

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of William Bryan S6699

f46NC

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. 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 'indecipherable' 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.]

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State of North Carolina Johnston County

On this the 26th day of April 1845 personally appeared before me a Justice of the peace and of the Court of Pleas and quarter Sessions of said County William Bryan of the County and State aforesaid now in his 85th year of age, 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 the 7th of June 1832.

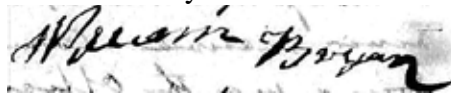
That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served in the Revolutionary War as herein stated, viz.: That in 1778 he was drafted for a five months tour under Captain John Whitley of this County and the Company marched to the South and were engaged in the battle of Brier Creek [sic, Brier Creek, March 3, 1779] but that the declarant was not in said battle, that from the period of his being thus drafted under Captain Whitley, he continued to render military service under the orders of the commanding Colonels of their County for more than twelve months in what was then called the "minute service" -- that the names of the Colonels of that time were, Colonel Arthur Bryan and Colonel Needham Bryan -- that this minute service was rendered to the orders of his two elder Brothers -- Asa [Asa Bryan] and John Bryan who were officers in the public service and acting in obedience to the orders and command of some of the Colonels before named -- that under such orders he was often out on scouting parties, in pursuit of Tories and enemies to the cause of independence, who were often concealed in different neighborhoods, -- in the woods and amongst evil disposed friends of theirs -- that in this irregular minute service, he is unable to state the exact length of time, except generally as before stated -- but that he has been out as long as ten days at a time on such -- and very often a less number of days -- That during these years -- he aided at a dear rate of furnishing a man for the twelve months service -- Military orders having been given that every fifteen men must furnish a man for a twelve months Service was stand a draft for one of themselves -- that as one of such a class he did thus furnish a man jointly with the rest of the class.

The Deponent further states that in the fall of 1780, he thinks, he was again drafted as a militia man under Captain Edmond Griffin [Edmund Griffin] -- William Roberts Lieutenant, James Holt Ensign and himself as Sergeant, and so marched to Wilmington under Colonel Needham Bryan of this County -- that he remained in service at Wilmington until the news reached them of the capture of Lord Cornwallis [sic, Cornwallis] at Little York [October 19, 1781], when soon after which his Company was discharged without any Certificates of service, to return to their homes. That although he acted as Sergeant in this Service -- he never received a

Commission as such. That Colonel Young was the officer then in Command at Wilmington under General Rutherford -- who he thinks was absent from there then. -- That whilst at Wilmington in said service, he had the smallpox uncommonly severe and was much of the time confined -- having nearly lost his life with it there.

The Declarant is not able at this remote period to say distinctly, the length of time, of his last draft under Captain Griffin, but he knows and remembers that it was only at Wilmington under said draft three months -- and that if they were bound for a longer term -- they were disbanded to go home on the news of the capture of Cornwallis, and were never afterwards called out. The Declarant states further that he has not before now made any formal application for a pension for the reasons that he understood -- that positive proof of service in the Army was necessary, and that he has not for years past known of any person living by whom such could be made, -- and for the further reason that he has not until lately stood in one of the bounties of his country to her Revolutionary Soldiers -- but that now, he has lived to see his little property waste away and leave him nearly dependent on the charity of his friends and community.

S/ William Bryan

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William Bryan", written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Sworn to and subscribed on the day and year above written before me.

