

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of William Cumming (Cummings) S8265

fn145NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

rev'd 12/22/10

[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.]

[fn p. 6]

State of North Carolina, Orange County: Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions November Term 1832

On this the 29th day of November A.D. 1832, personally appeared in open Court before the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for the said County and State aforesaid now sitting, William Cummings in the 74th year of his age, 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 on the 7th of June 1832.

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

That sometime in the month of March or April 1778 he enlisted for the term of 18 months in a company commanded by Captain Matthew McCauley and was attached to the Regiment commanded by Col. Archibald Lytle – marched from Hillsborough in Orange, to Halifax N. C. thence to Petersburg in Virginia. Thence to Valley Forge, where we were encamped three months or thereabouts. From thence to Halifax N. C. Thence to Hillsboro in Orange, where he remained till the expiration of our 18 month Term. Having served as a quarter Master Sergeant from the time he returned from Halifax till the expiration of his enlistment.

In the year 1780, this applicant sometime in the month of June (he thinks it was) volunteered in the Service of the United States for four months in the Town of Hillsboro in a company commanded by Captain Farmer and John Wales [could be John Wall], was Lieutenant – we were marched to the South, passing through Pittsboro & Fayetteville we crossed Cape Fear [River] at Sprowl's Ferry [sic, Spruill's Ferry], and near the Ferry we joined General Caswell's troops. From Sprowl's Ferry we marched to Cheraw Hills on the Pedee [River] in South Carolina. From thence our march was continued Southwardly. Joined first Rutherford's Army and then General Gates' at the Cross Roads (he thinks it was) about 40 miles from Camden, was at the engagement at that place in August of that year. After the route of Gates Army at said Battle, this applicant returned home and acted for the remaining part of the Tour as Deputy quarter Master under Major Abe Tatum in the Town of Hillsboro.

This Applicant further states that some time in the fall of the year 1780 he again engaged in the service of the United States as Quarter Master Sergeant, under Major Absalom Tatum and was stationed in the Town of Hillsboro where he was engaged in issuing provisions, forage &c – after he had officiated in this capacity some four or five months, he and his brother Henry Cummings were made prisoners by some of Colonel Tarleton's corps of William Couch's in the vicinity of Hillsboro whither he had gone to hide some property, anticipating a visit from the enemy. By the enemy he was brought to the town of Hillsboro as a prisoner of war. From Hillsboro was taken by the British Army to

Guilford Court House. Thence to New Garden, thence to Bells Mills on Deep River – where he was discharged by the British-- probably in consequence of their being on a retreat and having been much discomforted by Battle at the Court House a few days previous.

After this applicant returned home he was again appointed quarter Master Sergeant, and stationed in the Town of Hillsboro whilst quarter Master Sergeant, he was frequently employed as bearer of dispatches, having to pass sections of County rendered dangerous by the strength of the Tories – amongst other dispatches, he bore one to Colonel Robert Mebane at White Marsh in Bladen County – also went to Halifax with a dispatch from Major Tatum to Colonel Nicholas Long; He was also bearer of a Dispatch from Hillsboro to Governor Martin at his residence in Rockingham County. In conclusion this applicant states (he thinks it was in the fall of the year of '81) he entered a company under Colonels Long & Branch, the object of this Company was to make a tour to Suppress the Tories – this Company ranged through the Southern part of Orange, through part of Chatham – and went on this excursion they took a Tory about 4 miles from Jones Ferry on Haw River, and forthwith hung him. This was the concluding part of this applicant's public service as well as he can now remember, Having served the United States in the Capacities of Quarter Master Sergeant, and private, in all three years or upwards.

This applicant states that he was Born in the Town of Hillsboro in Orange on the 18th day of January 1759.

Has a record of his age but it is now misplaced

Was living in the above County of Orange when called into service and has been living there ever since the war of the Revolution

That when he entered the Service of the United States he volunteered

He knew Colonel Jo. Taylor, Colonel Lytle, Colonel Robert Mebane, General Butler, Colonel William O'Neal, General Rutherford, General Locke & others

His discharges are now lost, He supposes (he has now however no recollection of having any). This applicant would in conclusion state that with a mind much impaired by age he finds it difficult to recount with that precision that he could wish, occurrences that happened upwards of half a century ago.

He can prove his services in part by David White¹ of the Hawfields by Charles Woods.²

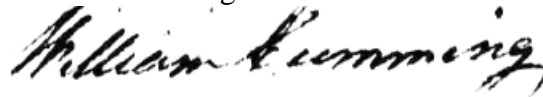
He is known to Thomas Clancy & William McCauley & others who can testify to character for veracity

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.

Sworn to and subscribed in open Court the day and year first above written.

