

## Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of John Smith S7540

f14NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

2/24/11: rev'd 4/29/21

[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' or 'undeciphered' 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 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention. Researchers should not rely solely on the transcripts but should review the originals for themselves. These transcripts are intended as an aid to research, not to be used in lieu thereof.]

State of North Carolina Sampson County }

On this the 17th day of November A.D. 1832 personally appeared before me Joseph Carroll one of the acting Justices of the Peace in & for the County John Smith a resident of said County of Sampson in the State of North Carolina aged eighty two years the first of October last, 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 under the following named officers & served as herein stated.

1. Under Captain Richard Clinton, Patrick Stewart Lieutenant, that his company did not belong to any Regiment, as this applicant can recollect, that he entered in the year 1775 but don't know the day or with certainty the month thinks it was in November or December, and left about the last of February 1776, that he engaged for three months as a minute man, that he was, what was then called, an enlisted soldier, or perhaps more properly he was a volunteer, that he resided in Duplin County (now Sampson) when he entered the service; that he was in the battle at Moore's Creek Bridge<sup>1</sup> in New Hanover County, in which McLeod [Lt. Col. Donald McLeod] an officer of the Tories was killed and 8 or 10 others of the enemy, that the Tories were defeated and General McDonald [Donald MacDonald] their commander taken prisoner, that his company rendezvoused at Duplin Old Court House, and that he joined them a little below at Zebedee Hollingsworth's and marched from thence to Wilmington North Carolina, from thence to a place called old Brunswick in Brunswick County, thence back to Wilmington, and while there an express came, ordering his company up to Moore's Creek Bridge, to which place he then marched where he arrived the day before the battle, and assisted in making entrenchments for defense, thence he marched back to Wilmington where he remained till he was discharged having served out the three months for which he engaged, that he has no documentary evidence and knows of no person whose can testify to his service in this tour.

2. Under the command of General Ashe [John Ashe] Captain Hardy Holmes, Lieutenant John Holmes, that he cannot recollect the name of his Colonel, but he can the favour of the man, that he cannot remember the time he entered this term but believes it was in September or October 1778; that he was drafted for five months, that about five or six days before the termination of the five months tour, he was taken prisoner at the battle of Briar Creek,<sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> February 27, 1776 [http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution\\_battle\\_of\\_moores\\_creek.html](http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_battle_of_moores_creek.html)

<sup>2</sup> March 3, 1779 <http://www.myrevolutionarywar.com/battles/790304-briar-creek/>

guarded with other prisoners, about eighty in number, to Savannah Court House, thence he was conducted to a place called Cockspur, and put on board a ship, that he was told the ship was distant eight miles from shore in one direction and six in the other, that eighty prisoners were put on board said ship, that he was there confined about five and a half months without being on land but once, that a British recruiting officer occasionally came on board to enlist some of the prisoners, in which he succeeded sometimes in getting one, sometimes two and at most three, that once he came aboard he got twenty men of the prisoners to exchange for British prisoners, that in calling over the list, this applicant was the twentieth man; that they were guarded to Savannah and there confined eight or ten days, that it was said an exchange of prisoners could not be made and that the twenty American prisoners must be remanded to the ship, at this applicant then determined to make his escape or lose his life in the attempt, rather than suffer any longer, the confinement, the starvation and the intolerable filthiness and exposure which he had endured while on board before, that one night while he was confined in Savannah Court House, this applicant and six others escaped by the door as someone was passing in, that they succeeded in getting by all the sentries, but the main guard hailed them that they lay still a while and fortunately made their escape, that this applicant arrived at home about the last of October or first of November 1779, having been absent about thirteen months & ten days that it was about the 17th of March he was put on board the prisoners ship aforesaid, that he was in the battle at Briar Creek in Georgia in which the Americans under General Ashe were surprised and defeated, that he cannot say with certainty who commanded the enemy but thinks Lord William Campbell was one of their officers, that he rendezvoused under Captain Holmes<sup>3</sup> at Elizabeth Town [Elizabethtown] Bladen County and marched into South Carolina and through a part thereof across Savannah River into Georgia, to Briar Creek where he was taken prisoner as aforesaid, that he served with no Continental regiments or companies as he knows of but thinks there were a few regulars at Briar Creek, that the regular officers he knew were General Lincoln [Benjamin Lincoln], Daniel Williams, Joseph Rhodes & Curtis Ivey; that he thinks his colonel's name was Alston since he has come to reflect more about it, that he has no documentary evidence as he received no discharge from this tour, and that he knows of no person who can testify to his service in this term, This applicant thinks the time of his imprisonment ought to be taken into computation as his sufferings were intense & his exposure there he believes has brought upon him much affliction and sickness.