S/ Jno Q. Adams, JP

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State of North Carolina Johnston County:

On this the 12th day of December 1845 personally appeared before the subscriber an acting Justice of the Peace, in and for said County, William Bryan who having been duly sworn according to law, doth upon his oath make the following statement supplemental to and in support of his Declaration heretofore made, in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress of the 7th of June 1832. That the family and name of Bryan was a very numerous, widely connected and influential, in this County long before the Revolutionary War, and that they so continued during the struggle for independence sharing largely in its support by their wealth and influence and that the same name and connection has continued dust distinguished nearly or quite up to this period though a great many have removed to distant parts and many have undergone a reverse of fortune. The County of Johnston was a large one embracing several of the adjacent present ones -- the Bryan Family were located then in the County before and during the Revolutionary War. One part of them lived near the middle, one family in the extreme North and now perhaps Wake County -- and one in the extreme South end, and the latter was the family and location of this Declarant. His father was named Lewis Bryan and raised only 3 sons of the following names and in this order of their ages viz.: Asa who was born in the date of 1750, John who was born in 1753 and William (this Deponent) who was born in 1760. The known distinction of his Family in the time of the Revolution, and up to this day, from branches of the other family before mentioned was "of Mill Creek."

This Declarant states, that all the three sons of his Father did service and much service in the time of the Revolution in behalf of freedom and independence as he doubts not many appear of record -- his Brother John was a man of Official distinction in this County for many years before he removed to Georgia where he died upwards of 30 years, and Asa, a Captain in the Revolution, died here upwards of 20 years ago -- leaving this Declarant the only living issue of his late father Lewis.

This Declarant moreover states on his oath aforesaid that he is now a man of large stature and that before he was 16 years of age he weighed 157 pounds but he was early riding in behalf of his Country -- his whole family belonging to the Whigs or Patriots.

That as heretofore stated in his formal Declaration aforesaid he served in the Militia of this State in the War of the Revolution at different periods for nearly or quite 12 months as well as his recollection now serves him. His first regular service was under Captain John Whitley, Hooks Lieutenant he thinks in the year 1778 drafted for 5 months -- Some time after the organization and equipment of the Company they were ordered and marched to South Carolina -- they were in the Battle at Briar Creek -- though this Deponent was not in the battle. That after the discharge of Captain Whitley's company -- This Declarant was often called out by Superior Officers whose names he does not now distinctly remember -- except that Colonel Needham Bryan was there County Commandant that these services were of short those frequent periods and that he was regularly detailed on such service by proper Officers. He has a distinct recollection of being called out on such service he thinks under Captain Raiford and marched some days down the Neuse River and encamped near Green's ferry -- then occupied by one Thomas Grey (a Lawyer) -- that he thinks this was in the year 1780 or 81 -- he knows it was in the latter part of the Summer -- as they had to forage their horses on the soft corn from Mr. Grey's field.

He cannot remember now, for what length he was then called out -- that he remembers he was always ready young and heedless -- That after this -- he thinks in the year 1781 he was drafted for a tour of five months (he thinks, although not certain) under Captain Edmond Griffin and they were soon ordered to Wilmington in this State, where they remained until the news of the capture of Cornwallis reached them as stated in my first declaration -- that on his return home he was paid only a part of what was promised in pay and subsistence and the bounty and pay was subsequently allowed in Certificates and often handed or drawn by our Officers. Again this Declarant has no way of ascertaining the aggregate length of time of his services but thinks they must have embraced twelve months or more and were so estimated when his Certificates were issued.

This Declarant states on his oath aforesaid -- that there was another William Bryan who has been dead some twenty years a longing to the family in the North end ("Swift Creek") of the County -- that this Declarant knew him well -- they were near the same age and that he thinks his said namesake did a tour of service in said War -- that he is confident that he was neither in Captain Whitley's nor and Captain Griffin's Company, nor and any command with this Affiant -- and that -- that, was the only William of Johnston County who could have rendered military service in the War of the Revolution decides and except this Affiant.