S/ J. Taylor, Clerk

S/ William Cumming



Charles Woods maketh oath that he is acquainted with William Cumming who made the above declaration, that he knew said Cumming in the year 1778 at Valley Forge, which was then the headquarters of General Washington, and well remembers that said Cumming came there in the capacity of quarter master Sergeant, & Forage Master, in a Regiment commanded by Colonel Lytle, Robert Mebane Lieutenant Colonel: and further that said Regiment to which the said Cumming was attached was of the Continental line.

Sworn to in open Court.

S/ Charles Wood, X his mark

1 [David White R11406](#)

2 [Charles Wood S42084](#)

[Thomas Clancy & William McCauley gave the standard supporting affidavit and, further, William McCauley added: "... And the affiant William McCauley further states, that he is a son of Captain Matthew McCauley who is mentioned in the above declaration, that he has heard his father speak frequently of the patriotic services of the said Cumming in the Defense of his Country during the War of the Revolution..."] [Thomas Clancy gave a separate affidavit in which he testifies as to his father's recollections of the services of Cumming during the revolutionary war.]

[fn p. 81]

State of North Carolina, Orange County

On this 29th April 1836, personally appeared before the undersigned an acting Justice of the Peace in and for the County aforesaid Charles Wood in the 89th year of his age, a resident citizen of Orange aforesaid, who being first duly qualified according to law, maketh oath that in the war of the revolution he knew William Cumming of the aforesaid County and has a distinct recollection of seeing said Cumming in the American service as Deputy Quarter Master & Forage Master in the winter of 1777 at Valley Forge in Pennsylvania, that said Cumming acted in that capacity nearly 2 years and was an active and efficient officer and a good Whig, that he has known the said Cumming ever since the year 1776, that while said Woods was prisoner in Charleston he heard from many acquaintances who were brought that City after Gates defeat, that said Cumming was in that battle. Wood further states that after the return of himself and others to Hillsboro the said Cumming was appointed over the company to keep them together till it was ascertained whether their services would be requested again. He states that this was in the year 1782 and the company was on furlough without date, and that he had not then discharged. That said Cumming was always friendly to the American cause, and actively served the United States as he has set forth in his declaration.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and date first above written, before me.

S/ Will E. Anderson, JP

S/ Charles Wood³

[fn p. 101]

State of North Carolina, Guilford County

On this the 16th day of January 1843 personally appeared before the subscriber, a Justice of the Peace, in and for the County of Guilford, William Cumming, a resident of said County aged 85 years, formerly a resident of the Town of Hillsboro, in the adjoining County of Orange, who, being first duly sworn according to law, maketh the following new Declaration, in obedience to the directions of the Commissioner of Pensions, dated the 5th of August 1842 in his letter to the Honorable R. M. Sanders.

The Declarant setteth forth upon his said oath, that sometime in the latter part of the year 1777 or the early part of 1778 he enlisted in the United States service under Captain McCauley, then a Lieutenant in the United States service, for 18 months, and soon thereafter was appointed Quarter Master Sergeant, and served under Col. Nicholas Long of Halifax N. C. this Declarant some time in the winter of 1778 as Quarter Master Sergeant went to General Washington's Army at Valley Forge, in company with Lieutenant McCauley, Colonel Lytle, Colonel Robert Mebane, Captain William Saunders [?], Captain Charles Dixon, Captain Tilman Dixon [Tilghman Dixon] and Captain Donoho [Thomas Donoho] – after remaining with the Northern Army, but a short time, he and Lieutenant McCauley as directed, returned to Halifax N. C. and after remaining a short time returned to Hillsborough where the declarant served as Quarter Master Sergeant, under Major Absalom Tatum, the Town of Hillsboro contained at that time, a war Office Military stores, & was a place of rendezvous, for both Continental & Militia troops. In the spring or summer of the next year, this Declarant was again in the United States service, as Quarter Master Sergeant, in the militia, about six months, as well as Declarant can now recollect under Colonel Moore, and served under Quarter Master Thornbury, & was

3 fn p. 126 Wood gives yet another supporting affidavit, this one dated April 19, 1837]

ordered to South Carolina, was at Gates defeat & after the defeat, returned to Hillsborough, N. C. and served under Major Tatum, as Quarter Master Sergeant until he was taken with the smallpox. The said William Cumming, Declarant, as aforesaid, would here remark, that, he made his first and original Declaration, in the year 1833 nearly 10 years ago, and that at that day, his recollection was much better, than what it is at present, which enabled him at that time to make statements, with more precision and satisfaction than he is now enabled, from an impaired memory. The Deponent further states that with regard to his first period of service, he does not remember the names of all the affiants, he has a recollection that William McCauley, Attorney-at-law, son of the aforesaid Captain Matthew McCauley, made affidavit in Court, as well as this affiant remembers to this effect (viz.) that he Lieutenant McCauley & the Declarant went together, to the Northern Army under General Washington, that the said Cumming was a good soldier &c. The Deponent would here restate, that he procured in proof of his Revolutionary services, the affidavits of Charles Wood, William Crabtree,⁴ David White, Brittain Bowers and others, soldiers and that of Thomas Clancy P.M. at Hillsborough and Josiah Turner Esq. former Sheriff of Orange, that they had always understood, and believed this Declarant had served in the war of the Revolution.

