

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of David Steele S7605

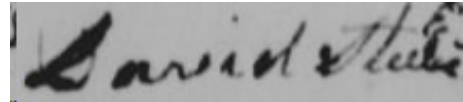
VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 12 April 2021.

State of Virginia Augusta County Ss.

This day personally came before me the Subscriber a Magistrate in and for said county David Steele, and made Oath that he is the same David Steele, who served as a private in the company commanded by Capt James Tate, attached to the Regiment commanded by Colo. [Henry] Lee; at the battle at Guilford Court House [Guilford Courthouse NC, 15 Mar 1781] and further states that he has in and about thirty years drawn a pension; and further states that he never did obtain a certificate or ever had one in his possession but allways drew his pension upon a power of attorney.

The above duly sworn to and subscribed before me this 2nd day of December 1820

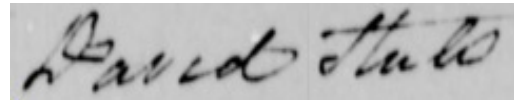


Feby 11th 1830

Dear Sir I again take the liberty of sending to the pension office the surgeons affidavit made according to what you wrote me was the regulations in the Department of which you are the head. I have made application for my stipend half yearly in Richmond but have failed to draw any thing for the last year & almost another half year has elapsed without my being able to get my money.

The agent who I employed says Mr Page never can be got to his office to arrange my papers & give me a draft to the bank. I shall be compeld to complain to those who Invest Mr Page with his authority, of his misconduct, and have no doubt but I will be joined by a great many of the pensioners throughout Va. If he has forwarded my name to Washington, and the sugeons affidavit is correct as I believe it is please give the Gentleman the necessary Instructions & inform me likewise of my fate as soon as convenient

With respect yours &c.



Surgeons Affidavit/ (Date) 11th Feb'y 1830

It is hereby certified that David Steele a private in the Company of Volunteer Rifleman commanded by Colo. James Tate and attached to Col. Lees regiment of horse in the service of the United States & rendered incapable of performing the duty of a soldier by reason of wounds or other injuries inflicted while he was actually in the service aforesaid, in the line of his duty, Viz. By satisfactory evidence and accurate examination, it appears that on the 15th day of March in the year 1781 being engaged in battle with Cornwallis's army at or near a place called Guilford Ct. House North Carolina in the district or Territory of North Carolina he received seven wounds in his head several of which manifestly appear to have passed through the skull To the brain, inflicting permanet & serious injury to the bones on each side of the head especially to the parietal & Temporal bones on the left side, by which the left eye appears to have been seriously injured also several serious wounds on the shoulder & back, the scapular bone being cut through & the shoulder thereby permanently injured, & he is thereby, not only incapacitated for military duty, but, in the oppinion of the undersigned, is totally disabled from obtaining his subsistence from Manual labour & that the disability is permanent & cannot be removed

W. Boyd – Surgeon

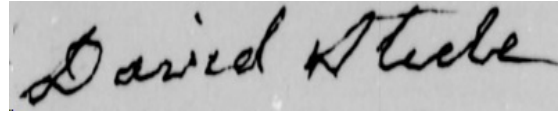
I am of opinion that the disability of David Steel cannot either in part & whole be removed
Feb 24 1830

Thos S Coalter[?] – Surgeon

Sept 28th 1834

Dear Sir [Secretary of War] I dislike to be troublesome to you, but necessity compels me to get our opinion on a small matter.

I inclose to you such a paper as I have drawn my pension upon for several years. I sent the same to Richmond & it has been returned to me as insufficient. If it is really so, inform me in what particular it is so; But if correct please to forward it to Rich'd with your directions to to pay the money to my agent as per power of Attorney. In complying with the above you will much oblige an old Soldier

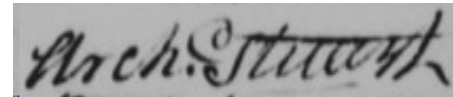


Memo

I well recollect that on the evening before the Battle at Guilford Courthouse N.C. in the year 1781 I went to see Capt James Tate where he was enCamped & understood in the Course of the evening that Colo. Lee who then commanded the Horse in the American Army applied to Gen'l. [William] Campbell to point out a proper Officer to attach to his Corps, That Gen'l Campbell recommended Capt Tate of this County (Augusta) That accordingly early next morning Capt Tate with his Company of which David Steele was a member marched in advance of our Army with Colo. Lee to meet the British They were met according to expectation & made a most gallant resistance. Capt Tate was killed and a large portion of his Company were killed or Wounded. I well recollect to see Steele the morning after the battle he had so many Sabre wounds that I considered it impossible he could recover & when I parted from him had not the most distant expectation of ever seeing him again. In conversation with Steel since I was anxious to know the state of his health. I recollect his making some complaints but the particulars at this date I cannot undertake to relate.

[Archibald Stuart]

20th Nov'r 1838



NOTES:

Steele was wounded at the skirmish at New Garden Meeting House between Lt. Col. Henry Lee's Legion and Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton's Legion.

François Jean Marquis de Chastellux gave the following description of the wounding of David Steele from a stay at his mill and inn on 18 April 1782:

“He was a young man, twenty-two years of age, whose charming face, fine teeth, red lips, and rosy cheeks, recalled to mind the pleasing portrait which Marmontel gives of *Lubin*. His walk and carriage did not however correspond with the freshness of his looks, for he appeared sluggish and inactive. I enquired the reason, and he told me he had been in a languishing state ever since the battle of *Guildford*, in which he had received fifteen or sixteen wounds with a hanger. He had not, like the Romans, a crown to attest his valour; nor, like the French, either pension or certificate of honour; instead of them, he had a piece of his skull, which his wife brought to shew me. I certainly little thought of finding, amidst the solitudes of America, such lamentable traces of European steel; but I was the most touched to learn, that it was after he had received his first wound, and was made prisoner, that he had been thus cruelly treated. This unhappy young man acquainted me, that overcome with wounds, and wallowing in his blood, he yet retained his presence of mind, and imagining his cruel enemies would not leave existing a single witness or victim of their barbarity, there remained no other way of saving his life, than by appearing as if he had lost it.”

Marquis de Chastellux. *Travels in North America, in the Years 1780, 1781, and 1782*. Vol. 2. English translation, 2nd Ed, 1787. pp 78-79

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark:/13960/t6f19220z&view=1up&seq=17>

A note in the file reads in part as follows: “David Steele/ Private/ Inscribed on the Invalid Roll of Va. at \$5 per month and increased to \$8 per month/ Orig'l. Papers Burnt.”

The file includes a letter from J. Steele, Jr. from Steele's Tavern VA dated 7 March 1843, stating that he was the son and heir of David Steele, deceased.