

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of James Fergus W25573 ^{1 2} Susan Fergus fPA85

Transcribed by Will Graves

10/11/06 rev'd 2/2/15

[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 'indcipherable' 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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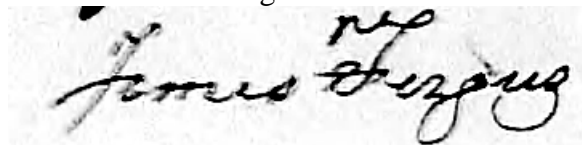
Amended Declaration³

State of Tennessee, Carroll County

On this 13th day of June [1832?] personally appeared in open court before the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions of said County, now sitting, James Fergus, a resident of said County and State aged seventy-six years in November last, 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.

This declarant, after being duly sworn aforesaid, deposeth and saith that by reason of old age and consequent loss of memory, he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his service but according to the best of his recollection, he served (under the circumstances as stated in his original declaration) not less than the periods mentioned below in the following grades: for six months as a private volunteer on foot; for six weeks as a private volunteer in the mounted infantry finding my own horse; for two months and two weeks, I served as an orderly Sergeant; for one month I served as a Wagon Master; for six months as a private partisan volunteer against the Tories as explained in the conclusion of my original declaration; and for such services I claim a pension. For the tours during which the above services were performed, this applicant was not employed in any civil pursuits. This claimant has no documentary evidence and knows of no person (other than those whose affidavits he transmitted with his original declaration and will again transmit with this) whose testimony he can procure who can testify to his services. 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.

S/James Fergus

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James Fergus". The ink is dark and the handwriting is somewhat slanted and fluid.

Sworn to & subscribed in open court the day and year aforesaid.

S/Edward Gwin, Clerk

[William Hays, a clergyman, and Thomas Monday, also a clergyman, gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

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Quest. 1st: When and in what year were you born? (Page 1st)

Answer: From the account of my parents, I was born in the County of Chester & Province of Pennsylvania in the year 1756 & month of November, the day not recollected.

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

Answer: I have a record of my age taken from my Parents in my Family Bible which I left with my son James in Cumberland County Kentucky before I moved to this place & have a copy of it with me here.

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

Answer: I was living with my Father in a part of Cumberland called Sherman's Valley in the State of Pennsylvania & after the summer campaign of '76 & winter campaign of '76-7 (account of which will be given hereafter) I undertook to study Physic under Dr. William Clunie, who at that time boarded at my Father's and in December 1777, I went with the Doctor into Virginia & in Augusta County we stopped. The Small Pox had broke out there & appeared to be fatal. In Augusta & Albemarle Counties, I assisted the Doctor in the Inoculation of the Small Pox of several hundred Persons, none of whom died. In the spring of 1778, we went to South Carolina, where I had a Brother living in what was then called the New Acquisition, Camden District. The Doctor taking to hard drinking, I quit him & returned to Pennsylvania. My Father, at the encouragement of my Brother who lived in Carolina, had sold his land & had determined to move there, which we did in the fall of '78. (At this time the Tories were getting very troublesome). I continued to live in this state until the death of my Father & Mother. I married in the year 1783. In 1794, I moved to Kentucky near Lexington where I lived three or four years & then moved to Cumberland County Kentucky where I continued to live until December last. I then moved to this place, viz., Carroll County, W. Tennessee where I arrived in March [of] the present year 1832.

4th How were you called into service; were you drafted; did you volunteer, or were you a substitute and if so for whom did you substitute?

Answer: The Militia of Pennsylvania; to what Regiment I do not recollect; was called out and out of one Battalion of Colonel Watts' Regiment of Cumberland County of the Pennsylvania Militia Eighty four men of us turned out volunteers to march to camp, no drafted men nor substitutes among us.

5th State the names of some of the Regular Officers who were with the troops where you served, such Continental and Militia Regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service.

