

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Benjamin Willis (Willes) W19634
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

Bridget Willis NY

Montgomery County

On this 20th day of April 1818 before me the subscriber one of the Judges of the court of common Pleas of the county of Montgomery and State of New York Personally appears Benjamin Willis aged Fifty five years resident in the town of Broadalbin in said county who being by me first duly sworn according to Law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the Provisions made by the Late Act of Congress entitled an Act to provide for certain Persons engaged in the Land and Naval Service of the United in the Revolutionary War. That the said Benjamin Willis enlisted in New City in Rockland County in the state of New York in the company commanded by Captain Michael Rudolph [Michael Rudolph BLWt945-300] of the corps commanded by Colonel Henry Lee of Virginia, on the last of June or the first of July one Thousand seven hundred and seventy Nine that he continued to serve in the said corps untill August one Thousand seven hundred and Eighty three being the close of the War when he was discharged from service at the head of Elk river [now Elkton] in the state of Maryland. that his discharge is lost. that he was in the Battles of Georgetown in South Carolina [24-25 Jan 1781], at the Haw river in North Carolina [Battle of Wetzels Mill on Reedy fork of Haw River, 6 Mar 1781], at Guilford [Guilford Courthouse, 15 Mar 1781] in said state and in a number of skirmishes in the southern states and that he is in reduced circumstances and stands in need of the assistance of his country for support, and that he has no other evidence now in his power of his said services Benjamin hisXmark Willis

PRESENT the Honorable Aaron Harring Esq'r first Judge

State of New York }

Montgomery County } ss. Be it Remembered, That on the Eighteenth day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty personally appeared in the Court House at the town of Johnstown in the County aforesaid in the Court called the Court of Common Pleas in open court, the said court being a court of record for the County aforesaid having the power of fine and imprisonment proceeding according to the course of the Common Law with a Jurisdiction unlimited in point of amount keeping a record of their proceedings. Benjamin Williss aged Fifty Six years, resident in Broadalbin in the county aforesaid who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath declare, that he served in the revolutionary war as follow: that on or about the twentieth day of June one thousand seven hundred and seventy nine at the County of Rockland in the State of New York he enlisted as a private soldier for during the war in Captain Michael Rudolph's company and Colonel Henry Lee's Legion and Virginia line that he continued in said company and Regiment until the termination of the War when he was honorably discharged at the head of Elk river which he thinks was in Maryland that he was in the battle of Haw River, Guildford Court House and several investments of fort and skirmishes in the southern states. that he has been placed on the pension list under the law of 18th March 1818 and that his original declaration is dated the twentieth day of April one thousand eight hundred and Eighteen and that his pension certificate is No. 593.

And I do solemnly swear that I was a resident Citizen of the United States on the 18th day of March 1818 and that I have not since that time by gift sale or in any manner disposed of my property or any part thereof with intent thereby so to diminish it as to bring myself within the provisions of an act of Congress entitled "an act to provide for certain persons engaged in the land and naval service of the United States in the Revolutionary War" passed on the 18th day of March 1818 and that I have not nor has any person in trust for me any property or securities contracts or debts due to me nor have I any income other than what is contained in the Schedule hereto annexed and by me subscribed, to wit:

Schedule

Real property I have none.

Personal property. 1 Iron kettle 1 small pot, 1 Tea kettle, 1 small kettle, 1 spider, 1 fire shovel, 4 chairs, two chests, 1 Trammel six spoons 4 knives & forks, 4 plates, 1 Bowl, 3 cups, 3 saucers, 1 Log chain 1 Ax. that I am a farmer and labourer by occupation I have three in family whom I support Viz. my wife Bridget aged fifty three, sickly, Daughter Rachael seventeen not able to do any hard work, having a weakness at the stomach, and affection of the lungs, son Robert eleven years of age and hearty that I am much troubled with Rheumatism and other complaints preventing me from working at least half the time that I owe Bona fide debts to the amount of Ninety Dollars. I have no means of support than above stated except the pension I received from the United States which was paid up to the fourth of March 1820.

Benjamin hisXmark Willis

NOTES:

On 4 June 1845 Bridget Willes (as she signed), of Darien in Genesee County NY, applied for a pension stating that she married Benjamin Willis in New York City in April 1786, and he died on 12 July 1843. Their marriage was certified by their children, Catharine Vickery of Darien, 53 in October 1845, and John J. Willis (as he signed), 39, of Alden in Erie County. John J. Willis stated that his parents had ten children older than himself.

On 16 June 1845 Isaac Cole, 65, stated that he had known Bridget Willis since she was an infant, and that her first child was named Nancy, who was older than 58. On 13 April 1846 Isaac Cole stated that Benjamin Willis and Bridget Cole left their homes in Rockland County NY and went to New York City, that when they returned they said they were married, and that he went to lived with them a year afterward. He also stated that they had a total of 12 children, three of whom were older than Catharine.

On 11 Aug 1846 Bridget Willess (as she then signed) was said to be 79. She stated that she recalled her late husband saying he had served "under "Capt Rodolph Col Henry Lee, and Gen. Green" [Nathanael Greene], and "spent about 3 years during the war in the Southern states."

A bounty-land application dated 10 May 1855 states that Bridget Willis was 88 and a resident of Marilla in Erie County NY, that she married Benjamin Willis on 28 April 1786, and that her name before marriage was Betsey [sic] Cole.