Roy & Lieutenant Watts, and was attached to the Regiment of Cavalry commanded by Colo. William Washington that he served the said three years out, and was in the battles of Kings Mountain [7 Oct 1780] – of Guilford [Guilford Courthouse NC, 15 Mar 1781] – at Gates's defeat [defeat of Gen. Horatio Gates at Camden SC, 16 Aug 1780] – at the Hanging Rock, and at the Cowpens [17 Jan 1781] where he received many severe wounds That he was discharged at Salem North Carolina when his time was out by Capt Roy, & has lost that discharge also – so that he cannot exhibit any written evidences. That he knows of no person whose testimony he can obtain owing to his infirmities who can prove these facts, except he knows a man by the name of Williams, who, was also wounded in the battle of Guilford, but he only knows of this affiants being there at the time of said battle. That he never received any pension from the United States or any of the United States, except that he has remained some three or four years on the poor list of Bourbon County & partook of the provision of said County for its poor – that he is about eighty years of age & infirm and unable to labor, and possesses no other means of subsistence since he was placed on the poor rates of Bourbon County except what was afforded him by said provision for the poor & that he needs greatly the aid of his country.

Commonwealth of Kentucky } S.S.
& Circuit of Bourbon }

On this twenty second day of August in the year 1820 personally appeared in open Court, being a Court of record in and for the Circuit aforesaid, William Dawson aged about eighty six years resident of Bourbon County & Circuit aforesaid, who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath declare that he served in the Revolutionary war, as follows, to wit, five years in Capt. Leroi's company of the third Virginia Regiment of light Dragoons, commanded by Colo. William Washington as fully detailed in his original declaration now on file in the war office under date of the second day of July in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, in pursuance of which he was inscribed on the pension list Roll of the Kentucky agency, and holds a certificate there of dated on the twenty second day of March one thousand eight hundred and nineteen, No. 8.243. And he did solemnly swear that he was a resident Citizen of the United States on the 18th day of March 1818 and that he has not since that time by gift sale or in any manner disposed of his property or any part thereof with intent thereby so to diminish it as to bring himself within the provisions of an act of Congress entitled “an act to provide for certain persons engaged

in the land and naval service of the United States in the Revolutionary War” passed on the 18th day of March 1818 and that he has not nor has any person in trust for him any property or securities contracts or debts due to him nor has he any income other than what is herein contained , nor has he made any schedule thereof, for except his wearing clothes and bedding and a part of his pension drawn heretofore & not yet expended, he owns not one single article of property, having been previous to his pension aforesaid many years on the poor rates of Bourbon County, & he annexed this statement to his oath instead of a formal schedule.

NOTE: I could find no record of any of the officers named by Dawson except Lt. Col. William Washington, and his declaration of service in the South is implausible. The battles of Camden and of Kings Mountain SC was fought before Washington’s 3rd Regiment of Continental Light Dragoons arrived in the South. The former battle did not involve Pennsylvania troops, and the latter did not involve Continental troops from any state. There were three engagements commonly referred to as battles of Hanging Rock in South Carolina, but Washington’s troops were not in any of them. Washington’s troops did fight at the battles of Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and Eutaw Springs, but it is unlikely that Dawson was in the Battle of Guilford Courthouse if he was seriously wounded at the Battle of Cowpens.