

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters](#)

Pension Application of Humphrey Brooke S6763

VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 3 Feb 2013.

State of Virginia } SS.
and County of Frederick }

On this 7th day of August 1832, personally appeared, in open court, before the justices of Frederick county court, now sitting, Humphrey Brooke, a resident of the United States, in the county of Frederick, and State of Virginia, who was born the 12th day of September 1760; who being first 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:

The first time that this Applicant entered into the service of his country was, in the month of August in the year 1777, at a time when the British fleet entered, and was coming up the Chesapeake bay [to present Elkton MD, landing 25 Aug]. There were two companies of militia ordered out from the county of King William (which was the county of your applicant's nativity) the one was commanded by a Cap't. David Pannell, and the other by a Cap't. Liston Temple. We marched to Williamsburg, where we continued on duty, ready to meet the enemy, at whatever point they might land; but as they did not disembark their troops in any part of the State of Virginia, our two companies returned home, after having performed a tour of three months service. Note. Your applicant belonged to Cap't. Temple's company.

After this, towards the beginning of January 1778, your applicant went down to Williamsburg (the then seat of government of the State of Virginia) and applied to the Governor & Council for a commission in a regiment of State artillery, commanded by Col. Thomas Marshall, and rec'd. an appointment of a Captain lieutenancy in the said regiment; and then was ordered on the recruiting service, to recruit his quota of men as Cap't. lieutenant. But while your applicant was engaged in this service, it so happened that Gen'l. Nelson [Thomas Nelson; see <http://revwarapps.org/b121.pdf>] was raising a troop of volunteer horse, to consist chiefly of young gentlemen. Your applicant was so delighted with what he conceived to be so glorious an opportunity of distinguishing himself against the enemies of his country that he relinquished or resigned his appointment of Capt. lieutenant of artillery and joined Gen'l. Nelson's corps of volunteer horse. The officers which composed that corps (to the best of your applicant's recollection) were Gen'l. Nelson, Cap't. of the troop, Col. [Robert] Lawson 1st lieutenant, Col. Hugh Nelson, 2d lieutenant, and Col. George Nicholas, corn[et] and, as well as your applicant's memory serves him, Gen'l. John Smith [pension application S6114], now residing in the county of Frederick, was either a corporal or a sergeant, he is not certain which. This corps marched from Virginia, in the month of June or July 1778, and halted in Philadelphia, where, after remaining about ten days or a fortnight, it was finally disbanded by Congress, to the no small disappointment & chagrin of your applicant, and, no doubt, of many others. the corps being thus disbanded, your applicant did not return to Virginia with the rest of his companions, but proceeded on from Philadelphia, and joined the grand army then encamped at White Plains, in the State of New York, and annexed himself, as a volunteer, to Col. Charles Harrison's regiment of artillery, and remained with it until the army marched from White Plains to a place called Fredericksburg; where it went into winter quarters: and your applicant returned home about the end of November 1778.

The next tour of duty which your applicant performed (agreeably to the best of his recollection) was to repel an invasion of the State of Virginia, but Gen'l. Lesley [sic: Alexander Leslie, 15 Oct - 15 Nov 1780; but see below]. There were some militia called for from the county of King William (but how many is not now remembered), which your applicant joined under the command of

Cap't. Christopher Tompkins, and marched with them first down to Williamsburg, and from thence to Hampton; where your applicant remained until the invasion was over.

[Gen. Benedict] Arnold's invasion of Virginia was the next occasion which rendered it necessary to call out a considerable military force. Your applicant joined our army, commanded by Gen'l. Nelson, at a place called Holt's forge, in the month of January 1781. Your applicant continued with the American troops until the invasion was over; and indeed for some time after, having attached himself, as soon as our army arrived at Williamsburg, to a company, or part of a company, which was there, under the command of Cap't. Samuel Eddins, belonging to Harrison's regiment of artillery. Your applicant returned home some time in Ap'l. 1781

Your applicant begs leave further to relate, that in the month of May 1781, there was a company of militia, command by a Cap't. Richard Dabney, sent to the extreme end of King William county, to a place called West Point, where York river divides itself into two branches: But what were the motives of our executive in sending troops to that place, your applicant, at this time, is unable to say. He acted as a light horseman, and was principally engaged in scouring the country for some distance from the encampment, for the purpose of learning where the British were, who were then in some of the adjacent counties.