Answer: Being in the 76th year of my age, I find my memory very defective & having no written documents preserved of the transactions or campaigns of which I am now about to give an account, after the lapse of so many years, I may in some things be mistaken but I will give a statement of the tours of duty to the best of my recollection in which I have served my country. I think it was in the month of June '76 that we enrolled ourselves as a volunteer Rifle company, 84 in number including Officers in Colonel Frederick Watts' Militia Regiment; every Officer in the Battalion enrolled themselves as privates & then we elected by vote our

Officers to command us in the present tour. Our uniform was a dark purple coloured Hunting shirt & pantaloons, a good Rifle & Powder horn & shot pouch, Tomahawk & butt were our equipment, all furnished by ourselves. Our marching Officers were Thomas Clark, Capt; Lieutenants Samuel Ross, James Fisher & a third one I do not now remember for we had no Ensign. From Sherman's Valley we marched to Carlisle Town, the seat of our County. We lay there five days to complete our equipments; thence moved on to Harris's ferry on Susquehanna [River]; thence to Middleton, Lancaster & to Philadelphia; thence went on a sloop up [the] Delaware River to Trenton; thence to Maidenhead, Princeton, Kingston, Brunswick & to Perth Amboy where we joined a number of Troops who lay there watching an English Camp on Staten Island opposite to Amboy. It appeared to me these troops were chiefly Militia. If there were any Regulars I do not now recollect. Col. Watts who commanded our Regiment was here with us. General Roberdeau [Daniel Roberdeau], I think from Philadelphia, is all the general officer whose name I can now recollect. While we lay here one evening we received orders to prepare with the rest of the Troops to march in the night & cross the sound into Staten Island in order to surprise & attack the British camp. I would here observe that we did not lie in Town but about half a mile out on the West side. About dusk, we moved into Town but a heavy cloud with thunder & a strong wind & torrent of rain put a stop to our going on; the scheme was abandoned, nor was it attempted afterwards while we lay here. The enemy sometimes incommoded us by firing from two Field pieces off the Island into the Town, but fortunately did us little damage. How long we lay here I cannot now say, it was however until the Battle of Long Island [August 27, 1776]; we heard the firing of the Cannon all day although at 30 miles distance. The next day an express came to us with orders to march to New York & I think in the evening we went on, past Elizabeth Town & Newark & to Bergen where our company was stationed. We here lay until the British took possession of New York, doing duty at Powles Hook [Paulus Hook]. We had a fair view of the British Frigates firing on our boats that were bringing the Ordinance & stores off from Governor's Island in the day. I think two days were spent before the Island was fairly evacuated. We had a Galley stationed to cover our boats who fired incessantly so that the smoke while the air was calm enveloped the boats & they escaped wonderfully.

While we lay at the Hook, two Frigates passed us up the River. Our Battery opposite the City opened [fire] on them & they [fired] on us, until they entirely passed; what damage we did them, we knew not, if any & we received none to speak of. When the British took possession of the city, our company was the last on the ground at Bergen & the Hook, the rest of the Troops were gone. While we knew not what to do, a gentleman came to us who announced himself Major, perhaps I a supernumerary who had no special command; he asked our Captain why we stayed here. The Captain said we were stationed there & could not retreat without orders. The Major replied it was a pity so find a company should be lost which undoubtedly would be the case if we stayed much longer where we were & though he had no special authority, he would take the responsibility on himself to order us off & we accordingly marched off to Hackensack old Town.

After we left Bergen & Powles Hook & got to Hackensack old Town, I cannot recollect how we maneuvered about afterwards except I very well remember we were encamped at Newark at the time of the fire in New York. It shone very bright & we were in hopes it was the British fleet on fire but we soon learned otherwise. How long we lay here, or what time we were dismissed, I cannot now recollect. I think it was sometime in October we got home, but what time of the month I cannot say. Before we arrived at home many of the

Company were ill of the Yellow Jaundice, myself among the rest, but in course of about three weeks I got it removed.

