

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Thomas Lewis S7138

VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 6 Oct 2014.

State of Virginia Rockingham County to wit,

On this 20th day of August in the year 1832, personally appeared in open Court, before Jacob D. Williamson, David Keeton, Reuben Moore and Augustus Waterman, Justices of the Court of the County of Rockingham now sitting, Thomas Lewis Sr. a resident of the said County in the state of Virginia aged upwards of 72 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. (to wit)

I Thomas Lewis Sen'r. of the County of Rockingham in the State of Virginia do make the following declaration,

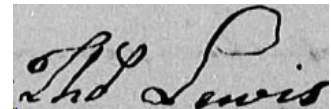
I was born in this county where I now live, then a part of Augusta County, and according to the family record (copy of which is in the family Bible of my brother the late Charles Lewis, with whose family I live, the original being taken I believe by the family of my brother Benjamin to the State of Missouri) I was born on the 26 of January 1760. I served five tours of militia service during the war of the revolution, or at least I had credit for the service of five tours, being sometimes discharged sooner than the expiration of the three months for which I entered, as will be more fully explained herein-after. And in addition to those tours I was drafted in 1778 (I believe it was) to serve eighteen months in the regular service, & then a substitute was hired for me without my knowledge or desire, who took my place in that service. – and each time I entered the service a volunteer.

I entered the militia service of the United States for the first time in the month of September 1776, under Captain William Nall of this (then Augusta) County and served three months in an expedition in the North western part of the State against the Indians, who had either in the Spring or Summer of that year done some mischief in those parts. The greater part of the time we were stationed in a fort then called West Falls' fort (from the name of the owner of the land [either Jacob Westfall's Fort near present Beverly or George Westfall's Fort on Mill Creek, both in Randolph County WV]), & a part of the time in Ty garts valley [sic: Tygart Valley in the same county]. Of those with whom I then served I know only of two who are now living, vz Robert Harnsberger of Augusta and John Pence Sen'r [pension application W5511] of this county whose deposition is hereto annexed. during that expedition no officer of the Regular army was with us, but soon after, a company of Regulars under Capt. Michael Bowyer was for a short time stationed in Tygarts valley. My second tour was in the year 1780 in a company commanded by Col then Captain John Rush [R9090] of this county whose affidavit is hereto annexed. I do not positively recollect the time we entered the service, but think it was in the month of October. I remember that we were discharged in the month of December, some short time before the expiration of three months. We were principally employed or encamped near Richmond, and were under the command of Colonel Sampson Matthews [Sampson Mathews] of Augusta County. some time in the month of December (there being then no enemy in that part of the country, and our service nearly expired) we were discharged, at "Bacon Branch" near Richmond. In the spring of the year 1781 I again entered the service under the command of the late Colonel (then) Captain George Huston of this county and marched (furnishing our own horses, arms, & provisions) to the South branches of the Potomac, for the purpose of breaking up an establishment of Tories (or Royalists) attempted to be made by a certain General Claypoole whose head quarters were at Cape Capon [sic: John Claypoole at Cacapon in present Hampshire County WV]. We were under the command of Colo Benj Harrison [Benjamin Harrison] of this county. Gen'l. Isaac Zane was also engaged in this expedition. The establishment was entirely broken up and destroyed. In this tour I think I was not in service more than a month – perhaps not quite so long, but in consequence of our complete success we were discharged and had a credit for a tour of duty. – Early in the month of June in the same year I again went into the service as an Ensign in a company under the before mentioned Capt. George Huston. – In this tour I was actively engaged the

whole time, and mostly in very fatiguing service, – principally performed in the country round about Williamsburg, and in that part of the state. In this tour I was in two engagements with the British. The first was called the battle of Hotwater near a creek some fifteen or 20 miles above Williamsburg [sic: Battle of Hot Water or Spencer's Ordinary, 6 miles NW of Williamsburg, 26 Jun 1781]. The Battle (or skirmish) was between a Brigade of Militia under the command of Colo. John Willis, and a part of the British Army. – This Brigade was attached to the Army under the Marquis LaFayette, and Col. Willis was an officer in the Regular service, and being at that time (I believe) a supernumerary, had temporarily the command of the militia Brigade.

