

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Robert Pollard S5944

f49VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

10/30/12

[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. 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 fails 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 errors or omissions to my attention.]

State of Virginia, City of Richmond

On this day personally appeared in Open Court in the City aforesaid now sitting, Robert Pollard a resident of the City of Richmond County of Henrico & State of Virginia, aged seventy-six 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 he entered the service of the United States in the Culpeper Minute Battalion as Adjutant, which was commanded by Laurence Taliaferro [Lawrence Taliaferro] Colonel Edward Stevens Lieutenant Colonel & Thomas Marshall Major, on or about the beginning of the month of September 1775, they rendezvoused at Culpeper Court house and soon after marched to Williamsburg by the direction of the Committee of Safety where they remained until the latter end of the month of November or beginning of December, – Lord Dunmore who commanded the British party had withdrawn with his fleet to Norfolk, – The second Regiment of regular troops commanded by Colonel William Woodford, Lieutenant General Scott & Majors Spotswood, the Culpeper Battalion of Minute men and some other Companies of Minute Men that were at Williamsburg were ordered to the Great bridge, – a part of the Culpeper Battalion not being properly armed was sent home, the Command then devolved on Lieutenant Colonel Stevens, with whose permission I returned home for a short time leaving with his consent my relative and friends Benjamin Pollard my deputy, who having joined us at Williamsburg was without employment and anxious to be with the Army. After making my arrangements at home, I returned to Williamsburg on my way to join the Army & having received [indecipherable word, perhaps an abbreviation of the word "appointment"] from the President of the Board of Public Safety I proceeded to Norfolk by way of the Great bridge, and on my arrival at Norfolk reported myself to Colonel Stevens, – My friend Mr. Benjamin Pollard remained with me and partook of my rations any other expense occurring to the State in consequence of his remaining [indecipherable word or words]¹ any services he had rendered. I arrived at Norfolk a few days after the battle of first January 1776 when a considerable part of the Town was burnt by the British – some short time after I got there the enemy commanded a heavy Cannonade a little before day and landed troops, as was believed, with a view to destroy the remainder of the Town. They met a warm reception from our troops and were compelled to take shelter on board their vessels again which they effected soon after daylight. – We sustained some loss from there



Cannon shot, – I have a faint [?]² recollection that they afterwards made an attempt to land troops in the daytime under cover of their Cannon, but did not succeed.

Things having remained entirely quiet for some time, and continued I believe until the departure of the enemy's fleet, which happened a few weeks after, there was a general impression in the Army that there would be no more fighting & the officers & men became impatient to return home, – Colonel Woodford the commanding officer of all the troops there left camp for Williamsburg and several other officers obtained leave of absence neither of whom returned, – after remaining in that inactive state some time longer and there being no appearance or probability of a more active scene occurring, on consulting with Colonel Stevens he considered it unimportant for me to continue longer as my friend Mr. Benjamin Pollard could perform the few duties required in my department and a pressing [??]³ belief that the Battalion would very soon be ordered home, arrangements were accordingly made and leave granted for my absence.

Not long after my departure the Battalion were directed to return & arrived in Culpeper sometime in early in March, as I verily believes; I received pay with the other officers & troops for the whole tour being about six months, I continued to hold my appointment discharging duties required by the Commanding officer, such as attending the board of Officers to fill their vacations that occurred &c, until the minute Troops were discharged by Law and returned to the rank of Militia.

In the year 1777 a detachment of Militia about 500 men were ordered from the County of Culpeper to join the Army under General Washington, I volunteered my services and was appointed Adjutant & Paymaster the troops rendezvoused at the Courthouse about the first or early in the month of September and marched immediately; – after joining the main Army it was understood that it was incompatible to hold the two offices conferred on me. I soon after resigned that of Adjutant in consequence of that opinion, or perhaps in order of the Commanding General of our Brigade, who was General Smallwood, the other I held during the tour, – the troops returned home on the last of November or beginning of December and I paid them at December Court, the Battalion was commanded by Colonel James Barbour when they marched from Culpepper and until they had advanced some distance in the State of Maryland, when an express was met with orders to march forward no troops not well armed, under this order about half of the men were discharged, the command then devolved on Major William Roberts, – these troops had no opportunity afforded of meeting the enemy, several attempts were made by General Washington to attack foraging parties of the enemy on points above and below Philadelphia, but before our troops could reach the places where they were foraging the enemy had decamped, in one instance the whole Army was put in motion mostly after night, the main body moved down towards Philadelphia through Germantown and large parties were marched towards Frankfurt & Chester, among the latter where the Culpeper Militia who forded the schoolkill [Schuylkill] in the night in the month of November, neither of the detached parties fell in with the enemy, it was believed that the British were early & well-informed of our movements.

