

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of William Smith S7555

fn25NC

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. Also, the handwriting of the original scribes often lends itself to varying interpretations. Users of this database are urged to view the original and to make their own decision as to how to decipher what the original scribe actually wrote. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. Folks are free to make non-commercial use this transcript in any manner they may see fit, but please extend the courtesy of acknowledging the transcriber—besides, if it turns out the transcript contains mistakes, the resulting embarrassment will fall on the transcriber. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading fails to catch all misinterpretations. I welcome and encourage folks to call those and any other errors to my attention.]

North Carolina Guilford County

Be it known that on this 12th day of January A.D. 1833 personally appeared before me Marshall McLean an acting Justice in and for the County of Guilford William Smith resident in the County and State aforesaid aged seventy-nine years, 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 the 7th 1832.

That he served under the following named officers and as is herein after stated – to wit:

That he was born in Pennsylvania but knows not in what County on the first day of December A.D. 1853 [sic, 1753] as always stated to him by his father who had it written in his family Bible which she wants copied into his own family Bible – that his father moved when he was about three years of age to North Carolina upper part of Orange County now Guilford County where he has lived ever since – that from the commencement of the revolutionary war the citizens of his section of North Carolina were divided into two parties – the Whig and the Tory – that he joined the Whigs the friends of freedom, liberty and independence and served his Country from '75 to 1781 sometimes at home a few days and again out on service sometimes days sometimes weeks and sometimes months, at a time but from the dangers to which his party was constantly exposed and from the circumstances of his joining at an early period of the war, many of his neighbors, who formed themselves into a company called minute man – he stood constantly on the defensive both when out service under the immediate command of his Officers, and when at home – that from old age and a very great failure of his memory he is unable to give any correct a history of his services so as to point out all the tours he when they were made or the time he spent in performing each – that in or about the summer of 1775 it was rumored in his neighborhood that the Tories had risen down in the County of Orange and had committed depredations on Whigs when the people of the Alamance (his own) neighborhood met together to consult what it would be best for them to do – that it was resolved by the meeting to send some two to ascertain whether the report was true: and that he and one Jesse Macombs [sic, Jesse McCombs?] volunteered and went and found that the Tories were in arms and had wounded in a skirmish one William Dent Esqr. a Whig that they returned immediately and brought to their friends this intelligence when they formed themselves into a company and marched with this company commanded by Lieutenant Wiley, Captain Forbis, Colonel Paisley and Colonel

Gillespie and brought away said Dent who was severely wounded and placed him under the care of Doctor Agnew, and returned after the Tories, took some prisoners and dispersed the balance – that he marched with Captain Forbis guarding these prisoners to Martinsville Guilford Old Courthouse where they were dismissed on a promise to be peaceable citizens in the future – that he cannot tell the length of this trip that after this he was out Tour after tour down into Randolph County after the Tories and out from home in various other sections which he cannot now recollect and continued with us to serve until about '77 when he was marched down to Fayetteville after the Scotch Tories and continued some weeks scouring the Raft Swamps, took many prisoners and lodged them in jail at Cross Creek now Fayetteville – that in this tour he was commanded by Captain Forbis & Colonel Paisley – that he cannot recollect the time he spent in this tour but must have been gone towards two months. That from this time until the summer of 1780 he continued to serve under Captain Forbis and Colonel Paisley in various short trips down into Randolph County and down into Scotch Country after the Tories who were often headed by one Colonel Fanning [David Fanning], who always escaped us although his company were often successful in catching some of his men – that a description or history of these tours he cannot safely or satisfactorily give but continued in them all many months. That he recollects a tour of some months which he made in the summer and fall of 1780 4 South Carolina after the British, commanded [I] his aforesaid Captain Forbis & Colonel Paisley – that there were other companies marched from his own County other than those one in which he served and recollects of one commanded by Captain McAdoo – that he joined other troops from other sections of North Carolina at Salisbury North Carolina that he marched thence further South and encamped at a place called New Providence not far from a Creek called Waxsaw, that a Tory was taken prisoner by a party set out; but that he was not sent. That the troops at New Providence were commanded by Colonel Paisley, Colonel Armstrong, General Davidson, General Rutherford and others whose names he has now forgotten – that the Americans were forced on account of the approach of a superior force of British to retreat North – that after they had marched through Charlotte there took place a slight skirmish between the Americans and the British cavalry – that when this retreat commenced his Captain (Forbis) continued his march home where he arrived late in the fall – that he again marched under his Captain Forbis & Colonel Paisley and joined General Green [sic, Nathanael Greene] on his marched North before the British and marched with him over Dan River to Halifax Virginia, where he with his Captain was permitted to return home to oppose the ravages of the Tories and British in his own neighborhood and to by some means to secure his property in which he was engaged when the Army met and fought at Martinsville – that his Captain had joined the troops again before the battle of Guilford and was mortally wounded in said battle that his company was after this battle again collected commanded and marched under Captain Robert Paisley after the British on their march ^{retreat} South and continued this pursuit until they arrived at Ramsay's Mills where he was again marched home – that he continued to serve as above stated after the Tour until the close of the revolutionary war – that [he] has always been a laboring man and from old age and decrepitude, is confined much to his bed and makes this declaration from his bed, that he could not be taken to the court of his County without great pain and fatigue – that there are few men of his age who have more failed in memory – that there were 6 years from '75 to '81 he was out on service near half his time and feels that he can't state with safety that he done service in all not less than at the least two years – that he is known to Reverend William Paisley, Captain Marshall McLean and in fact all his neighbors who can and are willing to testify to his character and their belief as to his