About the last of November, I think it was, news came to us Genl Washington with the Army was flying before the enemy through the Jerseys & for all in Pennsylvania that would volunteer their service to come immediately. No draft was talked of & I think a bounty was offered to such as would be in Philadelphia before Christmas. 30 of us in the Company to which I belonged turned out, most of whom had been out in the summer campaign with our brave Captain Clark at our head. We equipped ourselves for the winter campaign with all the speed in our power & moved on to Philadelphia. The weather was very severe between Carlisle and Susquehanna. We met Genl Mifflin [Thomas Mifflin] on his way through the state to hurry the volunteers on that were on their way & to encourage others to turn out. There was snow on the ground; we crossed the River at a Ferry below Harris's & in the afternoon it came on a thick and heavy snow, but we went on through it till we got into Middletown. We lay there all night & it continued to snow all night & near the middle of the day it cleared up. This was the deepest snow I ever had seen, it was near 4 feet deep on the level ground. Our baggage wagon could not move till we broke the road before it. We labored on through it with all possible diligence. The first day we went 3 miles, the next 7 miles and the third 9 miles. By this time we got into Lancaster. The snow now got shallower & the road somewhat broke. We arrived in Philadelphia between Christmas and New Year's Day. The Hessian prisoners taken at Trenton [The battle of Trenton, December 26, 1776] were yet in the city, but shortly after they were sent on to Lancaster. The weather [being] severe, we rested a day or two & then moved on to Trenton. The Battle of Princeton [January 3, 1777] was over. Trenton was evacuated & partly desolate, I think it was General Greene [Nathanael Greene] we met here, we lay all night in the Town & next day we were ordered on to a little village or hamlet called Crosswicks where we lay in the snow a few days, perhaps a week, with some Troops & then moved to Princeton & lay under the command of the brave old veteran General Putnam [Israel Putnam] until near spring. There was but one company of Regulars with us here, the rest [were] volunteers or militia. There was some Jersey Artillery with us, also some Light Horse, perhaps 60 or 70. The ground was frozen so hard and deep we could not bury the dead; the sick and wounded some of whom died every day or night, we had to throw in the trenches of the redoubts until the ground thawed in the spring. We however buried Colonel Haslet [John Haslet] of the Delaware line who fell in the Battle of Princeton with the honors of War & I think a Major Fleming [sic, Captain John Fleming] of Virginia, if I mistake not. The British lay at Brunswick that winter & we had a picket guard placed at Kingston then about 3 miles from us on the Road to Brunswick. One day the British drove in our picket & the General expected we would be attacked. The alarm guns were fired, the drums beat to arms, the wagons were quickly loaded with baggage & stores & drove off towards Trenton, all was hurry, but not confusion. We were marched out of Town into the Plain on the side next to Kingston, the way we expected the Enemy to meet us & formed into a line of battle. One company of Regulars with muskets & bayonets; one Regiment & Colonel Tarbutt's [?] volunteers with rifles and some others with the Jersey artillery & our few Light Horse comprised our line. We were in expectation of an attack & kept on the ground until dark. No enemy appeared & then returned to our quarters; lay on our arms all light and were in the line of battle in the morning by daylight & continued on the ground till eight or nine o'clock of the day. We continued this course for a week or more. We understood afterwards by deserters what saved us from an attack was the fear that the firing might bring

General Washington who lay in Morristown with the Army on their backs & intercept them before they could get back to Brunswick. Numbers of Hessian deserters came to us while we lay here. The spotted Fever & the small Pox prevailed among us & many of our men died. The winter was extremely severe, but we had good quarters in Town, however we frequently went in parties and drove in the British sentries at Brunswick and harassed them more than they did us. What time we were dismissed from here, I do not recollect. Several of our company died here, two of the smallpox and others of the spotted Fever, one in Philadelphia where the Fever was raging & very fatal, another on the road before we got to Lancaster, some got home with the Fever in them & died shortly afterwards. I think it was sometime in March when we arrived at home, but cannot ascertain the particular time. Of the 30 who marched out of our home Company in December, 16 died, 14 survived.

I served as orderly sergeant on this tour. I have no documentary evidence neither of this nor the former tour nor do I know any Person in this part of the country who can testify to my having served the aforesaid tours. There was I understand last summer a Mr. Robinson living not far from Lexington, Kentucky, who if he is alive must be now about 80 years of age, who knows of my serving as above. Lexington is upwards of 300 miles from this place where I now live. A Brother of the said Robinson was living last summer in Tipton County about 100 miles from here, as I have understood, who served with me in the same company the summer campaign of 76. He was about one year older than myself. These are all I have any knowledge of that may yet be living that could testify of my above services & whether they are yet living, I know not. As I went out with Captain Clark in both the aforesaid tours & returned home with him, I received no discharge in writing. The discharge was oral. I do not recollect the names of any of the officers here this winter but what I have mentioned above as they were strangers to me then & perhaps I never saw them afterwards. I find my memory has failed more in recollecting names than any thing else.