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Nothing occurring to afford a prospect of active operations shortly in the Militia troops not being well clad for the winter season was fast approaching, the Commander in Chief discharged all the Militia from Virginia, they had been called out from several Counties as far south as the Rappahannock.

Sometime probably in the next year, I was appointed a Captain in the militia which appointment I held until the end of the War, whether I actually received a Commission I do not recollect, but am satisfied I had some evidence of it to exhibit in case of falling into the hands of the enemy.

Sometime in the month of March 1781 I believe about the middle of it, a detachment of Militia of four to 500 men was ordered to march from the County of Culpeper to Southampton County on the South side of James River, to assist in repelling an invasion or expected invasion under the command of General Phillips [William Phillips], I was directed to take the command of a Company which I accordingly did, the troops were marched without delay under the command of Colonel James Slaughter to the point designated, other Militia were collected there also an General Muhlenberg [Peter Muhlenberg] took the command, Sometime elapsed before our troops commenced a retreat, after the British vessels began moving up the River our troops retreated with a view to keep in advance of them, at times we had to make forced marches, at others would be in active for a day or two, on the retreat Baron Steuben joined the troops and assumed the command, General Muhlenberg remaining with them, on the arrival of our troops at Petersburg, the Commanding officer decided to make a stand, and what resistance our force was capable of composed of 1000 to 1100 altogether Militia, without any hope I presume of doing much more than to show that it was for want of powder and not for want of nerve that we retreated before them, the enemy landed somewhere below Petersburg, perhaps at City Point, and Army of 2500 regular troops. Our disposition was made to meet them, the troops were drawn up on the North side of Appomattox River, and parties detached below the Town where the enemy was not, our men would fire & retreat, reinforcements were sent on to their assistance – and although the British Army outnumbered us so greatly, it was several hours before our men were forced over the bridge, the planks being removed, heavy fire was kept up for a short time, the action I feel confident took place on the 25th of April [1781], – a retreat on our part was thought necessary as the River above the Town was fordable and means might probably be obtained of crossing it below in a short time that being effected our troops would have been enveloped between two forces, overpowered by numbers. – We arrived at Chesterfield Courthouse early the next morning where our wounded men had been sent, they were about 30 in number and some severely injured, – the enemy soon after took the direct route for Manchester, but did not appear to hurry themselves, on their arrival there they burnt the Tobacco warehouses with their contents, this happened at night, our Army had retreated to the Coal pits about 12 miles south of Manchester, information having been received of the arrival or hourly expected arrival of General Fayette [Lafayette] at Richmond, we marched after night and crossed James River at Tuckahoe ferry 14 miles above Richmond and joined Lafayette early the next morning, General Phillips did not attempt to cross the River to attack Fayette's troops as was expected, but retreated to Petersburg. General Fayette took some time to rest his troops before he went in pursuit of the enemy, his first movement as well as now remembered was to the neighborhood of Petersburg, it was supposed by most of the officers to attack it, but whether from the near approach of Lord Cornwallis or some other cause, he removed his troops of crossed James River, soon after Cornwallis did arrive at Petersburg & we retreated to Richmond, where we remained until it was ascertained that the British troops were in pursuit of us, a retreat was commenced by

our Troops and continued until General Fayette had advanced 70 or 80 miles up the Country, during the retreat the detachment to which I belonged was relieved by another Battalion of Militia from Culpepper sometime late in the month of May or beginning of June, and I was regularly discharged having served out the time for which they were ordered out, say sixty days.

The detachment in which I served commence the campaign of 1781 in Virginia and regular supplies of militia were furnished from the County until after the siege of York. Some troops were ordered out from that County on Arnold's [Benedict Arnold's] invasion in January, myself and company among them but some directed to return before we reached Richmond.

I was born and raised in the County of Culpeper and resided there until the fall of the year 1784, when I settled in Richmond and have resided here ever since. – I acquired knowledge of my age from the register in my Father's family Bible written by himself; – that I never had a pension & hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present & hereby declare that my name is not on the pension roll of any State.

In support of my declaration for services in the Culpeper Minute Battalion reference may be had to the Certificate of Chief Justice Marshall, for services in the detachment that marched from Culpepper to Headquarters to join General Washington, I refer to the affidavit of Lieutenant Moore who I know to be a man of respectability & had served for many years as a Magistrate in the County, – in regard to the tour in 1781 under the command of Colonel James Slaughter, I have to rely on my statement annexed, not having been able to obtain information of any person now residing in Culpeper that has any recollection of it.