This Declarant understood that it is a rule of the Pension Office, that when service is claimed for an officer, no pension were be allowed for such service, unless some record evidence is furnished, the Declarant unfortunately has lost, or misplaced all evidence of his Revolutionary services, but learns that a pension may be allowed upon satisfactory affidavits of services, the Declarant will therefore under existing circumstances, except of the pay of a Sergeant for the length of time he served as Quarter Master Sergeant, or so much thereof, as Mr. Edwards made deem the proof of service will Justify.

The Declarant here states upon his said oath, that from old age and loss of memory, he cannot at this time, make a more full and detailed statement of Revolutionary Services than is contained in the above affidavit.

And the said Declarant further states that from old age, and infirmity of body, he cannot attend Court to make this Declaration, also that some three years ago, his pension Certificate was returned to the Pension Office.

Sworn and subscribed the day and date first above written before me.

S/ Peter Adams, JP

S/ William Cumming

[fn p. 115]

State of North Carolina, Orange County

On this the 3rd day of July 1837, personally appeared before the undersigned an acting Justice of the peace in and for the County of Orange aforesaid, Ezekiel Brewer, a resident citizen of the said County, 73 years old in November next who being first duly qualified according to law Deposeth and saith as follows, to wit:

That in the War of the Revolution, he the said Brewer was drafted to serve a Continental tour in 1780 (he thinks was in the year) & that he Substituted one Benjamin Howell, who served in his room & stead, that this deponent's father lived near the Town of Hillsborough in the County aforesaid, that said Deponent was frequently in Hillsboro aforesaid, and was during the Revolutionary War and ever since well acquainted with William Cumming of the aforesaid County (whose pension has been suspended for further evidence). This Deponent states upon his said oath that he very distinctly remembers of William Cumming as "Quarter Master Sergeant" entering the United States Service the precise time he does not remember, but thinks it was in the winter or spring of the year 1778, and soon after said Cummings entered the United States Service as Quarter Master as above stated, he and Lieutenant Matthew McCauley (now dead) went on to the Northern Army, and heard Cumming after his return

4 [William Crabtree W17689](#)

from the North, say, that when they went to Washington's Army it was encamped at Valley Forge, not far from Philadelphia.

That said William Cumming to this affiant's knowledge did enter the United States Service as "Quarter Master Sergeant" as above stated: That as "Quarter Master Sergeant" he went to the Northern Army in the winter or spring of 1778, and after his return from the North, served in that capacity till in the fall of 1779 when his period of service as "Quarter Master Sergeant" expired & he was regularly discharged from said service.

This Deponent also states upon his said oath, that when De Kalb's Army marched from Hillsboro for the South (which Army was presently under command of General Gates) and that Campaign said William Cumming was again in the capacity of Quarter Master Sergeant and with the troops from Hillsboro this Deponent saw him there in the service, in the month of July (he thinks) 1780, and this Deponent has always understood & believes that said William Cumming continued with the Army about six months as Quarter Master Sergeant, he has always understood so, from those that served in that Campaign.

This Deponent further states, that either in the year that the War closed, or the year previous, said Cumming had command of a company in Hillsboro – but how long he was in this latter service this Deponent does not now remember.

Sworn am subscribed on this the third day of July, 1837 before me.

S/ E/ Philips, JP

S/ Ezekiel Brewer



[fn p. 117, Josiah Turner gives an affidavit stating that he has heard his father James Turner speak of serving in the revolution with William Cumming.]

[Hugh Currey⁵ of Caswell County, NC gave a supporting affidavit saying he saw Cumming in Hillsboro in the summer of 1780 acting as QMS.]

[fn p. 121]

State of North Carolina, Orange County

On this the 14th day of July 1836 personally appeared before the undersigned an acting Justice of the peace in and for the County aforesaid, David White, a resident Citizen of the aforesaid County now in the 74th year of his age who being first qualified maketh oath that in the war of the Revolution, he was acquainted with William Cumming of the aforesaid County, and this affiant was a private in the militia in 1780 at Gates defeat, and whilst in that tour, said William Cumming acted as quartermaster Sergeant for the troops to which this affiant was attached – How long said Cumming acted as quartermaster Sergeant, this affiant does not remember, but said Cumming was esteemed a good Whig & zealous in the Cause of liberty.

Sworn and subscribed the day & year first above written before me.

