

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of James Downing W25536  
Transcribed by Will Graves

Sarah fn43NC  
3/11/10

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State of North Carolina Cumberland County

This day personally appeared before me P. J. Tillinghast, Jr., one of the Justices of Peace for the County of Cumberland and State of North Carolina Charles Downing of New Hanover County North Carolina a private Soldier of the Continental Army of the Revolutionary War of the United States who wishes to be enrolled on the Pension List of the United States and paid as other Pensioners of the State of North Carolina. After being sworn according to law deposeth and saith that he the Deponent did enlist under Captain Robert Rowan at Cross Creek now Fayetteville North Carolina and was attached to the said Captain R. Rowan's Company and marched with his Company to Wilmington with Carolina & from there to Charleston South Carolina and this deponent was in the Battle of Fort Moultrie South Carolina in the year 1776, and this deponent was transferred to Captain Tatum was company and afterwards volunteered under Captain Dickson on Detachment command and did go from Charleston to Georgia first to Savannah Georgia & from there to Sunbury under Major White 1st Regiment North Carolina Troops and this deponent went under General McIntosh, while on that expedition to the South, with the Georgia Troops. Then this Deponent returned to Wilmington North Carolina and received an honorable discharge having continued in said Service 12 months from the date of his Deponent's enlistment. This deponent further saith that he was on various other Tours of

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Service in the Militia under Captain E. Williams, Colonel Thomas Crawford & Colonel Thomas Childs & Colonel Wade for about three years: this deponent further saith that he the Deponent was discharged from his first tour of Continental service as above stated at Wilmington North Carolina on the 30th day of April 1777 having served his tour of twelve months for which he enlisted under Colonel Robert Rowan then Captain Rowan.

This deponent further says that he the Deponent is between sixty-five and seventy years of age and nearly blind & Deaf and his Deponent's Circumstances in life is so reduced as to require him to call of his Country the United States for support under the Late act of Congress further this deponent saith not.

Sworn & subscribed before me  
S/ P. J. Tillinghast, Jr., at Fayetteville  
this 26th day of November 1818  
and to whose deposition faith and  
credit is attached

S/ James Downing, X his mark

North Carolina Cumberland County: this day personally appeared before me P. J. Tillinghast Junior one of the Justices of Peace for the County of Cumberland and State aforesaid Colonel George Dudley<sup>1</sup> now of said County & State aforesaid after being sworn according to law deposeth and saith that he is personally acquainted with James Downing the present Claimant for Pension and that he the Deponent did see the said James Downing soon after he James Downing enlisted under Captain R. Rowan at Fayetteville North Carolina in the year 1776 and that the said James Downing was then performing the duties of a private Soldier Captain Rowan's Company of the first Regiment North Carolina [words obliterated] did marched with the said troops to Charleston South Carolina and to the best of this deponent's belief the said James Downing did continue in service as aforesaid the full term for which he the said James Downing did enlist faithfully performed his duty and received an honorable discharge which discharge has often been shown to this deponent. This deponent further saith that the said James Downing is very deaf & nearly blind further this deponent saith not.

S/ Geo. Dudley

Sworn and subscribed before me at Fayetteville this 26 November 1818

S/ P. J. Tillinghast, Jr., JP

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State of North Carolina Secretary's Office the 7th of April 1820

I William Hill Secretary of State in & for the State aforesaid, do hereby certify that I do not find the name of James Downing on the muster rolls of the Continental line of this State in the revolutionary war, but finding on the Journals of the Provincial Congress which met at Hillsboro on the 20th of August 1775, that Robert Rowan was appointed a Captain on the first of September 1775 and not find the said Robert Rowan's name on the Rolls aforesaid I am induced to believe the declaration of the said James Downing is true.

The names of those who entered the service in the early part of the war for a short time our seldom found on the rolls. Given under my hand the date above.

S/ Wm Hill

State of North Carolina New Hanover County

On this 13th day of September in the year of our Lord 1832, personally appeared James Downing in open Court before the Justices of the court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions, now sitting, in the town of Wilmington, in, and for the County of New Hanover, and State of North Carolina aforesaid; 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 of June 1832.

That he was born in the now State of Virginia, that he is nearly eighty-eight years of age; that he entered into the Colonies service, in April or May A.D. 1776 by enlistment, at a place then usually called Cross Creek, now the town of Fayetteville in the County of Cumberland, and the State of North Carolina, in a company commanded by Captain Rowan; and this deponent thinks, that this company was attached to the first Regiment raised in North Carolina; which according to his recollection was commanded by Colonel Moore: That he was marched into South Carolina and was at the siege of Sullivan's Island. That afterwards his company with other troops were ordered into Georgia, under the command of Major White, and Captains Dickson and Low; that he returned with other troops to Wilmington North Carolina, the officers were Colonel White, Major Murphy, Captains Dickson and Low; at which place his company was