On reviewing my declaration I find I was at some loss to account for the movement of the Army after the arrival of General Fayette, the time that elapsed before they marched to Petersburg appeared to be longer than I had supposed they remained inactive, but not being able to recollect any movement prior [?] ⁴ to the march to Petersburg, I was led to consult Marshall's *Life of Washington*, he states that the main body of our troops were marched to the North side of Chickahominy River. Upon reflecting most seriously on this subject I have a faint recollection that they did cross Bottoms Bridge on the road leading to Williamsburg, distance of about 16 miles below Richmond and was encamped there a few days, – one fact I feel confident in my mind of, that when the movement was made towards Petersburg our troops marched from Richmond & crossed James River to Manchester.

S/ Robert Pollard

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert Pollard". The signature is written in dark ink and features a large, decorative flourish at the end of the name.

[The above document bears no date nor is it attested]

[f p. 16]

Virginia

At a court of Hasting's Held for the City of Richmond, the 30th day of July 1832 Robert Pollard of this city, this day in open Court presented, and made oath to, a declaration containing a

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be "W. G. ...". The signature is written in dark ink and is partially obscured by a small number "4" at the bottom left.

statement of facts in relation to his application for a pension, as an officer of the revolutionary war: He also produced in court the certificate of the Reverend Richard Channing Moore, director of the Monumental Church in this City, the certificate of John Marshall Chief Justice of the United States, and the certificate of Reuben Moore, William Duval and Thomas Rutherford, (all of which papers are hereunto annexed:) and the Court do hereby declare their opinion, after investigation of the matter, and after putting the interrogatories prescribed by the war Department, that the above named (Robert Pollard) was a revolutionary officer, and served as he states; and the court further certifies, that it appears to them, that Reverend Richard Channing Moore, John Marshall, and Thomas Rutherford, above named, are residents of this City, & William Duval above named, is a resident of the County of Buckingham, and all of them are credible persons, and their statements entitled to credit; and that the said Reuben More is unknown to the members of this Court.

[Attested by the clerk of the court July 31, 1832]

[f p. 19]

State of Virginia, City of Richmond to wit:

On this day personally appeared before me Joseph Tate Mayor of the City aforesaid Robert Pollard a resident of the city of Richmond, County of Henrico & State of Virginia, aged seventy-six years, who being 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 he entered into the service of the United States in the Culpeper Minute Battalion, as stated in the annexed declaration about the first of September 1775, they marched to Williamsburg, the Great Bridge & Norfolk, & were discharged and reached home early in March 1776 see Mr. Marshall's Certificate – he was fully 6 months in service as Adjutant.

The Battalion of Militia that marched to Headquarters and joined the Army under General Washington in 1777 rendezvoused at the Courthouse about the beginning of September, and returned home the last of November or beginning of December. Lieutenant Moore in his affidavit swears they were fully three months in service, which I verily believe was the case. I was the Adjutant & Pay master in this detachment as stated in my annexed declaration. The tour in 1781 under command of Colonel James Slaughter that marched to Southampton County in which I had the command of a Company as Captain, the troops were ordered out for sixty days or two months, they left Culpeper Courthouse as well as I can recollect about the middle of March or perhaps a few days later – At the end of the 60 days they were released by another detachment from that County & regularly discharge, while General Lafayette was retreating up the Country having served out the full time.

I state my services as follows, in the Culpeper Battalion of Minute Man 6 months, commencing the beginning of September 1775 & ending early in March 1776 – The expedition to Headquarters 3 months, commencing the beginning of September 1777 and ending the last of November 1777 or beginning of December and the tour to Southampton, commenced about the middle of March to the 20th 1781, & terminated at the end of 2 months – making altogether 11 months service, to state with exact precision the days on which the service commenced & ended is not in my power, but I am well satisfied that the time of services of each tour is not overrated.

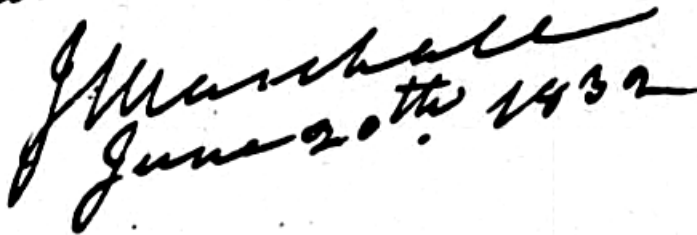
S/ Robert Pollard

[attested August 8, 1832]

[f p. 36]

