

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Joseph Willis W1017¹

Jemima

fn??²NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

1/15/11

[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.]

State of North Carolina Lincoln County: County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions October session 1832

On this 31st day of October 1832 personally appeared in open court, before the justices of the Court of pleas & quarter sessions now sitting Joseph Willis a resident of Lincoln County in the State aforesaid aged seventy-seven years 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 the 7th 1832.

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

That he was drafted in the County of Caswell & State of North Carolina on the 1st day of September 1780. I was then ordered to Caswell Court house where I was placed under the command of Captain Adam Saunders & Lieutenant Tate Ensign William Holiness [sic, William Holderness?]. These were my company officers, our Superior officers was Colonel William Moore, Major Elijah Moore, we marched under their command to Hillsboro, we was there placed under the command of General Butler, and we here received our arms, from Hillsboro we marched to Salisbury and from Salisbury we left General Butler & marched under command of Colonel Moore to the six mile Creek, in McLenburg [sic, Mecklenburg] County (I think it is) & there we joined General Davison [sic, William Lee Davidson], we was there sometimes scouting about until we received orders to go and assist or reinforce General Morgan it was requested for someone to volunteer & accordingly our Colonel Moore volunteered & most of his men. We started for the purpose of reinforcing General Morgan. Commanded by Colonel Moore we had not quiet reached the place before we met General Morgan with 370 prisoners of the British who Morgan had taken at Rugeley's Mills among the prisoners was a British officer Colonel Rugeley. General Morgan gave up the prisoners to Colonel Moore we guarded them on to Salisbury where they was imprisoned and we guarded there until my time was out and I was discharged & went

¹ BLWt14990-160-55

² At the time this file was viewed on Footnote.com, the page numbers assigned by Footnote.com to the digital images of each of the pages in the file were nonsensical. Footnote.com indicates that it is working on trying to resolve this issue with its software.

home & I was taken sick in consequence of serving a winter tour & wading waters & assisting our wagons in the water &c. I was for some time as helpless as a child. I applied to a physician & I recovered & had but recovered when I had to obey the call of my country a second time, I was drafted for 3 months. We marched to Caswell courthouse in the County of Caswell & State of North Carolina, the time I served my 2nd tour was one year from the time I served my 1st tour which was the 1st September 1781. My company officers was Captain Saunders, Lieutenant Jeffries & Ensign Robert Wilson. Our Regiment was commanded by Colonel Moore, Major Reynolds we went on under command of Colonel Moore to Deep River & there General Butler took command & then we and went on in pursuit of the British who had taken Governor Burk [sic, Thomas Burke] from Hillsboro with other of our citizens. We pursued them & overtook their rear guard & fired on them but they did not stop to fight us. The British pushed on for Wilmington with their prisoners and there left them & was reinforced and returned to meet us. They came upon us at Crown mash [sic, Brown marsh?]. We was attacked about midnight when the moon was full & bright we was alarmed by the fire of our pickets. We was aligned & in readiness in an instant when the advance of the British came on, part of our line broke & was taken prisoners & another body of the enemy rushed on the part of the line where I was we waited until they got within 20 or 30 yards when we fired on them they retreated & left us. There was considerable number of the British killed & but few of our men. We kept the ground. We marched on to Cross Creek now called Fayetteville & from there back again where we had the engagement & from there rocky point near Wilmington. We had been at this place only one day when we heard Cornwallis was taken. I then went with a command of men to Wilmington to take our men that the British had taken as prisoners and were unable to go with them when they left Wilmington. We then returned back to rocky point at headquarters & there got my discharge from Colonel Owens after serving my tour of 3 months & 3 weeks. The 3 weeks I served longer than my time I was drafted I then returned home to Caswell County and then moved to Lincoln County North Carolina where I now live. During my 2 tours, I underwent many fatigues & privations which measurably impaired my Constitution, I am now advanced in life & quite feeble and has to make by head [?] by my labour and I hope I may be taken in the decline of my life as one who may have a share of the surplus funds of government. I do hereby relinquish every claim to a pension or annuity except the present, and declare that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any State whatsoever. Sworn to & subscribed the day & year aforesaid.

Interrogatories by the court

Question 1st Where and in what year were you born?

Ans. I was born in Gouglin [sic, the Goochland?] County Virginia, on the 23rd November 1753

Question 2nd Have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

Ans. I have a record of my age in my father's Bible now in possession of one of my sisters Joicy Mashburn

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

Ans. In Caswell County North Carolina I have lived since in Lincoln County North Carolina

Question 4th 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 was drafted twice, the 1st time for 4 months the 2nd for 3 months & I staid 3 weeks longer than I was drafted for that last time.

Question 5th 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 have stated in my declaration the general circumstances of my service & several Generals that I was under besides I saw General Green [sic, Nathanael Greene] General Rutherford, Colonels Mayben [sic Robert Mebane?] a Continental officer & others I do not recollect

Question 6th 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 received a written discharge from both tours, 1st from General Butler & 2nd from Colonel Owens & I have misplaced them or laused [sic, ?] them Since.

Question 7th 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. David Williams Abner Hull

S/ Joseph Willis

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph Willis". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and somewhat slanted to the right.

[David Williams, a clergyman and Abner Hull gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[On March 9, 1853 in Cleveland County North Carolina, Mrs. Jemima Willis, 65, a resident of Lincoln County North Carolina filed for a widow's pension under the 1853 act stating that she is the widow of Joseph Willis; that she married him sometime in the year 1833 or 1834; that her husband died February 18, 1848; that they were married in Lincoln County.]

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$25.66 commencing March 4th, 1831, for 7 months & 21 days service as a private in the North Carolina militia.]