

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of Samuel Riggs S4095
Transcribed by Will Graves

fn30NC
rev'd 1/6/10

[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.]

State of Tennessee, County of Hawkins: 1st Judicial District, April Term 1834

On this 4th day of April 1834, personally appeared in open Court before the Judge of the Circuit Court of Hawkins County now sitting, Samuel Riggs, a resident citizen in the County of Hawkins and State of Tennessee, aged seventy four 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 7, 1832.

That the Declarant Samuel Riggs was born in Morris County, in the State of New Jersey, on the 4th day of April 1760. He has no record of his age himself; but here is a record of his age in the Bible left by his father at his death, now in the possession of his oldest sister, Elizabeth Riggs of Jefferson County, Tennessee. When the declarant was five years of age, his father moved to Surry County, North Carolina, on the Yadkin River. There he lived twelve years. In his seventeenth year Declarant moved with his father to Powell's Valley on Indian Creek, now Hawkins County, East Tennessee, where he lived nearly a year -- thence to the North Fork of Holson [sic, Holston River], where he remained until the spring of 1778. When he moved to the North Fork of Holston from Indian Creek; it was on account of an attack by the Indians upon that settlement, in which they had killed the next neighbor of Declarant's father, one William Parks. Shortly after his removing to the North Fork of Holston, Declarant volunteered under Captain Isaac Shelby in the summer of 1778, in the month of July, day not recollected, for the purpose of protecting the frontiers against the Indian incursions and of garrisoning a fort on Beaver Creek. There were about thirty men under Captain Isaac Shelby. Lieutenants and ensign not recollected. The company were for the greater part of the time engaged in keeping the Fort. This Fort was capable of containing five hundred people. Repeated attacks were made by the Indians upon the settlements, and the people compelled to take shelter in the Fort, until the company had driven off the Indians, and the people thus cultivated their land under the protection of Captain Shelby's company. Captain Shelby's company were constantly in service, in doing the duty of Sentries, or in scouting parties, and in all such service as was necessary for the protection of the families of that frontier settlement. While the Declarant was in service under Captain Shelby at this Fort, General Christy [sic, William Christian], in the fall of 1778 in October, day not recollected, came by the Fort with his troops on his expedition against the Cherokee Indians, and it being thought that the people would not need the protection of Captain Shelby's company during this invasion of the Cherokee Country, Captain Shelby went on with General Christian. The Declarant was anxious to go on this expedition but, his health being bad, he was not permitted to do so. The Declarant's father received a written discharge from Captain Isaac Shelby for the Declarant's service, setting forth that the Declarant had served a tour of three months under him garrisoning the Fort on Beaver Creek. Whether his Father ever received anything for Declarant's Services or not, Declarant does not know. Declarant did not receive anything, nor does he know what has become of the Discharge obtained by his father. In the month of December 1778, day not recollected, Declarant volunteered under Captain Isaac