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<sup>1</sup> This MAY be the same man as FPA S41514 who filed for a pension while living in Chatham County, NC

discharged by Colonel Moore. This deponent is under the impression that at the time of discharge, that Mr. Moore may have held a higher rank; yet under any circumstance he was the senior officer at the time. That afterwards deponent voluntarily joined a troop of horse; in which station he served for upwards of two years, and a half; that at different times, he was under the command of Colonel Williams, Wade Milback, or Medback, and Crawford: that he was detailed on and this special occasion under Colonel Harrington. This Deponent further states that he furnished himself with his horse, pistols, sword etc. Further that he was ordered to the assistance of Charleston, but did not get further than Cedar Creek; that he was then under the command of Colonel Gulp or Glaph, and Major Samuel Benton; that after the surrender of Charleston we rendezvoused to get to the High Hills of Santee; but being headed by the enemy we bent our course for Camden; being cut off again, the men scattered, and there was scarcely enough left, for a guard for the wagons; under these circumstances, this deponent got permission to go to Cheraw, then the residence of his family; that the morning after his arrival the British Gragoons [sic, dragoons] entered the place; they were under the command of Major McCarthey or McArthur and Captain Campbell.

This Deponent further swears that the discharge given him by Colonel Moore together with other papers relating to his services were lost, stolen or destroyed.

That at the time of the loss he was in good circumstances, and had health. Now he is blind, deaf almost helpless and has frequently become the object of public charity. He states that he went into a respectable Store to purchase of articles necessary for his business; that he left his pocket book on the counter; that it was supposed and generally believed that it was taken by the clerk belonging to the Store; this deponent never got his pocket book, money, or papers, except a few torn pieces of the latter, among which was the signature of Colonel Moore.

This deponent refers to the testimony of Captain Jacob Hartman, and [an] old inhabitant of Wilmington, and a most respectable citizens: and this deponent does expressly relinquished every claim whatever, to a pension, or annuity, except the present, and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any State or agency.

Sworn to the day & year aforesaid

S/ John W. Stanley, Clk

Jacob Hartman being first duly sworn in open Court maketh oath that he has been well acquainted with James Downing for upwards of thirty-five years; that he always understood from himself, his relations and particularly from his late sister, that he served as a soldier for many years in the revolutionary war; And this was always the uniform impression and is now the general belief of the elder part of the community acquainted with Mr. Downing. Deponent states that for veracity, applicant never was to deponent's knowledge questioned. In relation to the loss of his pocket book money and papers, as by him stated in his application; deponent says that he was present shortly after the fact; and inquired of him why he carried such papers about him, he replied that he was informed that Congress had passed a law in favor of revolutionary officers and soldiers, and that he had put the papers in his pocket book for the purpose of obtaining information, and legally advice.

That that among the pieces of paper found, and which deponent saw was the name of Colonel Moore; that this Deponent swears that from his knowledge and from his long acquaintance with Downing that he believes that he would not swear to a falsehood; he is aged, deaf and almost blind; yet though and object of charity, he has about him the Spirit of Independence.

S/ Jacob Hartman

Sworn to & subscribed in open Court the 14th day of September A.D. 1832  
S/ John W. Stanley, Clerk

State of North Carolina New Hanover County: Superior Court of Law Fall Term 1833

On this the 30th day of October 1833 before the Honorable Robert Strange one of the Judges of the Superior Courts of Law & Equity in and for the State of North Carolina now sitting and presiding in the Superior Court of Law for the County of New Hanover, personally appeared James Downing a resident of New Hanover County in the State of North Carolina, aged eighty-seven years, who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following amended declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

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

1<sup>st</sup> He enlisted with Captain Robert Rowan in the spring of 1776 for twelve months and served that term out as a private soldier; he entered in a company commanded by the said Captain Robert Rowan, Neil McAlester first Lieutenant, Robert Council second Lieutenant, Robert Varnell Ensign, in a Regiment in brigade commanded by Colonel or General Moore -- that when he entered the service he resided at Cross Creek now Fayetteville in Cumberland County NC; that he rendezvoused or an embodied at Cross Creek and was marched from thence to Wilmington thence to Charleston, thence to Sullivan's Island and was there at the attack made upon Fort Moultrie by the enemy in thence back to Charleston -- thence he was detached under Captain Dickson, Lieutenant Evans, in a Regiment under Colonel White, Major Murphy, upon an expedition against the Indians and marched to Savannah, thence to Sunbury and made it Head Quarters and occasionally took excursions in detached parties against the British and Indians, at one time on board a Row Galley and took prizes a sloop brig and schooner laden with rum, rice etc. -- from Sunbury he marched back to Charleston, thence to Wilmington and discharged in April or May 1777 by General Moore a part of which is here with appended the rest having been lost, that he knows of no person alive by whom he can prove this service, but accompanies this declaration with the affidavits of Colonel George Dudley and his sister Mary Vann taken several years ago.

