

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of John Finley W1257

Sally Finley

f44SC

Transcribed by Will Graves

1/12/08 rev'd 2/12/15

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Where the meaning is not compromised by adhering to the spelling, punctuation or grammar, no change has been made. Corrections or additional notes have been inserted within brackets or footnotes. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. A bracketed question mark indicates that the word or words preceding it represent(s) a guess by me. The word 'illegible' or 'indecipherable' appearing in brackets indicates that at the time I made the transcription, I was unable to decipher the word or phrase in question. Only materials pertinent to the military service of the veteran and to contemporary events have been transcribed. Affidavits that provide additional information on these events are included and genealogical information is abstracted, while standard, 'boilerplate' affidavits and attestations related solely to the application, and later nineteenth and twentieth century research requests for information have been omitted. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading skills fail to catch all misinterpretations. Also, dates or numbers which the software treats as numerals rather than words are not corrected: for example, the software transcribes "the eighth of June one thousand eighty six" as "the 8th of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

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State of South Carolina, Abbeville District: SS

On this twenty fourth day of October in the year of our Lord 1832 personally appeared in Open Court before the Honorable Richard Gantt presiding Judge of the Court of Common Pleas & General Sessions for the said State and District now sitting John Finley a resident of the Village of Abbeville and the District of Abbeville and the State of South Carolina aged seventy-two 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 7th June 1832.

That he the said John Finley entered the service of the United States at the age of Sixteen years on the 15th day of August 1776, that he was an enlisted soldier or recruit and enrolled as such by one Sergeant Emmit for the particular service of a corps of mounted horsemen called as the Applicant believes the Georgia Provincials or Rangers whose sole duty appeared to be the frontier protection in Georgia against Indian depredations and Tory revolt against the Country, that he enlisted under the said Sergeant Emmit in Craven County afterwards Ninety Six District and now Laurens District on the 15th day of August 1776 for the term or period of time of Eighteen months, that he with other recruits of like character were marched from the this place in the State of South Carolina by the said Sergeant Emmit to a place in the State of Georgia called Kettle Creek where he was placed under the command of one Captain McFarlin [perhaps either Capt. James McFarland or Capt. John McFarland, both of Georgia] who had rendezvoused his company at Kettle Creek for about the period of one month and from thence was marched by Captain McFarlin to a place called Neels or Neals fort [sic, probably Nail's Fort] on the frontiers of Georgia where the company joined another but under what Captain the Applicant does not recollect, at Neal's Fort about the number of three companies were embodied collected or organized, and from thence the Applicant was marched with the said troop under the command of a Major Marberry [probably Leonard Marbury or Marbrey] to a place called Fort Barrington on the Altamaha River in the State of Georgia which place was designated the Head Quarters of the troops, and at which place the troops had a battle with the Indians who were defeated with a loss not known to the Applicant but with a loss on the part of the troops of five or six men killed, and from which place the troops alternately issued and moved in small squads & scouting parties up & down the said River & over to the North & South bank through the country to check and intimidate the inroads of the Indians and other enemies of the Country for about the period of seven months, ending in April or May 1777, from Fort Barrington the said troops were marched under the command of one Colonel John Baker to East Florida near the sea coast and near the mouth of St. John's River and from thence was marched by change of course up to a place called Nassau Swamp where the said troops were defeated to the number of about 120 by a much greater and superior force of Indians & British who by stealth and address gained the superior advantage of enfilading the troops of Liberty between this impenetrable swamp and the enemy's lines in so embarrassed a situation as to terminate in their defeat, and success to the Indian

and British victors at which battle the Applicant was taken prisoner being on foot, having two days previous to this battle had his horse shot dead from under him in a little skirmish with the Indians, from Nassau Swamp he was taken by the British and put into their castle or prison at St. Augustine, where he remained in prison several months and was finally released by an English Officer (a Scotchman) by the name of Major McClorea [?] or McLorin (as the Applicant believes) who promised the Applicant his liberty from prison on condition of joining his troops then in Florida, to this the Applicant assented with a firm resolution to forfeit the terms of his liberation from prison as soon as an opportunity afforded for his escape, which he considered justifiable in his duressed and solitary situation, in a short time after the Applicant's liberation from prison, he and another individual made their escape from the British and the Applicant after a painful journey on foot, suffering every privation incident to a fleeing prisoner of his age without money and friends hungry, badly clothed, lousy and sick and as it were in an enemy's Country he arrived back to his native place of Ninety Six District in the State of South Carolina. The Applicant here states that from the period of his enlistment as aforesaid in the Georgia Rangers or Provincials under Sergeant Emmet down to the period of his return to his native District Ninety Six as aforesaid, was more than Eighteen months & considers himself entitled to pay for at least the term of his enlistment, although he was prisoner part of the time.

The Applicant further states that sometime in the year 1780 he went to the State of Pennsylvania where he had some relations with whom he resided until the close of the Revolutionary War, that he was sickly and frail, and unable to perform military duty after his return & escape from the prison & British in St Augustine in Florida as aforesaid.

The Applicant 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.

Answers to Interrogatories

Answer to Interrogatory 1st – the Applicant says he was born in Craven County afterwards Ninety Six District now Laurens district in the State of South Carolina and that he was born in November of the year 1760.

Answer to 2nd Interrogatory – The Applicant says he has not the original record of his age, that it was plundered by the Tories during the revolutionary war but has frequently heard his parents tell his age.

Answer to 3rd Interrogatory – The Applicant says he was living in Craven County Ninety Six District when he enlisted into the Service of the United States, that he lived between two & three years in the State of Pennsylvania and since in the State of South Carolina since the Revolutionary War, and that he now lives in the Village of Abbeville in Abbeville District in the State of South Carolina.