Bletcher, Major Anthony Bletcher commandant. Lt. George Hart was the Lieutenant of the company -- other officers not recollected. Captain Bletcher's was one of the three companies raised for the purpose of garrisoning a large Fort on the North side of the Holston River, opposite to the Long Island. This Fort was on the remotest part of the frontiers. These three companies -- under Major Bletcher were constantly engaged on duty, in keeping the Fort or in Scouting parties protecting the settlers and ascertaining the approaches of the Indians. This garrison was regularly detailed for guard duty and for the duty of Scouts and was regularly paraded night and morning and were every Sabbath Day taught the manual exercise. In the month of April 1779, day not recollected, this Declarant was discharged after a service of four months by Captain Bletcher on the application of Declarant's father, who was then about to move back to North Carolina. Whether Declarant's father received anything for his services or not, Declarant does not know. Declarant himself received nothing. Declarant moved back to Surry County, North Carolina with his father and there remained until the fall of 1780 when he again moved with his father to Green County, North Carolina, now East Tennessee. Early in the month of December 1780, Declarant volunteered under Captain William Pruett, (John Howard [or Boward], Lieutenant, no Ensign) to go under Colonel John Sevier against the Cherokee Indians. We were mounted riflemen. Col. Sevier commanded the men from Washington and Greene Counties -- Major Tipton [Jonathan Tipton], Captain Hawkins and Captain Langdon Carter were officers under Col. Sevier. There were four companies under Col. Sevier, about 200 men. The company of Captain Pruett started after Col. Sevier had started. The first night we encamped on Lick Creek; the second night we overtook Col. Sevier on Long Creek in what is now Jefferson County; the third day we started two hours before day and crossed French Broad River at Buckingham's Island and encamped on the other side of the river. The fourth day we marched for Chota Town. We started early in the morning, and after marching two miles we came to where the Indians had encamped the night before on their way to attack the whites. The Indians had fallen back to waylay us. Our spies having gone on and met the advancing spies of the Indians, made us acquainted with their situation; they had fallen back about two hundred yards from where they had encamped. Col. Sevier was leading one division and Major Tipton the other. Suddenly a gun was fired about fifty yards off from the midst of a field of tall grass before us at Col. Sevier -- Major Jesse Walton, a volunteer being next to Col. Sevier, jumped from his horse and fired at the Indian, who had discharged his gun at Col. Sevier, and broke his the Indian's leg. The Indians immediately jumped up and fired -- our men jumped from their horses at the fire of the first gun (except Col. Sevier) and commenced firing -- and immediately drove the Indians, completely routing them. We killed sixteen of them. None of our men were killed; one of our men was slightly wounded in the hand and one of our horses was killed and one of our men was injured by being thrown from his horse. We pursued them to a cane break, in which they took refuge, and we were ordered to halt. We got a good many guns and knapsacks, which were thrown down by the Indians. The same day we returned to Buckingham's Island, and there remained encamped for eight days, waiting for reinforcements from Virginia. A considerable body of men, about 500 came on commanded by Colonel Archibald [sic, Arthur] Campbell. Other Virginia officers are not recollected. Col. Campbell took the command of the united forces, and the whole body, the day after the junction, marched towards the Indian Towns. After leaving Buckingham's Island, we crossed Little River and arrived the second night at the Indian Town on the Tennessee River. Here we found provisions, deer skins, horses, cattle and a Swivel [gun?]. After burning this town, we marched up the river, on to Chota several miles above the mouth of the Tellico River. We remained sometime in Chota -- finding here corn that had been concealed -- an Indian was killed at this town. After burning Chota we marched back down the Tennessee River to the mouth of Tellico River to Tellico Towns. Here we remained for some time, when the army divided. The larger part, of which Declarant was one, marched under Cols. Campbell and Sevier to the Hiwassee Old Town; the remainder being left at the Tellico Towns. We arrived at the Hiwassee Old Town the second day -- burnt it and immediately returned to Tellico, where we again remained for several days. At our entrance into Tellico Towns, Captain Ellit of Virginia was killed by