I became acquainted with Mr. Robert Pollard in September 1775. The Culpeper of Minute Battalion to which I belonged, assembled at Culpeper Courthouse on the first day of that month, and Mr. Pollard was in the staff; I think Adjutant of the Battalion. In the month of September we were ordered to Williamsburg, and Mr. Pollard marched with us. We remained at Williamsburg until late in November when we marched to the Great Bridge. Mr. Pollard remained with us in Williamsburg until some short time before we left that place, when I understood he obtained permission to be absent leaving his relative Mr. Benjamin Pollard as his deputy. I remember Mr. B. Pollard acting as I understood as the deputy of Mr. R. Pollard. He was in the same mess with myself in Norfolk. I think but am not certain that I saw Mr. B. [could by R.] Pollard in Norfolk. The Battalion marched from Norfolk to Suffolk I believe late in February and was discharged as well as I can recollect in March. I do not recollect seeing Mr. Pollard after his obtaining leave of absence in Williamsburg unless it be for a short time in Norfolk, but I am satisfied he never resigned or left the service.

S/ J. Marshall [John Marshall, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court]
June 20th, 1832

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Marshall" followed by "June 20th 1832". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored paper.

Although I do not positively recollect seeing Mr. Robert Pollard in Norfolk, he has mentioned to me so many of the occurrences which actually took place as to convince me that he was there.

S/ J. Marshall

The affidavit of Reuben Moore of the County of Culpeper & State of Virginia in the seventy ninth year of his age taken & sworn to before us Philip Slaughter & French Strother two of the Commonwealth's Justices of the peace for said County –

This affiant saith, that in the year 1777 & he thinks towards the last of the month of August – a quota of the Militia for said County was called into service – that he the said affiant was a Lieutenant in Captain Richard Waugh's Company which Company together with several other Companies marched from said County under the command of Colonel James Barbour until they arrived in the State of Maryland – Where a part of the detachment returned home for want of arms, and that a Major's Command, under Major William Roberts was ordered to proceed to join the main Army (then in Pennsylvania) under the command of General Washington – that they did join the main Army under General Washington in the State of Pennsylvania, & that the affiant continued as Lieutenant with the Culpeper Militia during the whole Tour – & was well & intimately acquainted with Captain Robert Pollard, who resided in said County & afterwards moved to the City of Richmond in Virginia, where he now lives – this affiant knows of his own knowledge, that the said Robert Pollard acted first as adjutant & Pay master, & afterwards as Pay Master during the whole Tour as aforesaid, & that they were in service at that time fully three months & he believes [indecipherable words] that time – given under my hand this 15 day of June 1832

S/ R. Moore⁵

⁵ FPA W8466

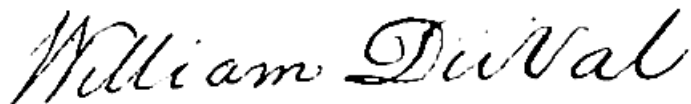


The affidavit of Major William DuVal⁶ aged about eighty-four years respecting Robert Pollard Esquire, an old Inhabitant of the City of Richmond.

This affiant lived near the City of Richmond since the Revolutionary War as far back as 1784, about the time that Captain Robert Pollard moved to the City of Richmond I lived at my seat near Richmond called Mount Comfort. I became well acquainted with him in or about January 1791. I moved to Richmond to be more convenient to my practice in the Superior Courts of this City and continued to live in this City until the year 1807 when I moved to Buckingham County and I believe since my removal I have every year since seen Captain Robert Pollard when I came annually to Richmond. I know him to be a man of Truth and great respectability. I have seen his statement of facts respecting his various tours of duty in the minute service, as well as in the militia service of this State and from my knowledge of his integrity I verily believe his statement made in his declaration is true, so many years have since elapsed that few of the old Veterans of the Revolution are alive in this state. In the Company that I commanded in 1775 & 1776 both my subaltern officers are dead on inquiry cannot discover that a single soldier is alive that I commanded either in the volunteer or minute service. I am well assured that Captain Robert Pollard is about seventy-six years of age.

