

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters](#)

Pension Application of John Harris W21247

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 14 March 2012.

State of South Carolina } Court of Ordinary Sumter district
Sumter district }

On this 24th day of February 1854 Before William Lewis Esquire Judge of the court of ordinary in and for Sumter district & State aforesaid personally appeared William Harris a resident of said district and State who being first sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions made by the acts of Congress for himself and other surviving children the pension due to his Mother Jane Harris late of Sumter district deceased, the pension due at her death under the acts of the 4th July 1836, 7th July 1838 and 3 March 1843. That he is the son of the said Jane Harris who was the widow of John Harris late of York district South Carolina deceased: That his father the said John Harris was a Revolutionary soldier as Captain of a volunteer company of Cavalry in the North Carolina militia which was formed and pretty much equipped at his own expence and at one time under the command of Major [William Richardson] Davie; that he was at the battle of Hanging rock in South Carolina [30 July 1780] under Mecklenburg County No. Ca. in which said company was mustered into service; that he was frequently engaged in cutting of the foraging parties of the British and Tories and some skirmishes about Salisbury and Guilford courthouses in No. Carolina; that when he joined the army in 1780 he was living with his family in Rocky River Mecklenburg county in No. Carolina and after hostilities ceased removed to York district So. Carolina, but the precise time the declarant was not informed: That his said Father and Mother were married in Mecklenburg county North Carolina on 3d April 1777 and that his Mothers maiden name was Jane Moore. He further states that his said father died in the year 1811, leaving the said Jane Harris his widow who did not again marry but remained his widow until 5 March 1844, when she died leaving the declarant and his Brother Wiley Lord Harris [looks like Wiley Lard Harris] a resident of York district South Carolina and his Sister Margaret Ward in the State of Mississippi her surviving and only surviving children, and that this declarant and his said Brother Wiley L. Harris still survive, but cannot say if his Sister Margaret Ward be alive or not, not having heard for some years when she was in very delicate health. That the foregoing declaration was derived from conversations with his Mother who lived and died in the Declarants family and that she furnished him with a Memorandum in writing of her age, marriage, ages of his Brothers and Sisters and death of his father which the declarant transcribed into her New testament that the family Bible containing the original record of the marriage and Births of the children was surrendered to court when his father became embarrassed and reduced in circumstances by being security for others, as the declarant was sufficiently old to know & now recollects his parents stating that the Bible was surrendered with the other articles

[signed] William Harris

Sworn and subscribed to before me, the day and year first within written. In testimony whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed the seal of said court [signed] William Lewis

"Jane Moore was born April 1756 and was married to John Harris April 3d 1777.

"Gates Washington Harris, the oldest Son was born on the 10th January 1778.

"Isaac Ross Harris was born March 1780.

"Wiley Lord Harris was born 1782.

"James Moore Harris was born March 1785.

"Margaret Harris was born April 1787.

"Samuel Harris was born January 1789

"Had a still born child 1790.

"John Sherman Harris was born in Feby 1792.

"William Harris was born Sept 10th 1793.
"Jane Harris was born Decem'r. 23, 1795.
"John Harris departed this life May 18th 1811
"Gates W. Harris died in the spring of 1811.
"Jane Harris the youngest daughter died December 1812
"Jane Harris died March 5th 1844."

Copy of the Inscription on the Tombstone of Mrs. Jane Harris
In Memory
of
Mrs Jane Harris
Who died March 8: 1843
In the eighty eighth year of her age.
In early life she was a Lady
Of much energy.
Her Christian Character
Shown brightest
In a quiet unobtrusive character.
For many years before her death
he was unable to attend church
And devoted her time to reading
Meditation and prayer.

State of So. Ca. }
Sumter dist } Personally appeared William Harris of Sumter dist who being duly sworn
according to law upon his oath swears that the Tomb Stone above and within mentioned was erected and
placed over the remains of his Mother Mrs. Jane Harris a few months after her death.
[signed 22 Jul 1854] Wm. Harris

South Carolina }
York District } Personally came Francis Henry aged eighty five years, of the District and State
aforesaid and being sworn makes oath that he was well acquainted with Captain John Harris late of York
District – that about the year 1790 Deponent mustered under him as Captain near Yorkville – that said
John Harris not long before had removed from Mecklenberg County North Carolina to this District – that
Deponent well recollects that the said John Harris was reputed to have served as Captain of a company of
North Carolina militia in the war of American Independence. Deponent states that he had no acquaintance
with said John Harris until after the war and beleives that he did not remove to this District until after
said war of American Independence – that it was common repute that said John Harris was Captain of a
company formed & equipped in Mecklenberg county No. ca. and Deponent beleives that he did serve in
said war as a captain. Deponent knew said John Harris in 1790 had a wife & children – has been well
acquainted with Wylie L. Harris who is now about seventy years of age now residing in said District &
State, has known him since boyhood who was a son of the said John Harris – knew another son of the
said John Harris named James M. Harris who was a Sheriff of this District & removed many years ago to
the West where he is reputed to have died – the other children Deponent was not personally acquainted
with. Deponent knew Captain John Harris for eight or ten years after he mustered under him as above
stated cannot recollect at what time he died in this District
Sworn to & subscribed before me this 3^d day of March A.D. 1854 [signed] Francis Henry

[The following affidavit was sent by John J. Ward of Oakland, MS to his uncle, Wilie L. Harris Esq'r. The letter was certified by Thomas Ward, Clerk of the Yalobusha County Court.]