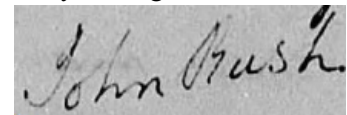
The other engagement was at JamesTown [Battle of Green Springs Plantation, 6 Jul 1781], between the army under La Fayette, and the British. In this affair Gen'l. [Anthony] Wayne with his Brigade made a charge with the bayonet upon the British line, and being repulsed, his retreat was covered by our brigade under Col Willis, – here Colo. Wm. Bowyer [William Bowyer] of Staunton was taken prisoner by the British. – After serving three months, I was discharged at a place called 'Bottoms bridge' some 15 miles below Richmond [sic: on Chickahominy River 10 mi E of Richmond]. the Regiment in which I served this tour was commanded by a Col. McClary [probably John McCreery] of Augusta, – the Brigade was (as above stated) commanded by Colo. John Willis for a part of the time, who was succeeded in the command by General William Campbell, of Virginia, and formed a part of the army under La Fayette. – Soon after my return home, I received the appointment of Lieutenant, and as such, immediately volunteered my services, and again entered the service in the month of September, '81. and was appointed by Col Daniel Smith the adjutant of this Regiment. I joined the army before Yorktown, – but in consequence of the desertion and great failure of the militia to enter the service into which they had been drafted there was a great many supernumerary officers, and I being only a Junior Lieutenant (having been only appointed a very short time before) was discharged as a supernumerary and returned home with Maj Gawen Hamilton and Capt. Sei Harrison [Josiah Harrison] of this county, soon after the commencement of the siege of York [28 Sep 1781]. I was also in the year 1778. drafted into the regular service for 18 months, and having made the necessary preparations I went to Col Dan'l. Smith [Daniel Smith], (the intimate friend of my father) for the purpose of entering into the service, when I found that Colonel Smith had hired a substitute who took my place. – I was perfectly willing to have entered into service as I had been assured by Col [Thomas] Posey (with whom I was well acquainted) that he certainly would procure for me a Commission in the regular service. – I do not remember that I ever received (or demanded) any written discharge from the service. – nor did I ever after my first tour demand or receive any pay for my services. – My first Commission was signed by Mr. [Thomas] Jefferson I think, – the last perhaps by Gov'r. [Thomas] Nelson, though I am not positive who they were signed by, however, after the close of the war I resigned my commission into the hands of Col Harrison who was then the Colonel of the Regiment to which I belonged.

And I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to any pension or annuity except the present, and declare that my name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state, nor have I ever before applied to the government for any aid whatsoever. – Having the testimony of Col Rush, and John Pence Sen'r. [not transcribed because it repeats Lewis's declaration] hereto annexed to substantiate my declaration I deem it hardly necessary to refer to another person to testify to my character, or their belief of my services in the revolution, but would mention the names of Judge Smith, – Dr. Harrison – Colo Maury – Geo Gilmore esq'r. – Gen'l. Porterfield of Augusta, or refer to any respectable citizen in my neighborhood. – Given under my hand this 11 day of August 1832.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Thd Lewis". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

I, John Rush, of the county of Rockingham in the State of Virginia do hereby certify that I am well acquainted with Thomas Lewis Sen'r. of this county, who hath made the foregoing declaration, and I have known him intimately since he was a small boy. I have carefully examined the statement above

made, and have a distinct recollection of most of the facts therein stated and have full confidence in the correctness of his whole statement. I well remember that at an early age he served a tour under Captain William Nall against the Indians in the North Western part of this state. I was then a Captain & Mr. Lewis lived in my company bounds and his name was on my muster roll. I also know that he served in Captain Hustans company in the expedition against the Tories on the South Branch of the Potomac which broke up Gen'l. Claypoole's establishment. I was myself in that expedition as a volunteer (private) under Huston, and recollect some anecdotes, of occurrences in which Mr. Lewis was concerned. I also distinctly recollect of his serving a tour in '81 as a Commissioned Officer in a company commanded by Capt. Huston – when he went as such into the service, I lent him my sword. I am not positive as to his rank, whether it was Ensign or Lieutenant, – and during that campaign I went into the service myself as the Captain of a company of Volunteers Mounted Infantry for 20 days, and I remember to have frequently met with Mr. Lewis in the service, and particularly in the battles at Hotwater, and James Town. I cannot say that I do distinctly recollect of his having been a member of my company in the tour which I served in '80 near Richmond, but I have not a doubt that such is the fact. His answers to all my questions concerning things that took place in the company are so correct, and so many things are brought to my mind that I had before forgotten that I do now remember, – so may particular circumstances occurring at different times & places, relating to persons & things, and which it would be impossible for one to know and relate so correctly & minutes, who had not been the whole time with us, would satisfy my mind, even if I had had a doubt of his statement. – but my long acquaintance with him, & his unquestionable character for truth and integrity command my most implicit confidence in the correctness of his statements. Nor do I now remember who was appointed the adjutant by Colo Smith, but I do distinctly remember that Mr Lewis was considered one of our best and most active officers, & perhaps the very best acquainted with military discipline of any other in this part of the country, at that time, he was always considered a very brave man. Given under my hand this 11 day of August 1832.