an Indian. There were some Indians getting corn in Tellico on our arrival. Captain Ellit was in front. One of his men wounded an Indian. The Indian having fallen Captain Ellit rode up to him, and as he approached, the Indian rose up and shot him dead through the head. Ellit fell so near the Indian, that the Indian got Ellit's gun and fired it at one of the men before he was killed, which was immediately done. We found several Negroes in the towns. After burning Tellico, we marched back together until we came to Long Creek, in what is now Jefferson County, when we separated, Col. Sevier returning with his men through Greene County, and Col. Campbell to Virginia through Hawkins County. The men who were engaged in this tour were informed that they would receive certificates for a three months tour at Jonesborough from a committee of the North Carolina Legislature, and those who applied did receive certificates for a three months tour -- though this Declarant never did, and never received any other than the verbal discharge of his Captain on his return into Greene County. The Declarant was engaged in this expedition from November 1780, day not recollected, until February 1781, day not recollected, a period of three months. After the year 1783 Declarant served three tours against the Cherokees under Col. Sevier -- his Captains were Wm. Lea, Stephen Copeland and Johnson, and one tour against the same Indians under Cols. Outlaw and Cocke, his Captain Wm. Lea. Declarant was detailed as a guard for the first settlement at Knoxville for two months -- He was detailed as a Lieutenant with six men to guard a frontier settlement on Flat Creek one of the branches of the Holston for two months. Declarant served two tours as a spy -- for all which services he has never received one cent. In the year 1780 Declarant moved to the head of Lick Creek in Greene County, North Carolina now East Tennessee, where he lived five years, when he removed to the waters of French Broad River in what is now Jefferson County, East Tennessee, where he lived two years, then to the waters of Holston River in Jefferson County where he lived three years, then to Fall Creek, waters of Holston, in Hawkins County, where he has lived for forty four years and where he now lives. Declarant makes no claim for the services which he performed after 1783. Tho' he has never received one cent for them, he served in the year 1778 three months under Captain Isaac Shelby in garrisoning Fort Shelby. -- In the year 1779 he served four months under Captain Bletcher -- in garrisoning the Long Island Fort. In the year 1780 he served a tour of three months in Captain William Pruett's company under Col. Sevier in an expedition against the Cherokee Indians. These he served in all during the revolution, ten months as a volunteer as above stated. In the year 1782 he served two tours as an Indian spy -- making five weeks service. Declarant has no documentary evidence in regard to his service having never gotten the discharges which his father received for his two first tours, Declarant being then under age. His Father lost them, where or when Declarant knows not. Declarant never got a discharge for his last tour, never applying for one. Declarant knows of no living witnesses, by whom he could prove his services. Declarant hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension except the present, and declares that his name is not on the Pension Roll of the Agency of any State.

S/ Samuel Riggs

Sworn to and subscribed in Open Court this 4th day of April 1834,

S/ W. B. Mitchell, Clerk

Question 1st: Where and in what year were you born?

Answer 1st: I was born in Morris County, State of New Jersey, on the 4th day of April 1760.

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

Answer 2nd: There is a record of my age in the possession of my sister Elizabeth of Jefferson County, East Tennessee.

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

Answer 3rd: When called into service, I was living in what is now Hawkins County, East Tennessee,

and Greene County, East Tennessee, then frontier settlements. Since the Revolutionary War I have lived in East Tennessee, where I now live in Hawkins County, Tennessee.

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

Answer 4th: I was a volunteer in every tour I served.

Question 5th: State the names of some of the Regular Officers who were with the troops, where you served; such Continental and Militia Regiments as you can recollect, and the general circumstances of your service.

Answer 5th: There were no Continental Troops, when I served. I served as a volunteer under Captain Isaac Shelby, in garrisoning Fort Shelby on Beaver Creek, above the North Fork of Holston River, near the line between Virginia and East Tennessee, from July 1778 date not recollected until October 1778 day not recollected, a tour of three months. I served as a volunteer under Captain Bletcher, in garrisoning Long Island Fort on Holston River in what is now East Tennessee, from December 1778 day not recollected until April 1779 day not recollected, a tour of four months. I served as a volunteer under Captain William Pruitt in an expedition under Col. Sevier against the Cherokee Indians from November 1780 until February 1781 -- a tour of three months. I served five weeks in 1782 as and Indian Spy in two scouting parties. In all I served ten months as a Volunteer as above named and five weeks as an Indian Spy -- during the Revolutionary War.

Question 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 6th: My father received two of my discharges -- he lost them when or where I do not know. I never got one for my service under Col. Sevier -- never applying for one.

Question 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 of your services as a Soldier of the Revolution?

Answer 7th: I have lived where I now do for forty four years. I would refer to the Reverend Daniel Howry, and Major Thomas Hale, citizens of Hawkins County, and to Dr. Pleasant W. Lane, a citizen of Jefferson County, a neighbor of mine as I live near the line between the two counties, who can be examined as required by the War Department.

S/ Samuel Riggs

Sworn and subscribed in Open Court this 4th day of April 1834,

S/ W. B. Mitchell, Clerk

[Daniel Howry, a clergyman, Thomas Hale and Pleasant W. Lane gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

Revolutionary War Pension Application of LT Samuel RIGGS (1845)

Transcribed by Bobby G. Carwile

Declaration in order to obtain the benefits of the Act of Congress passed 07 June 1832

On this 6th day of August 1845 personally appeared before me John RIGGS, an acting Justice of the Peace in and for the County and State aforesaid.