3. After his return from Savannah, he entered again under the command of Captain David Dodd, King Vann Lieutenant; the company belonged to a Regiment commanded by Colonel James Kenan he is not certain as to the time but thinks it was in the fall of 1780 and left this tour at the end of three months, that he was a volunteer light horsemen, that he volunteered to keep from being drafted, that it was a three months tour; that he was in a battle on the Brown Marsh<sup>4</sup> in Bladen County at Baldwin's, that the enemy having the advantage in point of position, being protected behind the house and being superior in numbers, the Americans retreated having one man wounded & a horse killed, that his marches this tour were in Duplin and Bladen Counties that he has no documentary evidence and knows of no person whose testimony he can

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<sup>3</sup> Capt. Hardy Holmes' company was attached to the Regiment commanded by Lt. Col. Archibald Lytle at the battle of Briar Creek.

<sup>4</sup> I think it likely the Veteran is describing the action that occurred in October 1780 at Myhand's Bridge in present day Sampson County [http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution\\_myhands\\_bridge.html](http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_myhands_bridge.html) The Veteran MAY, however, be referring to the action which took place in September 1781 at Brown Marsh, but the facts he describes do not match what we think we know about that action. [http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution\\_brown\\_marsh.html](http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/revolution_brown_marsh.html).

procure to testify to his service in this Tour.

4. Again under the command of David Dodd Captain, Samuel Elkins he thinks was Lieutenant, subject to the control of Colonel James Kenan, in the fall he thinks of 1781 and it was more than three months from the time he entered this tour till he left it, that he did not engage to serve any specified period, that his services were not continual, but was called out upon emergencies and would serve a week or a fortnight at a time and return home, that part of the company would continue in service till relieved by another part and so on in turns, that his services, taken together, in the excursions would, in his belief amount at the lowest estimate to three months, that he was in pursuit of the Tories to prevent them from committing depredations and injuring the inhabitants, that he was a volunteer light horsemen, that he was in no battle, but fired, at the Tories on several occasions, that four of them were killed over Cohara [sic, Coharie] in the neighborhood of Captain she Williams's [sic, probably a reference to John "Shay" Williams] that he his marches were confined for the most part if not entirely to Duplin County, that he has no documentary evidence and knows of no person by whom he can prove this service. Questions propounded to John Smith the aforesaid applicant with his answers thereto.

1<sup>st</sup> Where and in what year were you born?

Ans. I was born beyond Roanoke [River] in Bertie County in the year 1750.

2<sup>nd</sup> Have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

Ans. I have, in my Bible, born October 1st 1750.

3<sup>rd</sup> Where were you living when called into service: where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live?

Ans. In Duplin County (now Sampson) near where I now live, and I've lived on the same plantation ever since the Revolutionary war.

4<sup>th</sup> How were you called into service; were you drafted; did you volunteer or were you a substitute, and if in substitute, for whom?

Ans. I volunteered every tour but the one I served under General Ashe when I was drafted.

5<sup>th</sup> State the names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops when you served, such Continental and militia regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service.

Ans. I think there were some regular officers with us at Briar Creek but don't recollect their names I can't say that I saw any Continental regiments. The militia regiments I remember were one commanded by Colonel Caswell, one by Colonel James Kenan, and I think there were some regiments under General Ashe in South Carolina. The general circumstances of my service for the most part are stated in the foregoing declaration. My memory is bad and I've forgotten a great deal I did know.

6<sup>th</sup> Did you ever receive a discharge from the service, and if so, by whom was it given and what has become of it?

Ans. I don't think I ever received a written discharge.

7<sup>th</sup> State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighborhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief in your services as a soldier in the revolution.

Ans. William Kirby, Joseph Carroll, Edward C Gavin, John Chestnutt, William Faison, John Lamb, John Bryan, Henry Hollingsworth Junior

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and he declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any State.

Sworn to and subscribed the day & year aforesaid.

Test: S/ Joseph Carroll, JP

S/ John Smith, X his mark

[Peter Carlton, a clergyman of Duplin County, and Edward C Gavin gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$68.90 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for 16 months and 10 days service as a private in the infantry and 3 months service in the Cavalry.]