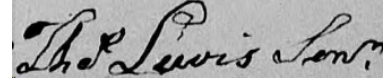


Rockingham County }
 State of Virginia } Sc

Personally appeared before me the undersigned a Justice of the peace in & for Rockingham County in the State of Virginia Thomas Lewis Sen'r. of the said county who being first duly sworn, deposeth and saith, that by reason of old age and the consequent loss of memory he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of time of his service, but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than the periods below mentioned, and in the following grades.

“For six and half months I served as a Private – For three months I served as an Ensign – and for twenty days as a Lieutenant & adjutant. And for this service I claim a Pension. The service was as follows – as a private under Capt. Nall 3 months against the Indians in 1776 under Capt. Rush 2½ months near Richmond, in 1780 – under Capt. Huston 20 days against the Tories on South Branch of Potomac in 1781 – and also at least 10 days in guarding a body of Prisoners from this County to Woodstock in Shenandoah County. (This service I omitted to mention in my former declaration. I cannot recollect the date when it was performed, but I well remember that the Prisoners were British & Tories, taken at Kings Mountain [7 Oct 1780; see endnote]. Some of them were sick, which caused us to be longer in that service than we should probably have otherwise been. One of them died on the road. My service as Ensign was 3 months under Capt. Geo Huston in 1781 in the country round about Williamsburg & York & 20 days as a Lieutenant & adjutant in the fall of 1781. I was, (for the reason stated in my declaration of August last) discharged as a Supernumerary on joining the army at the Siege of York. – for further details I beg leave to refer to my declaration of 11 August last, – herewith returned, (as I hope) duly authenticated

Given under my hand this 23 Nov'r. 1832.
Sworn to & subscribed this 23 Nov'r. 1832
before me S. H. Lewis

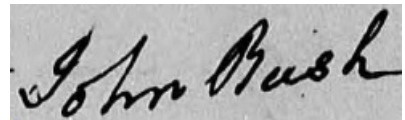


Personally appeared before me a Justice of the peace for Rockingham County John Pence Sen'r. of the said county, who being duly sworn deposeth & saith as follows.

I John Pence Sen'r. of Rockingham in Virginia do hereby certify that I have this day examined the amended declaration of Thos. Lewis Sen'r. hereto annexed, and I believe the same to be correct. I know of his serving three months in 1776 under Capt Nall against the Indians – in 1780 under Capt. Rush at least two & a half months, and I also know that he went under Capt. Geo Huston against the Tories on South Branch in the early part of the summer in 1781 (I believe it was). I know that he served as a Commissioned Officer under Huston in 1781 in the country about Williamsburg. I believe that he served three months as he states, (I was twenty days in the service at the time under Capt. Rush, & Mr. Lewis was in the service before I entered, & I left him in it, when I was discharged). I also know that he was a private in guarding the British Prisoners through this county & to Woodstock in Shenandoah County. I was with them & think that we were at least [illegible] days in the service. I remember the facts which he mentions of the sickness of some, & the death of one of the prisoners – but I do not remember the date, except that it was in the fall of the year. as to the dates I cannot swear positively, but of the services I am positive. For details I refer to my testimony taken in open court in August last & dated 11 August 1832. Given this 23 Nov'r. 1832

Personally appeared before me a Justice as aforesaid John Rush Sr. who being duly sworn, deposeth & saith, as follows. I John Rush Sen'r. of Rockingham county in the state of Virginia, do hereby certify That I have examined the amended Declaration of Thomas Lewis Sen'r. hereto annexed and I do know, that most of the facts therein stated, are true, and I believe that his whole statement is true. I [two illegible words] to refer for particulars to my certificate subscribed and sworn to by me on the 11th day of August last, which is to the best of recollection correct, except that (on the 5th page & 13th line from the top) the words “mounted Infantry” are inter lined, instead of “mounted riflemen.”

Sworn to & subscribed before me
this date above written S. H. Lewis



NOTE: Except for Maj. Patrick Ferguson, who was killed, none of the enemy soldiers at the Battle of Kings Mountain was British.