Answer to 4th Interrogatory – The Applicant says that he entered the service of the United States as an enlisted private in a corps of troops called the Georgia Rangers or Provincials, by what authority these troops were raised the Applicant cannot tell.

Answer to 5th Interrogatory – The Applicant says he cannot answer this question with certainty the circumstances of his service he has in his Declaration already related.

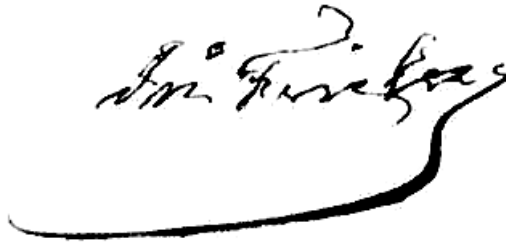
Answer to 6th Interrogatory – The Applicant never received either a verbal or written discharge, he was taken prisoner by the British & kept in a prison at St. Augustine for several months & for a period beyond the term of his enlistment of 18 months as above in his declaration stated.

Answer to 7th Interrogatory – Thomas P. Spierin [?], Col. Patrick Noble, Col. Alexander Bowie, Samuel L. Watt, John Allen, George Shillito are persons in his neighborhood who can testify as to his character for veracity and their belief of my services as a soldier of the revolution.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid in open Court.

S/ Jas. Wardlaw, Clerk

S/ Jno. Finlay



[Franklin Branch, a clergyman, and John Hodges gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

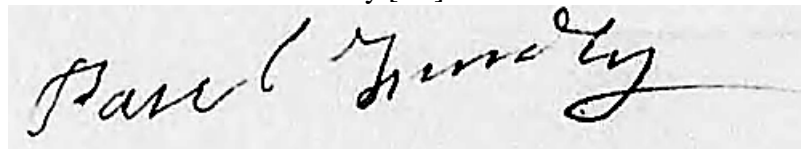
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State of South Carolina, Abbeville District: SS

I Paul Finley¹ a resident of Laurens District in the State of South Carolina do solemnly swear that I am the next youngest brother of John Finley whose declaration as an applicant for a pension under the act of Congress passed 7th June 1832 accompanies this affidavit and that the facts stated and set forth in the said Declaration by the said John Finley from the period of his enlistment under Sergeant Emmet on the 15th day of August 1776 for Eighteen months in a corps of troops raised for the frontier service in the State of Georgia called as the deponent believes the Georgia Provincials or Rangers, as well as all the subsequent detailed statements of service mentioned in his Declaration down to the period of the battle at Nassau Swamp are strictly true and substantially correct, and that these statements of fact are known to the deponent from the fact of enlistment with his brother John Finley at the same time under Sergeant Emmet in the same corps of Georgia Rangers or troops and of having performed the same service, which his brother John Finley as related in his Declaration down to the period of the battle at Nassau Swamp where he separated from his brother John Finley by effecting his escape and retreat from the enemy. The deponent says that he has no personal knowledge of any subsequent service performed by his brother John Finley, but believes the same to be true from the character which his brother John Finley has always sustained as a man of truth and veracity and from the well known fact of his Whig principles & revolutionary services.

Sworn to before me
S/ Geo. Shillito, JP

S/ Paul Findly [sic]



Oct. 13th 1832

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State of South Carolina, Abbeville District

Amended Declaration of John Finley and applicant for a pension under the act of Congress of June 7th 1832 in conformity with the received Brief Objections of the War Department pointed out with red ink under the sixth and fourteenth Interrogatories of the said Brief --

Answer to the sixth objection

I John Finley do solemnly swear that Captain McFarlin (the names of the Lieutenant & Ensign I have forgotten), Major ___ Marbury and Col. John Baker are the only Officers I served & perform duty under in the Revolutionary War, that I know of no Officer of the Regular Army, who were with the troops in which I served, and that I know of no other field Officer than those I have mentioned

¹ [Paul Findly W9440](#)

except, it be General Screven and I only mention him, as the probable person or Officer who had the command of the troops in which I served, but as to the certain knowledge of the fact, I am ignorant, although I have seen him with the troops at Fort Barrington, but not in command that I know, neither was he in Uniform.

Sworn to before
S/ W. C. Black, JP
April 29, 1833

S/ Jno. Finlay

[p 29: By affidavit dated April 29, 1833 and given in Abbeville District South Carolina, Leanden Bryan gave testimony that Paul Finley, a witness for the services of John Finley, died April 23rd, 1833 and was buried the same day.]

[p 9: On April 12, 1853, in Abbeville District SC, Sally Finlay [sic], widow of John Finley, deceased filed an affidavit stating the her husband John, died at Abbeville Court House on December 17, 1836, a pensioner of the US for his services in the Revolution; that she married him on December 25, 1808 in Abbeville; that they were married by the Rev'd Arthur Williams, a Baptist minister. She signed her application with her mark.]

[p 10: Certification by Gabriel M Mattison, Magt. of Abbeville District that he has examined the original of the private record of the marriage of John Finley to Sally Posey in the family Bible now in the possession of Sally Finley which reads as follows:
"John Finley married to Sally Posey on the 25th day of December 1808".]

[p 31: On February 16, 1837 in Abbeville District South Carolina Benjamin Lane Posey gave testimony that he was present at the marriage of John Finley and Sally Finlay who was Sally Posey; the ceremony was performed by the Rev. Arthur Williams, a Baptist minister on December 25, 1808.]

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$60 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service as a private for 18 months in the South Carolina Continental line. His widow was pensioned in a like amount.]