[Attested July 28, 1832]

S/ William DuVal



[f p. 41]

The affidavit of John Brown⁷ of the County of Culpeper & State of Virginia in the 76th year of his age – being Sworn Deposes & says that about the month of April 1781 he marched from the County of Culpeper in Captain Robert Pollard's Company of Militia first to Fredericksburg then to Richmond & from thence to Petersburg where they had a small Engagement with the British Army, that Colonel James Slaughter commanded the Regiment & General Edward Stevens commanded the Brigade that they retreated from Petersburg to Chesterfield Courthouse – that Deponent knows that Captain Robert Pollard dead perform the aforesaid Tour of duty (as Captain) which to the best of his recollection was two months. Given under my hand this 28 day of July 1832

S/ John Brown, X his mark

[f p. 44]

I David Jamison of the County of Culpeper & State of Virginia in the 79th [? written over and unclear]⁸ year of my age being sworn Deposes & says that in the year 1781 after my return from

⁶ [William DuVal S8362](#)

⁷ [John Brown S6735](#)

⁸ 

South Carolina and 5 months Tour with the Militia from Culpepper County Virginia as a Lieutenant – the weather being very warm & I was much indisposed with the dyspepsia which confined me much home – I did not mix much with Company & was not much informed of passing Events as I would have been if in health & especially had not that personal knowledge of Transactions respecting the Militia but I recollect to have frequently heard from several Militia man (my acquaintances) who said that they were soldiers under Captain Robert Pollard when engaged in an action at Petersburg against a party of the British Army & that they were compelled to retreat & the British got possession of the town. I often heard them speaking in praise of their Captain as an officer & friend. I well remember to have heard a neighbor by the name of Edward Atkinson speak of being in said Action as a soldier under Captain Robert Pollard – I have heard others of the soldiers relate the same. Given under my hand this 3rd day of August 1832

S/ D. Jameson⁹



[f p. 46]

The affidavit of Jeremiah Turner¹⁰ of the County of Culpeper & State of Virginia in the eighty third year of his age being sworn Deposes & Says that he was called upon to serve a Tour of duty in the Militia from Culpepper County in the early part of the year 1781. That he was in the seventh Division of Militia of said County & marched as well as he recollects about the month of March or April in Captain John Waugh's Company & that the Culpeper Militia was commanded by Colonel James Slaughter from said County – that they marched to Richmond by the way of the Bowling Green then to Petersburg where they had an engagement with a part of the British Troops near the Bridge & the Americans having to retreat took up the Bridge to prevent the British Army from passing it – that they retreated from there to Chesterfield Courthouse under the command of General Lafayette that they remained in service during that Tour which was 2 months at least. That the said Turner well remembers that Captain Robert Pollard of Culpeper commanded a company of militia in the same Regiment during the whole of that Tour. Given under my hand this 4th of August 1832

S/ Jeremiah Turner, X his mark

[f p. 48]

I Philip Slaughter¹¹ of the County of Culpeper & State of Virginia in the seventy fourth year of my age do hereby Certify that I have been acquainted with Robert Pollard, formerly of the County of Culpeper & now of the City of Richmond in Virginia, for upwards of fifty years – that we were both raised in the County of Culpeper & that our parents were related that he was brought up by Edward Stevens (afterwards General Stevens) and as assistant in his Store at Culpeper Court house & that I lived in the Clerk's Office of said County – that in the fall of the year 1775 we both marched with a Battalion of Minute man, raised from Culpeper, Orange & Fauquier Counties to Williamsburg in Virginia – that in that year 1776 – I was appointed a

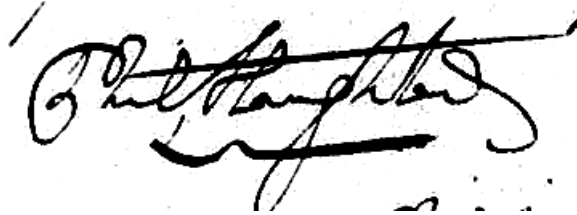
⁹ [David Jameson S5607](#)

¹⁰ [Jeremiah Turner W19472](#)

¹¹ [Philip Slaughter W29886](#)

Lieutenant in Captain Gabriel Long's Company of Regular Continental troops – & that we were annexed to the 11th Virginia Continental Regiment, and commanded by Colonel Daniel Morgan Lieutenant Colonel Christian Febiger & Major William Heth – that in the fall of 1777 a few days after the Battle of Germantown [October 4, 1777], a Battalion of Militia joined the main Army under General Washington while we were in Pennsylvania – that Robert Pollard was there adjutant or Pay master & that I have understood and verily believe, that the said Robert Pollard served a tour of duty as Captain in the Militia from Culpepper County under the command of Colonel James Slaughter in the spring of 1781 – that I believe & am well convinced that there was no other Robert Pollard as Captain of militia in Culpeper that Captain Pollard was always considered as a great friend to his Country and Gentleman of High Respectability & Veracity – & I firmly believe he did perform the aforesaid 3 tours of duty – given under my hand this __ day of August 1832

S/ Phil Slaughter

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Phil Slaughter". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background. There are some faint marks and a small number "79" to the left of the signature.

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$160 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service as a Captain & Adjutant in the Virginia State line for 11 months.]