

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Thomas Coppedge S8239

VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Virginia, – Amherst County to wit:

On this 15<sup>th</sup> day of April 1833 personally appeared in open Court before the worshipful justices of the County Court of Amherst now sitting, Thomas Coppedge, a resident of the County of Amherst and State of Virginia, aged eighty years, who having religious scruples as to taking an oath made solemn affirmation according to Law, and doth on his affirmation make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7<sup>th</sup> 1832, – That he entered the service of the United States in the Company commanded by Captain Thomas Gaskins in the regiment commanded by Colonel [William] Crawford, in the line of the State of Virginia, – That he entered said service in the year 1776 for two years under one engagement, and was regularly discharged in Williamsburg in the State of Virginia after the completion of his service. – That he resided in the County of Northumberland in the State of Virginia at the time he entered the service, – that on his first entering the service he was stationed at Williamsburg in Virginia, where he remained for several months; – he was then marched to Burwells Ferry on James River [Hog Island in Surry County to Carter's Grove in James City County], and from thence he was marched to Norfolk where he remained a considerable time, and from thence he was marched back to Williamsburg, where he was discharged as herein before stated, – That he was engaged in no battle during the service, – that he has no documentary evidence to establish his service, – that he had a certificate of discharge given by Captain Gaskins, but it has been long since lost, – that he has no record of his age except a memorandum kept by himself, from information derived from others, – that he knows no persons besides those whose certificates are hereto attached who know of his service, – that he now resides in a County remote from the one in which he enlisted and equally distant from the theatre of his services, and that nearly all of those who were acquainted with him in those days are either dead or removed to places unknown to your petitioner, – That he was born in the year 1752, in the County of Northumberland in the State of Virginia, – that he now lives in the County of Amherst, and has resided there for many years, – that he has no particular recollection of the names of the officers who were with him besides those already mentioned and those now here enumerated, – Captains [George] Stubblefield, [Burgess] Ball and Pleasant [sic: John Pleasants], – that he served in the fifth regiment which was made up of ten companies, and that he enlisted in said service, – That he has not produced the testimony of any clergyman, because there is none in his neighbourhood with whom he is sufficiently acquainted, to enable him to testify in this case, – most of the clergymen of this part of the Country being itinerant in their character, & not residing many years in any one place. – He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present, and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state. [signed] Thos. Coppedge

Affirmed to, and subscribed the day & year aforesaid.

And the said Thomas Coppedge produced to the Court the following affidavits to wit: – The affidavit of Edward Watson of the County of Amherst and State of Virginia, of lawful age taken before Arthur B. Davies a justice of the peace for said County the 16<sup>th</sup> day of August 1832. – The said affiant being duly qualified upon the holy evangelist saith, that he was in the revolutionary war as a private in the militia of Virginia, – That he was in Williamsburg at the time that General Howe went up the bay, and it was believed he intended to come to Williamsburg, – that he verily believes from many circumstances which he has heard Thomas Coppedge detail some twenty or more years ago, which came to his said Coppedge's knowledge as he frequently stated to him this affiant during the time said Coppedge was in the regular service, that he must have been in the revolutionary war. This affiant has heard said Coppedge relate many years ago the circumstances of a man by the name of Goodrich being taken up as a

traitor and put in jail at Williamsburg when said Coppedge was in service, – which circumstance this affiant well recollects also, – which occurred when he was in Williamsburg as a soldier, and this affiant thinks it was in the summer or fall of the year 1776. – This affiant further states that he has known Thos. Coppedge many years and he believes said Coppedge would not qualify or affirm to a falsehood knowingly, and this affiant believes said Coppedge to be about eighty years of age. – Given under my hand this 16<sup>th</sup> day of August 1832.

Edward Watson

This is to certify that in the year 1775 or 1776 that Thomas Coppedge and I listed in the minute service, under Thomas Gaskins Captain for two years, and some time after, Thomas Gaskins took a commission in the regular service for two years, and to my certain knowledge, that Thomas Coppedge listed under him for two years, and after serving his time out, he came back. – There were ten regiments raised in Virginia and this said Thomas Gaskins were in the fifth regiment.

Rhodham Angel of the County of Albemarle and State of Virginia.

This is to certify that I was present when Thomas Coppedge now a resident of the County of Amherst in the State of Virginia, marched as an enlisted soldier in the spring of 1776 in the minute service under Captain Thomas Gaskins in the County of Northumberland; – This affiant understood that said Coppedge enlisted for two years and served out that time complete. – She well recollects a verse sung by said Coppedge the moment orders were given to march, which are the following, Viz.

Awake, rouse your courage, Americans have  
For freedom to fight, and we will never be slaves,  
Tho' Great Britains subjects we are willing to be  
Yet Britons must know we love to be free

And further this affiant saith not. – Given under my hand this 9<sup>th</sup> day of April 1833.

Judith Parriott

NOTE: The Pension Office objected to the initial failure of Coppedge to provide a clergyman's certificate, to which Coppedge's agent, Samuel M. Garland, replied as follows in a letter dated 27 April 1833: "In regard to the first objection I beg leave to say, that it is now removed; and in addition, I take the liberty very respectfully to remark, that that requirement has been viewed by the most intelligent part of the community here, as very objectionable, – it is looked upon as establishing a dangerous and invidious principle, and one which if extended to other proceedings to which it might be with equal justice applied, would be attended with most injurious consequences. I do not doubt but that reasons sufficiently urgent were thought to exist to justify this rule of evidence, but the reasons whatever they might be have not been seen, or if seen, not appreciated by the community at large."