The Declarant states that in regard to his age it is perhaps impossible now to obtain proof of it -- that there was a family record of it -- his Father being a man [of] learning and education, but that the Book has either been destroyed or carried to distant parts so that he cannot obtain any benefit from it. This Declarant early obtained from it or his parents or [one or more indecipherable words, possibly 'prayer book']¹, -- that he was born on the 3rd of August 1760 -- that he knows of no living person who could corroborate this evidence, unless it be Nancy Hobbs now a very old woman in the adjoining County of Cumberland but who long lived near the parents of this Affiant and the widow of my late Brother Asa Bryan (Ann Bryan) who is near my

Wm. B. Bryan

own age and always lived near to him and who now lives also in Cumberland County but near to the Johnston line.

This declarant would further state that his omission to assert his rights heretofore has been mainly from his peculiar location -- thus -- he lives in the extreme end of the County in what may be said to be an obscure vicinity some 18 miles from a Post Office in his County and where there is not a newspaper taken in several miles of his reach in this County -- and that since this Affiant has lost his property and has become unable to go about he sees, or has seen, but very few who were able to inform him rightly of the provisions of Congress made for revolutionary services -- that in proof of this he has not been to his Court House but once in many years some 6 or 7 years ago, and as long (since then) before then-- that on one of these occasions he did apply to a lawyer to know if there was any chance to obtain anything from his Country -- and that the lawyer told him, -- that he thought not unless he had his Certificates of discharge or could prove his services by some other person; and that he knew you of no one who could prove such.

And this Affiant may truly say in addition and conclusion -- that he was not anxious to thrust himself upon the charity of his country and to call upon her for aid and assistance so long as his circumstances were easy -- but that now and within a few years past and more recently, his means have been almost all taken from him, by debts of security-ship and otherwise -- entirely unexpected by him, once in his life, and for a great period of his life.

From these and the foregoing causes this declarant is now compelled to ask the bounty provided by his Country which he hopes and prays may not be further withheld from one whose services in its behalf was never questioned by any person with whom he was acquainted.

Sworn to and Subscribed before me with his own proper hand
S/ John Q. Adams, JP S/ William Bryan

[p 16: Thomas Bagley, clerk of Court certifies that the veteran died in Johnston County February 11, 1846 leaving no widow but leaving the following named children to wit, Asa H. Bryan, Janet Bryan, Johannah Thornton, Joseph Bryant, Eliza Bryan & Alice Bryan are the only living children of William Bryan.]

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State of North Carolina Cumberland County

This day the 15th of December 1845 personally appeared before me an acting Justice of the Peace in and for the said County Anna Hobby who being duly sworn according to law deposed and saith that she is now in her ninety-seventh or eighth year. That she was born in the date of 1748 in the County of Johnston and State aforesaid and in the southern end of said County -- That she was married to her husband Ruben Hobby in the date of 1770 and then lived a neighbor to Lewis Bryan of Mile Creek in the County of Johnston aforesaid -- that she well knew all the family of the said Lewis Bryan, who had, and raised three sons named Asa, the eldest son, and who was near the same age of this Deponent -- the next son was named John, who was high Sheriff of said County and surveyor -- the next was William who is now living within 2 or 3 miles of where he was born -- and not more than five miles from where I now live though in different counties. This Deponent further saith that the aforesaid William Bryan is 10 or 12 years younger than she is herself and that she has no doubt but the said William is the only living child of his said parents -- this Deponent further saith that she well remembers that the aforesaid sons of Lewis Bryan were all out in service in the Revolutionary War -- that this, she only knows from

being a neighbor to them, and knowing there from that they were all months at a time under Capt officers in the service.

The deponent further saith that she has a distant recollection when William Bryan (heretofore described) returned home from service at Wilmington and that he was badly marked with smallpox, which he had while then absent under Capt. Griffin, who Capt. Griffin though she never saw (that she remembers) still she remembers him well by name and service. She further saith that there can be no doubt but the said William Bryan of Mile Creek, who is now, as she understands, applying for a pension – is the identical William who did service as aforesaid in the revolutionary war.

Sworn to and subscribed before me
S/ James Hodges, JP

S/ Anna Hobby, X her mark

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$26.66 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, and terminating February 11, 1846 when he died