

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Richard Nichols S7271

PA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

Commonwealth of Virginia Wood County Ss

On this 21st day of November 1832 personally appeared in open Court before the Justices of Wood County now setting Richard Nickols a resident of Wood County and State of Virginia aged seventy three years and upwards 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 pass'd June 7th 1832

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named Officers and served as herein stated.

That in the year 1775 he resided about nine miles from Pittsburg Pennsylvania. I was drafted in the Militia of said State, that I went into actual service under Capt Josiah Ricketts of said State his Lieut. was Alex'r McDone [Alexander McDone] the Col. of our regiment was George Vanlangaham I was stationed at Raccoon Creek – Washington County [now Beaver County] in said state of Pennsylvania at a Mill said to belong to our Captain, where I remained three months and was then discharged and came home. That in 1776 my Brother older than myself was drafted. I took his place and served one month on Grants Hill near Pittsburg Pa. under one Col. Robt. Campbel [sic: Robert Campbell] who resided in Pittsburg the Capt's name I do not remember, I think Crooks was his name. In the year 1777 I again entered the service as a Volunteer under Capt Joseph Cissna of the Pennsylvania Militia or Spies and was a part of the time stationary, and a greater part of the time was scouting with differant parties. When stationed I was generally 12 miles below Pittsburg on the Ohio River at the mouth of Moncures Run [sic: Montour Run] I was eight months in this service under said Capt Cissna. In the same year I served one month more under the same Capt stationed at the same place as above stated. In the year 1778 I was hired as a substitute and served one month at the same station under one Capt James Wright. my next service was instead of my Brother who was draft'd in the year 1778. I marched from Pittsburg to some where on the head water of the Muskingum River above the mouth of White woman at Tuskarawra Creek [sic: Tuscarawas River near Bolivar OH] the place was then call'd fort Lawrence [sic: Fort Laurens, constructed late 1778. My Col. was Wm Crawford [William Crawford] and my Capt James Wright under whom I had before served and I was in this service Three months. In 1780 [sic] I again hired myself as a substitute for another man, whose name I do not recollect, and served better than two months Col. Broadhead [sic: Daniel Brodhead] was our Commander. my Capt name was James Ross. I march'd from Pittsburg up the Allegany river [sic: Allegheny River to the Munsey Indian towns; 11 Aug 1779], to an Indian Town, then called Black Mingo and afterwards returned to Pittsburg and rec'd my discharge. In all the times I have enumerated I received my discharge from the proper Officers. But not appreciating there value I took no care of them and they are lost – I was born in Dumfries Pr. Wm. [Prince William] County Virginia in the year 1759 – I have no record of my age, and have to speak as I was informed by my parents – I have no recollection of any regular [Continental] Officers unless Col Broadhead was one as I understood he had been. And while I was out under Col Crawford as above stated Gen'l. [Lachlan] McIntosh was our General. I think he might have been a regular Officer as I understood he came from another state – I was never in any regular battle but on one occasion volunteered under Capt Joseph Cissna and went to Smoky Island and had a brush with some Indians, of which we killed seven and some few escaped I do not know of any person now living that actually knew of my service having resided in Wood County Va. for the last thirty two years, I am known to the most of the Citizens in the upper end of this County vizt John A Kennaird, James Henderson Burr Triplett, &c with Reece Woolf, D. B. Spencer and Abm Samuels. There is no regular clergyman living in my neighbourhood or in the county that I know of. I hereby relinquish every claim what ever to a pension or annuity except the present and declare that my name is not on the Pension Roll of any state whatever.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid Richard Nichols

[Certified by Reece Woolf, Abraham Samuels, and D. B. Spencer. James Henderson certified that he had heard Nichols speak of his services long before passage of the pension act.]

[On 20 May 1833 Nichols was issued a certificate for a pension of \$63.33 per year for 19 months service.]

[The following report is by US District Attorney Washington G. Singleton who investigated hundreds of pension applications from present West Virginia. For details see my appendix to the pension application of David W. Sleeth S6111. Singleton wrote on this report "Fraud."]

Richard Nicholas served 19 mo. draws \$126.66 [sic]

I the undersigned Richard Nicholas in pursuance of the requisition of the Secretary of war give narative following of my age and Revolutionary service to Wit. I was born in the year 1759.

on the 5th day of July 1776 I attended a festival at Pittsburg in honour of the Declaration of Independance [see endnote], and immediately thereafter I was drafted in the neighbourhood of Pittsburg for one month and served under Capt. Rooks at Pittsburg. Genl [Edward] Hand commanded the station – my company was stationed at Grants Hill near Pittsburg.

In the year 1778 I substituted in my brothers volunteer place for three months. I joined McIntoshes campaign at Pittsburg [spring 1778]. Right was my captain. Genl. McIntosh marched his army across the country to the mouth of Big Beaver & there built a garrison or Fort [Fort McIntosh at present Beaver PA, begun Sep 1778]. from there the army was marched to Tuscarahas and at that place built Fort Laurence, it then returned to Fort McIntosh at which place my tour of 3 mos expired and I was discharged.

In the year 1779 I served one month at Moncures Bottoms [Montours Bottom near present Coraopolis] 12 miles below Pittsburg under Capt Right. there was about 25 or 30 men at this station. Some four or five families who had farms in the neighbourhood lived in the Fort. – in this time I was a substitute but cant recollect for whom.

In the year 1780 I substituted in the place of Campbell and marched from Pittsburg under Capt. Ross up the allegany to the Munshee towns. Genl. Broadhead commanded the expedition. the Indian towns were burnt, thier corn destroyed and some Indians were killed. I was in this service forty days that being the time for which I hired as a substitute.

the forgoing comprises all the service I done except some little scouting in short tours – in one of these tours I was out six weeks

all the service I done was as a substitute except one month. I cant tell why it was that I was not drafted as others were. I did not prove my services [see endnote]. I know of no living witness by whom I could have proved them. H. L. Prentiss wrote my Declaration. I told him the same in substance I now tell. In witness that the forgoing statement contains the truth I hereto subscribe my name Dec'r. 12 1834

Witness/ W. G Singleton

Richard Nicholas

A true copy from original notes.

W. G Singleton/ Dec'r 14 1834

NOTES:

News of the signing of the Declaration of Independence would, of course, not have reached Pittsburgh the day after.

The word "Drop" is written on the certificate, indicating that Nichols was dropped from the pension roll. The probable reason is that in his narrative to Singleton Nichols did not include all the service claimed in his application. In addition, Singleton had decided that service against Indians on the frontier was not actually military.

Because few records of militia service existed, regulations for administering the pension act of 1832 require as proof only a plausible declaration of service and certification by two neighbors of the applicant's character for veracity and reputation as a soldier of the Revolution.