The detachment at West Point being at length discharged, your applicant proceeded with all imaginable expedition and joined the American army, commanded by the then Marquis Lafayette, at Dandridge's mills [on Goldmine Creek near Rockville; mid-June 1781], in the county of Hanover. The Marquis was then following, by slow and cautious steps, the British army under the command of Lord Cornwallis, who was then retreating, very leisurely, down to old Jamestown. Your applicant had been with this American army but a few days, before he was appointed to take the command, as Captain, of a company of militia, which came from the county of Fluvanna, and belonging to a regiment commanded by Col. Charles Dabney, who, as your applicant believes, had commanded a regiment of Virginia State troops in the Continental army. Your applicant continued in the command of this company until their term of service expired, which was in the month of August, but a little while before the siege of York. Your applicant, in consequence of having discharged his company, and there being no foe to encounter (the British army having crossed James river, after a short but severe action with the Americans, and taken possession of Norfolk, which was inaccessible to us by reason of their ships, if nothing else) he returned home: But there he had not been but a short time, when he heard of the arrival of the French fleet, under the command of the Count de Grass [sic: Comte de Grasse, 30 Aug], in the Chesapeake bay; and also of the coming on of Gen'l. Washington, with the main army, to lay siege to Yorktown, which the British, under Lord Cornwallis, had taken possession of and strongly fortified. Immediately, on this information, your applicant resorted to the army, which then lay, when he joined it, at Williamsburg. Your applicant was then without any command, but he was resolved to enter the ranks as a common soldier, rather than, for want of a command, not to be a sharer in that glorious struggle which was to put a final & glorious termination to the American war, and to insure our independence as a brave and free people among the nations of the earth. But a provision was soon made for your applicant, by an appointment of aid-de-camp to Col. Holt Richardson [Holt Richeson], who, in the absence of Gen'l. Lawson, during the whole of the siege, commanded his brigade as brigadier-general, until Cornwallis capitulated, and his army marched out as prisoners of war.

Your applicant, may it please the court, has thus endeavoured to give as concise & plain a narrative of his military services, during the war of the revolution, as he well can do, to preserve something like method & perspicuity in his communication. But it ought to be observed that in bringing his recollection to bear on objects which have nearly faded from his mind by lapse of time, and concerning which no note or memorandum was ever taken, from a supposition that they never would be either of use or benefit to him; it is not to be wondered at, that his statement is not so

particular & circumstantial as it would have been, had these occurrences (he means that of rewarding the old soldier for his services) been foreseen. He 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.

Questions propounded to Humphrey Brooke (an applicant under the pension act, which was passed by the Congress of the United States 7th June 1832) by the court of Frederick county, while in session.

Qu. 1. Where, and in what year, were you born?

An. I was born in the State of Virginia, and county of King William, on the 18th day of September

Qu. 2. Where were you living when called into service: where have you lived since the revolutionary war, and where do you now live?

An. When called into the service I was living in the county of King William: since which I have lived several years in the county of Hanover, and in the year 1813 I removed to the county of Frederick, where I continue to live now.

Qu. 3. Have you any record of your age; and if so where is it?

An. My age was recorded in my father's family bible, which never belonged to me; and which, if in existence, must be 140 or 150 years off.

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

An. My services were of various characters, as will be seen by my statement or declaration.

Q. 5. State the names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops where you served: such continental & militia regiments as you can recollect, and the general circumstances of your services.

An. These things have been all done as fully as lies in the power of your applicant, in the statement which he has already made.

Qu. 6. Did you ever receive a discharge from the service, &c?

An. I never did

Qu. 7. Did you ever receive a commission; and if so, by whom was it signed, and what has become of it?

An. When I was appointed a Capt lieutenant in a regiment of State artillery, I was ordered on the recruiting service, to recruit that quota of men which belonged to a Captain lieutenant's command; but before your applicant was called on to join his regiment, he had resigned his appointment, and of course never received a commission: and as to the rank of Captain which your applicant held in the army commanded by Gen'l. Lafayette, while Lord Cornwallis was traversing the State of Virginia, he begs to observe that, when militia were called out from various counties, and organized into regiments, the command of those regiments was entrusted to officers belonging to, or who had belonged to the Continental army; and as they served only for a very limited period, no commission, as your applicant believes, was thought necessary. It was on this principle that your applicant was appointed and served as Captain. When he arrived in camp, there was a company of Fluvanna militia without a Captain; to the command of which your applicant was appointed, from the circumstance of his having seen more service than ordinarily falls to the share of militia Captains in general

[The following appears to have been certified on 28 Sep 1832.]