State of Mississippi }

Yallobusha County }

This day personally came before the undersigned, a Justice of the Peace in and for said County, John James Ward of said state and County, who makes oath that Margaret Ward, his mother, is now living in this County, and is, by her own estimation, Sixty eight years of age, also that John Harris, his uncle, a brother of his mother, has resided, during six years last past, in Phillips County, in the State of Arkansas, and is Sixty four years of age, that he believes said John Harris is still living there having received a letter from him about three weeks ago

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 5th day of June AD 1854

[signed] John J. Ward

[On 22 July 1854 William Harris amended his application of 24 Feb 1854 in accordance with the above letter.]

James Taylor Esq'r }

Sumterville }

Yorkville June 15 1854

Dear Sir, I receiv'd your very intelligent letter of June 12 stating that you had obtained record evidence of payment made to Capt John Harris & Company of Salisbury Dist. N.C. Certainly he is the very idetical man. I have often heard my Father say that he rendevoused'd frequently at Salisbury and that it was there he was musterd into the service, under what Commanders I cannot recollect. I have heard him speak of Gen'l. Geo Graham [George Graham], of General Davidson [sic: Col. William Lee Davidson], of Col [William Richardson] Davie and of Col [William] Washington. Genl Green [sic: Nathanael Greene], and that the field of his Operations was pretty much from Guilford Court House down to the lower part of Mecklengburg County N.C. and I believe he was at the battle of Hanging rock, S.C.

I know I have heard both him and my Mother say that he marched with Gen'l Greens army when General Green was retreating before Lord Corn Wallace [sic: Cornwallis, Feb 1781] through North Carolina to Guilford Court House, and that he fought in that battle [Guilford Courthouse, 15 Mar 1781]. he had also a waggon in the service which accounts for the individual amt that you speak of. I have heard my Mother tell an anecdote with regard to my Father and a man by the name of Black Bill Alexander [Capt. William "Black Bill" Alexander of the Rowan County NC Militia in 1780 and the 1st Regiment of South Carolina State Dragoons in 1781], two of the best Horsemen in the American Army. those two men were always selected to reconnoitre the British Army haveing two of the finest Horses, of the finest Metal, fleet, & strong and under good Command. and they being two of the activest men that could be started were always sent out upon these expeditions. They would get so near sometimes to the British Army that they would be seen by the British. and the British Cavalry would take after them and chase them. but they being better Horsemen and understanding how to ride through the woods better than them, they could out run the British Horsemen and when they got to a respectful Distance they would turn up there rumps and clap their hands upon their rumps by way of defiance

Now this is a convincing evidence to my mind that my father did serve faithfully in the American revolution because she could have no motive in telling such a tale as that unless it was so. it is now more than 50 years since I first heard her tell this story. I have written 2 letters to my Sister Ward but have not yet received an answer, but I think an answer will surely come soon, I am pretty certain that she is still alive

I am with much/ respect Yours truly/ Wylie L Harris

Please to write soon

[On 17 May 1854 Philip Sandifer stated that he had heard his father, Philip Sanders (pension application R9215), and Thomas Carroll, a revolutionary soldier, state that John Harris had been a Captain in the North Carolina Cavalry. A letter dated 22 Sep 1854 refers to the pension application of Thomas Downs

(S8337) who stated that he volunteered in the Cavalry under Captain John Harris and under Major William Richardson Davie in 1780.]

NOTE:

On 1 May 1854 Elizabeth Litle, 73, of York County SC, stated that she had known Capt. John Harris and Jane Harris, that the latter had lived with her son, William Harris, in Sumter District SC, and that the children of John and Jane Harris were as follows: Washington Gates Harris, Isaac R. Harris, Wylie L Harris, James M. Harris, Margaret Harris, John Harris, William Harris, and Jane Harris. She stated that Washington G. Harris, Isaac R. Harris, John Harris, and James M. Harris had moved many years before to the West, that W. Gates Harris, Isaac R. Harris, and James Harris were reputed to have died, that Jane Harris died in York District in 1812 or 1813, and that Margaret Harris and John Harris had moved to Mississippi many years before. There are other statements of a similar kind.

On 14 June 1877 the Department of the Interior wrote to John Harris of Rock Hill SC informing him that he was being sent a "Testament, belonging to your Grandparents, and which was sent to this office to be filed in evidence in the case of Mrs. Jane Harris in her application for pension." John Harris acknowledged receipt in June 1782.