Samuel RIGGS of said County aged eighty five 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 the 7th 1832. States he entered the service of the United States under the following officers and (sic) served as a Lieutenant three tours under Colonel John SEVIER. That he recollects Captain SHELBY, Captain COPELAND and Captain CARTER, and one tour Captain not recollected, does not recollect the times when he entered the service nor date when he left the same, that he was in an engagement with the Indians near French Broad River in which fourteen were killed, and was in several engagements afterwards with them, that he lay on French Broad River until a regiment of about five hundred troops came from Virginia, he was sent to where Knoxville now stands with troops to guard a family then living there and afterwards marched to the different Indians towns, that he served as a Lieutenant four tours and that he served on horseback and that he cannot precisely swear as to the precise length of the services but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than twelve months, and for such service he claims a pension. That he is now drawing a pension for \$33.33 per annum payable at Jonesborough Agency as a Private. That the reason why he did not make application before as a Lieutenant was that he was under the impression that none but officers of the Regular Army were entitled to draw a pension. That he has no documentary evidence and that he knows of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to his service.

Sworn to and subscribed this the day and year aforesaid.

Samuel (X) RIGGS

John RIGGS

Justice of the Peace for Hawkins County

We, Andrew COFFMAN and Y. I. MORRISS, Clergymen residing in the County of Jefferson, State of Tennessee, hereby certify that we are well acquainted with Samuel RIGGS who has subscribed and sworn to the above declaration and that we believe him to be eighty five years of age, that he is reputed and believed in the neighborhood where he resides to have been an officer of the Revolution, and that we concur in that opinion.

Sworn and Subscribed to the day and year aforesaid

Andrew COFFMAN

Y. I. MORRISS

John RIGGS

Justice of the Peace

Question: Where and in what year were you born?

Answer: I was born in New Jersey on the 4th day of April 1760.

Question: Have you a record of your age and if so where is it?

Answer: There is a record of my age in my father's bible. One of my sisters got the Bible. She is now dead, and I don't know what has become of it.

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

Answer: I lived in Lick Creek which is now in Greene County, Tennessee, and have lived in Jefferson and Hawkins and now reside in Hawkins County.

Question: How were you called into service?

Answer: I was a volunteer.

Question: Did you receive a Commission and if so, by whom was it signed and what has become of it?

Answer: I had a Commission signed by Colonel John SEVIER and Captain SHELBY, which is lost or mislaid so that I cannot find it.

Question: 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 of your service as an Officer of the Revolution.

Answer: The Rev. Andrew COFFMAN and Y. I. MORRISS.

I do hereby certify that Samuel RIGGS the above named applicant is unable from bodily infirmity to attend Court.

John RIGGS
Justice of the Peace

The Court approves the original proceedings had before John RIGGS Esqr. And do hereby declare their opinion that the above named applicant was an officer of the Revolution and served as he states, and the Court further certifies that Andrew COFFMAN and Y. I. MORRISS who have signed the foregoing certificate are Clergymen resident in the County of Jefferson and their statement is entitled to credit.

I, Robert JOHNSON Clerk of the County of Hawkins and State aforesaid, do hereby certify that the foregoing contains the original proceedings of the said Court in the matter of the Application of Samuel RIGGS for a pension and that said John RIGGS, Esqr. Whose name appears on the foregoing declaration is an acting Justice of the Peace in and for said County.

Witness my hand and Seal of Office
Rogersville
This 1st day of September 1845

Robert JOHNSON, Clerk
By I. L. FULKERSON D.C.
Raleigh NC 20 December 1845
Comptroller Office

I, William S. COLLINS Comptroller of Public Accounts in the State of North Carolina do hereby certify that the name of Samuel RIGGS appears of Record in this office as having had the following special certificates issued in his favor for Military Service in said Books purportedly and for six pounds Nineteen Shillings which Certificate was issued 12 June 1783. See Book No. 1, Page 40. Also another was issued in the name of Samuel RIGGS for Nineteen Pounds Four Shillings (19/4) see Book No. 9, Page 10.

Given under my hand and Seal this 20th day of December 1845
William S. COLLINS
Comptroller