In the Autumn of the year 1778, my Father moved to South Carolina and settled in what is now York County, then called New Acquisition, Camden District. Late in the season the Tories hearing of the British coming to Savannah were in a place called Thicketty, south of Broad River & embodied under a Tory Captain Colman [sic, Coleman?, perhaps a mistaken attempt to identify William Cunningham]. A Whig Colonel Brannon [sic, Thomas Brandon] of Fair Forest settlement collected a company to oppose Coleman, but unfortunately Brannon was surprised in his camp by the Tories & defeated [Brandon's Camp, July 12, 1780] with the loss of 4 men killed. As soon as we heard of this defeat, about 300 of us collected under the command of Captain Andrew Love,⁴ to whose company I was attached & marched to support Col. Brannon. On the way before we got to Broad River, we met Colonel Brannon with about 20 men flying from the Enemy & all the wit of Captain Love could not prevail with the Colonel to turn back with us & pursued the Tories, nor did he, but went on over the Catawba River into North Carolina before he halted. We pursued on over Broad River to Thicketty & Fair Forest but found Coleman & his Tories had gone off to join the British in Georgia & was got too far ahead of us for us to overtake them, as we were not prepared for a long march.⁵ After burning a number of the Tories houses that were gone, we returned home. In January 1779 there was a called for men to go to Georgia to assist that State against the English who had got possession of Savannah & to suppress the Tories who were joining them there. Colonel Neal [sic, Thomas Neel],⁶ Lieut. Col Watson⁷ & Major Francis Ross⁸ were the field officers who commanded the Regiment of militia at this time to which I belong. Mounted men to scour the country & reconnoiter [were] the kind of troops called for. 200 men were

quickly enrolled for marching in this company. I went as a volunteer; whether any were drafted or not, I do not now recollect. This detachment was commanded by Lieut. Col Watson & Major Ross. Captain James Martin was my company officer. There were besides the mounted man a number of foot with the wagons loaded with provisions and baggage. It was a very wet winter, the roads exceedingly deep. We had 200 miles from where we started to Augusta where we were to join General Williamson.⁹ We had a very uncomfortable march & tedious time on the Road. I think there was eight days on the way. The sun never appeared to us. It sometime rained incessantly and frequently showery. This I can well remember: all that time the shirt on my back was not dry nor had I them off for we had generally to encamp in the Woods & always to take care of all horses. What time we got there, I cannot now recollect, however, General Williamson sent us on from Augusta to join Genl Ash [sic, John Ashe]¹⁰ at Briar Creek [March 3, 1779], time enough to get defeated. Some days after we got there we got intelligence of the English coming up the opposite side of the Creek from Ebenezer where they lay between us & Savannah. The River was very full by reason of the late rains. The back water extended up the Creek 12 miles at least to where it was fordable from where we lay. To ascertain the truth of this report, 40 of us were ordered up the Creek to reconnoiter; with this party I went. We set out late in the evening with a guide. About midnight, we came to a house where was a woman & children. We pretended to be a party of Loyalists from North Carolina coming to join the British & wished to know if she could inform us where they lay & how we could get to them. The woman seemed delighted & told us they were encamped about half a mile from us on the bank of the Creek; that they were on their way to drive the Rebels out of the Forks & would make us very welcome. Her husband was then with them at the Creek; that it would be best to wait until morning before we joined them or at least till her husband came home for fear they might mistake us for Rebels. From her we got all the intelligence we wanted & after giving our horses plenty of oats we returned to Camp. The next day & gave General Ashe the above account & that we might expect them on us the next day at farthest. Notwithstanding this, General Ashe the next morning ordered the balance of our detachment that had not been out the day before reconnoitering of 160 men under Major Ross to cross the Creek & proceed toward Ebenezer & make what discoveries they could. A bridge was repairing but not finished. Ross & the men swam their horses over and went on. Two young men were likewise sent off with an express to General Williamson at the same time with an old man who had liberty to return home. By this time the British had got into the road between us & Augusta & were coming down on us when they met our men that carried the express and took them prisoners. The old man that was with them being some distance behind and riding a swift mare escaped & came back to Camp with the information that the Enemy was coming on us. It appeared that Genl Ashe took no notice of this, nor was there any preparation made for action till the British vanguard was fired on by our sentries. What of us that belonged to Major Ross' detachment that had been on the scout up the Creek and were left in Camp lay about a quarter off from the main Camp to take care of our horses in an old field, had orders sent us to get our horses, mount them & come into Camp. This we did. The line was just formed as we arrived. The left wing [was] commanded by Colonel Elbert¹¹ who had a Company of Georgia Regulars. We rode close along the rear of the line when the first general fire was made. As we were on lower ground than the enemy, it passed chiefly over our heads. We had got to the extremity of the right wing where General Ashe commanded by the time the second fire was made. This was our post, but we had not time to give more than one fire when the General wheeled & fled & the whole wing with him. He