And this declarant further makes oath, that the first tour of duty which he performed, of a military character, was in the year 1777; when the British fleet, with their army on board, commanded

by Gen'l. [William] Howe, entered the Chesapeak bay, in the month of August. He remained in the service, on that expedition, until the month of November; constituting a service of three months. The next rotation was his appointment to a Cap't. lieutenancy of artillery; which appointment, that he may be on the safe side, he will set down to have been made on the 10 day of January 1778. In this capacity he continued until the month of April was pretty far advanced, (say the 25) when, in a few days after, he sent in his resignation: immediately after which he may be considered as belonging to Gen'l. Nelson's corps, having engaged with him some days before he sent in his appointment in the artillery. That he may be within the bounds of truth he will fix the commencement of his entrance into that troop at the first of May 1778. This corps was disbanded by congress say the 15 of August following; which will make his continuance in that troop 3 months & 15 days. On the dissolution of the aforementioned corps he joined the grand army, and continued as a volunteer, in Harrison's regiment of artillery until some time in November, and arrived at home the 20; making a tour of 3 months & 5 days in that service. The next service which he performed was, when a company of militia was ordered down to Hampton. In a former declaration your declarant mentioned that it was to repel Leslie's invasion; but on looking into Marshall's life of Washington, he finds that it was Matthews' [Gen Edward Mathew's and Commodore George Collier's] invasion instead of Leslie's. As this was a short invasion, (that he may be sure), let that be set down at 20 days. This invasion commenced & ended in the month of May 1779. Arnold's invasion comes next in order. This Declarant joined the army under Gen'l. Nelson, at a place called Holt's forge, in the county of New Kent, either on the 8, 9 or 10 of January in the year 1781; however set it down on the 10; and continued in service until some time in April – say the 15: making a tour of at least 3 months & 5 days. However, for truth's sake, set it down at 3 months. The next service was in the month of May, in the same year, when a company of militia was called out, under the command of a Cap't. Dabney, to take post at West Point, in the county of King William, where he remained in the capacity of a light-horseman, until early in June. Set that down at one month. This declarant there joined the American army, commanded by the Marquis Lafayette, in the forepart of June (say 8 or 9 of June 1781) and was appointed within 2 or 3 days afterwards to the command of the company; in which command he continued until the time of service of his company expired, which, to be within bounds, may be set down at 2 months. This declarant then acted in the capacity of aid-de-camp in Lawson's brigade, commanded by Col. Richardson, as brigadier general, from the 28 of September, when the army under Washington moved down to Yorktown; and continued in the character of an aid until the capitulation, which was on the 18th [sic: 19th] of October 1781; and as this declarant continued in camp for several days after the capitulation, your declarant thinks that that service may be fairly set down at a month.

It will now I hope be seen, my good Sir, that I have been as explicit & particular in this declaration as could reasonably have been expected of me, when the great lapse of time (being upwards of fifty years since these things happened) is taken into consideration. In drawing off this present declaration I have been in some measure assisted by Mashall's history of the life of Washington, w'ch. for conscience sake, and that I might be as correct and as exact as possible I borrowed, that I might be set right wherever I was in error, which indeed I found myself to be in, in one or two instances in statements of no very great importance; but which I have, with much satisfaction corrected; for I wish nothing to be set down in my declaration but what is as consonant to the truth as the nature of the case will admit of. That the whole may be presented to you in one view, I have set them down as they occurred in a table which you will see below. Let me hear from you as soon as you possibly can; and you will greatly oblige

Yours very respectfully/ [signed] H Brooke

Tours	Months	days	
1.....	3....	0	Private
2.....	3... 25		Cap't. Lieutenant
3.....	3... 15		Private
4.....	3.... 5		ditto
5.....	0... 20		ditto
6.....	3.... 0		ditto
7.....	1.... 0		ditto
8.....	2.... 0		Cap't.
9.....	<u>1....</u>	<u>0</u>	Aid
Total...	21....	5	

NOTE: On 15 Aug 1832 Robert P. Brooke stated that he had frequently heard Humphrey Brooke speak of his services.