S/ G. Hurdle, JP

S/ David White



[fn p. 128]

State of North Carolina, Orange County

This day came before me Samuel Strayhorn one of the Justices of the peace for said County William Crabtree Senior and after being duly sworn according to law stated that he knew William Cummings Served in the United States service in the year of 1780 as quarter master Sergeant and remembers of seeing said Cummings acting in that Capacity to the troops under General Gates and the year aforesaid to wit 1780 said Cummings was a good Whig and served the United States as he has set forth in his declaration.

Sworn and subscribed this the 21st day of April A.D. 1836 before me.

S/ S. Strayhorn, JP

S/ William Crabtree, X his mark

[fn 143-145]

Supplemental evidence

State of North Carolina, Guilford County

On this the 19th day of August 1837 personally appeared before the undersigned an acting justice of the peace in and for the County of Guilford aforesaid, William Cumming, a resident of said County (formerly a resident of Orange) who being first duly qualified according to law, maketh on oath the following explanatory and additional statements to his Declaration for pension, To wit:

This Deponent sets forth that (according to the best of his recollection) it was sometime in the array part of 1778, he entered the United States service for the period of 18 months – Served part of the time with the Main Army under General Washington at Valley Forge, returned to North Carolina and served out the balance of his time of service in this State & principally in Halifax & Hillsboro.

The time that his period of service expired he does not now remember, but thinks it was in the month of either of September or October 1779; that during all of this said period of 18 months, this Declarant acted in the United States service in the capacity of quarter Master Sergeant.

That sometime in the spring of the next year, to wit, 1780, he Declarant again entered the United States service and acted in the Capacity of Quarter Master Sergeant – was in the Regiment under command of Colonel Ramsey (subsequently commanded by Colonel Stephen Moore) marched with said troops to the South went through this borough – Cross Creek – thence to Randolph old Court House. Thence Joined General Caswell's Troops thence Joined General Gates' troops and was in the engagement near Camden when our troops were defeated from the defeat I went to Salisbury in North Carolina, thence to Hillsboro. Thence to Halifax where after staying a short time, I was ordered back to Hillsboro – this Declarant remained in Hillsborough some one or two months. During all this period this Deponent acted as Quarter Master Sergeant in the second period of service: -- this Deponent does not remember the precise date of his entering the service, but thinks it was about the first or middle of May 1780 and when his period of service expired it was about the first or middle of November following say six months, but this Deponent feels positive that his Services as Quarter Master Sergeant in the second period of his services was six months or upwards.

That in the month of February or March 1781, this Deponent was again in the Service of the United States as Quarter Master Sergeant, and was sent by General Butler to destroy some military stores in the town of Hillsboro, a little before Cornwallis went into that place in February 1781. That in this excursion this Deponent was made prisoner by some of Colonel Tarleton's men. That in a few days after the Guilford battle, this Declarant made his escape and went to the Town of Hillsboro and again resumed the office of Quarter Master Sergeant – but does not at this time remember how long he served.

That sometime in the year of 1782 this Declarant had command of a company of state troops or Continentals (he thinks) but is not positive which, the length of time he served he thinks was three months.

Personally appeared before me the undersigned, a justice of the peace in and for the County of Guilford aforesaid William Cumming, who being first duly sworn deposed and saith that by reason of old age, and the consequent loss of memory he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his

Service but according to the best of his recollection, he served not less than the periods mentioned below, to wit:

In 1778 – 9 for 18 months as Quarter Master Sergeant

In 1780 for six months (or more) as ditto

In 1781 for – (say two months) as a ditto

In 1782 for three [months] as Captain or “Lieutenant commandant”

and for such services I claim a pension.

This Deponent at this time has no distinct recollection of his discharges. That old age is so fast impairing his mind that within the last few years his memory has greatly failed him and cannot therefore give the detailed and satisfactory account of his services that he could wish.

(He proves his Services by Ezekiel Brewer & others-- whose affidavits accompany this Declaration (except those that have been previously sent on to the Pension Office)

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. (His name having been on the pension roll but discontinued as pensioner for further explanation and proof)

Sworn and Subscribed the day & year aforesaid before me

S/ Jos. Gibson, JP

S/ Wm Cumming

[fn p. 3: on November 22, 1855 in Guilford County North Carolina, William H Cumming, made application as the son and administrator of the estate of William Cumming deceased, a revolutionary pensioner at the rate of \$120 per annum stating that his father was entitled to a pension as an officer and quarter Master & Commissary in the war of the revolution; he states that his father died April 18, 1849 leaving the following named children: William H Cumming, John Cumming & Eliza Dotson, his only surviving children.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Wm H. Cumming", followed by a closing bracket "]" on the right side.

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$460 [could be \$410] commencing March 4th, 1831, for two-year service as a quarter master Sergeant in the North Carolina militia.]