2ndly In a company of cavalry in Anson County under Captain William McDaniel, John Pemberton first Lieutenant, Slythe [?] Pemberton second Lieutenant in a Regiment commanded by Colonel Edward Williams in the fall of 1780 and served one month as a private in an expedition against the Tories, marched to Gun Swamp in Robeson County NC thence to Drowning Creek, and Little Pedee [River] thence back into Anson County NC and discharged, that he was a volunteer that he resided in Anson County NC when he entered the service that he has no documentary evidence to show this service and knows of no person by whom he can prove it.

3rdly Previously to the last mentioned service he served two months as a private in a company of militia in South Carolina his Captain's name he cannot now recollect, Hicks was Lieutenant, in a Regiment commanded by Colonel Culp, Lemuel Benton Major in April 1780; that he was drafted for this service; that when he entered it he resided in Cheraw South Carolina; that he marched from Cheraw to Georgetown, thence on for Charleston and hearing the firing of cannon, Charleston being then besieged he marched to high hills of Santee, thence to a place called the hanging Rock, thence on to Camden and being cut off thither by the enemy he marched back to Cheraw and discharged; that he has no documentary evidence and knows of no person by whom

he can prove this service --

4thly Immediately after the expiration of the above mentioned months service in the cavalry he entered again as a volunteer in or about November 1780 in a company of Cavalry in Anson County NC under Captain William McDaniel, John Pemberton first Lieutenant, Slythe Pemberton second Lieutenant, in a Regiment commanded by Colonel Edward Williams and served three months as 1st Sergeant in said company; that when he entered this service he lived in Anson County NC; that he marched to Gun Swamp, Drowning Creek & Little Pedee in pursuit of Tories; that he has no documentary evidence and knows of no person by whom he can prove this service --

5thly After the last mentioned service he entered again as a volunteer in a company of Anson cavalry under Captain William McDaniel, John Pemberton first Lieutenant Slythe Pemberton second Lieutenant in a Regiment under Colonel Edward Williams; sometimes under Colonel Wade and sometimes Colonel Medlock and served eighteen months as 1st Sergeant in tours of a fortnight each in expeditions against the Tories; that he was in several skirmishes with them and sometimes parties of the British cavalry or dragoons under Captain Hector McNeill and Captain Fanning [sic, Colonel David Fanning]; in two at Beatties' Bridge [sic, Beatti's Bridge] on Drowning Creek, and in others and other places. -- that he was constantly in service from this time viz. from about the month of February or March 1781 till the termination of the war; that his marches were in Anson and the adjoining Counties in pursuit of the Tories and in defense of the inhabitants against their depredations; that twice he went in a guard to guard Colonel Williams on his way to the General Assembly of North Carolina at Hillsboro; that he resided in Anson County NC that he has no documentary evidence and knows of no person by whom he can prove this service --

The Continental regiments with which he served were the 1st and 3rd of the Continental line in the 5th as he believes of the Virginia line; the regular officers he knew were General Moore, General Rutherford, General Harrington -- Colonel Marion if he was one, General Lee, General Gates, General Greene, Colonel DeKiezen, Captain Rowan -- and others I could mention after some further reflection.

Answers of James Downing the aforesaid applicant to the questions propounded to him by the Court aforesaid as prescribed by the War Department.

Ans 1<sup>st</sup> I was born in South Carolina in Cheraw in about the year as near as I can ascertain 1745.

Ans 2nd -- I have no record of my age now, it was recorded in a book which my brother took away with him when he removed to South Carolina.

Ans 3. When first called into service I was living in Cumberland County NC I then lived a while in SC then in Anson County NC since the Revolutionary War I've lived in Sampson County NC and in Wilmington NC also in New Hanover County NC and now live in New Hanover County North Carolina as Wilmington.

Ans 4. I first enlisted, then was drafted and then volunteered --

Ans 5. I refer to my declaration -- I recollect Colonel Crawford's Regiment of militia in Anson County NC -- Colonel Williams, Colonel Lillington's -- Colonel Caswell -- Colonel Brown's of Bladen, Colonel Owens, Colonel Armstrong's of Cumberland NC &c Culp's & Col. Childs.

Ans 6. I never received but one discharge given me by Colonel or General Moore part of which is hereunto appended.

Ans 7. I am known to nearly all the citizens of Wilmington I am believed to have been a soldier of the Revolution.

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 & subscribed the day & year first above written.

S/ James Downing, X his mark

[Joshua James and John Walker gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[fn p. 36: Thomas P. Hunt, a clergyman, gave a standard supporting affidavit in open court on October 30, 1833]

[fn p. 38: Mary Vann, a citizen of Cumberland County, gave an affidavit dated December two, 1823 attesting to the service rendered by James Downing under Captain Rowan for 18 months.]

[fn p. 22: on December four, 1854 in New Hanover County North Carolina, Sarah Downing, 75, filed for a widow's pension under the 1853 act stating that she is the widow of James Downing, a pensioner at the rate of \$63.32 per annum for his services in the revolution; that she married him in August 1830; that they were married by the Reverend Jesse Jennett; that her husband died June 14, 1835; and that she remains his widow.]