revolutionary services and likewise to John Finley¹ who can from his personal knowledge testify to his said services – that he has no documentary evidence of his services – that he was not in any regular fought battle except a skirmish at Blair's mill, that he was always a volunteer.

He hereby relinquishes every claim to a pension except the present & declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year above written.

Test: S Marshall McLean, Junior, JP

S/ William Smith



[William Paisley, a clergyman, and Marshall McLean gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

I John Finley hereby certify that I served in the revolutionary war with William Smith named in the above declaration – that I was often out with him after the Tories down towards and at Fayetteville and many other places – with him in a trip to the South beyond Charlotte and marched with him North over Dan River – have heard his declaration read and do believe from personal knowledge that he has stated the truth.

Subscribed & Sworn to the date above written.

S/ Marshall McLean, Junior, JP

S/ John Finley



State of North Carolina Guilford County

Be it known that on this 19th day of January A.D. 1833 personally appeared before me and Acting Justice in and for the County of Guilford John Finley whose name is attached to a preceding certificate who being duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following affidavit, to which, that since giving the certificate before mentioned he has been requested to explain more fully how he became acquainted with the services of William Smith named in the preceding declaration – that he was well acquainted with William Smith during the revolutionary War and did service with him from the commencement thereof to its termination that assistance of this section of North Carolina were from the commencement of the war divided into two parties, the Whig and the Tory – that said Smith belonged to the Whig party and always stood ready and took a very magnanimous and active part in defending his friends and the friends of freedom and independence from the aggressions of the common enemy and those who took part with them – that his services were rendered in the matter which he states in his declaration – that the first of the war the Whigs (among whom was Smith – were compelled to resist the depredations of the Tories, they assembled and went out into service as necessities seemed to urge – but when their aggressions seemed rather to increase than diminish, it was resolved by many of the Whigs to formed themselves into a company called minute men to be ready at any and all times to march in aim minutes warning, so that their operations against the Tories might be united and more efficient – that said Smith and himself both belonged to this company – that the regulations was that any company was to march at all times when there was necessity under whatever Captain the Colonel (mostly Colonel Paisley) should assign to command it – that those

¹ Sic, [John Findley S6843](#)

who composed this company were considered, called, & looked upon as soldiers of the Revolution from the time the company was formed until the end of the war – that owing to his memory having greatly failed he is now unable to state the precise time when this company was formed but knows that it was formed shortly after a tour which those who formed afterwards the company, made after the Scotch Tories down about Cross Creek now Fayetteville making which trip said Smith was in company – that this tour was in 76 or 77 – that this company was often very often down the country after the Tories, sometimes down among the High Hills of Randolph County called the Caraway mountains – down among the Raft Swamp – down on Deep Creek – up the country on the Yadkin River and often in the immediate neighborhood – that this company would be out sometimes days, sometimes weeks, few and then many, and the time which they spent at home, they were compelled often to go on when in the field engaged at work – that this company was commanded much and very often by Captain Arthur Forbis who was mortally wounded in the Guilford battle – sometimes by Captain Robert Paisley, Captain Gillespie and Captain Bhitwell [?], and almost always under the command of Colonel John Paisley – that the tours mentioned to have been made down the country were made mostly to disperse companies of Tories collected by one Colonel Fanning that many of Fanning's men were taken prisoners, others killed and the balance mostly as much dispersed as practicable – that said Smith was always with him in these tours – that he was also with him (Smith) on the tour which he mentions he made to the South into the County of Mecklenburg, New Providence and on the confines of South Carolina in the latter part of 1780 – that after he returned home he again set out, joined General Greens Army on its march North, and marched with him to Halifax Old Court House Virginia, but that he had to return home, with his Captain to quell any insurrection of the Tories – that Smith was along with him – that said Smith has for many years been a member and elder in the Presbyterian Church – that he has ever been and exemplary and consistent Christian and that he never heard his piety or veracity disputed or questioned – that this affiant has recently been enrolled on the Pension list under the act of Congress of 7th of June last that he cannot state the precise time that said Smith served as aforesaid but thinks that he must have served at the least and not less than two years – that it has always been reported among his neighbors and generally believed that he (Smith) was a faithful soldier of the revolution and believes that no one has ever been disposed to dispute it – & that he served mostly if not always a private volunteer.

Subscribed and sworn to the day and year aforesaid.

S/ John Finley

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$80 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for two-year service as a private in the North Carolina militia.]