was gone 150 yards or more before our little party followed. The British left wing was advancing rapidly & as Colonel Elbert afterwards informed me, he knew not that the Right wing was gone till he found the enemy in his rear killing his men. Of course he & all his men that escaped death were made prisoners. (It was after Col Elbert was released that I met him in Virginia & he gave this account & added that he fully believed Genl Ashe betrayed us to the British & declared that if he ever met with him one of them should die before they parted) Genl Ashe rode a good horse, left his men & got round the enemy & made to a Ferry above, crossed & escaped, while the rest of us were drove into the swamp between the Creek & the River. There were several Cuts or Lagoons that crossed between the Creek & the River. The banks of these were so steep & deep that the horses that went in could not get out again & some man could have been drowned had not canes been put into their hands & helped them out. Here I left my horse & furniture, threw off my coat & swam. We now got into a thick canebrake & the enemy pursued us no further. This was late in the evening. 12 of us got together & as it was moonlight in the night, we formed a small raft of driftwood in the mouth of a lagoon on which 3 of us with danger & much difficulty got over the River after being carried about a mile down before we landed. We got out of the Bottom and wondered up the River till daylight and fortunately in the mouth of a branch, we found a large Perogus¹² loaded with corn. In the bar opposite to us on the other bank we discovered a great number of the North Carolina men. We quickly rode over & took in as many as the boat would bear & caused them to throw out the corn while we crossed back. By this means we got all our men that were there off before the enemy came down to the River. Major Ross who had crossed the morning before came in the night to the camp, not knowing of the defeat. They were fired on & driven back over the Creek, passed the River below the mouth of the Creek & there crossed at a Ferry & the next day the remains of our detachment got together & moved up the River to Genl Williamson's Camp & joined the troops there.¹³ Many of our men were half naked having stripped to swim the River. The 3rd of March, we were defeated & that night there was a light frost & many suffered with the cold having nothing on but a shirt or breeches. Here we lay I know not how long. Here I had the command of a brigade of 12 wagons given me & was sent with them to Saluda for Flour which I brought to Camp. About this time a party of our men with Major Ross crossed the River above Augusta in pursuit of some Indians & came up [on] them, had a small skirmish in which the Major received a Mortal wound, was brought into Camp & died in a few days. Shortly after this, we were discharged & returned home under the command of Lieut. Col. Watson, I think in the beginning of April. When we returned we found a part of our Regiment under the command of Col. Neal [sic, Thomas Neel] was called out & gone on what was called the Stono Campaign.¹⁴ As soon as I got clothes for the summer campaign, I volunteered again with a few others and followed on to Orangeburg & fell in with our Regiment under Col. Neel. There Colonels Wynn [sic, Winn] & Brown & some others were there with their men, all under the Command of Col. Senf, a foreign Officer who it was said was sent out to discipline our Southern men.¹⁵

While we lay here, Col. Senf laid off the ground for a Fort, and employed our men in cutting turf & working on it until we heard that the British had crossed Savannah River & got to Purysburg. I now for the first time began to keep a small journal in a memorandum book which I continued until I was taken with the Fever & carried to Charleston.

On the first of May '79, we received intelligence that the enemy had got possession of Purysburg. 2nd of May, preparation for marching to meet the enemy was made to set out on

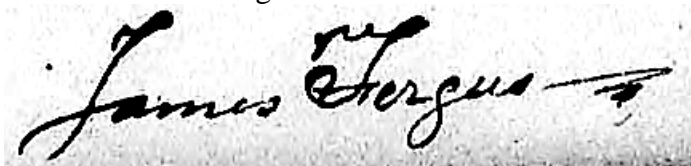
the following morning. Towards evening 28 or 29 wagons from Charleston arrived loaded with Arms, ammunition, entrenching tools, 2 Howitzers, shells & cannon balls &c &c. Governor Rutledge¹⁶ arrived also. 3rd: the General [alarm] was beat early this morning & orders given for marching at a minute's warning; preparations for marching completed. In the evening the Governor reviewed us. 4th: Paraded & marched off early this morning. Took with us a great number of Tory Prisoners & some of the Queens' Rangers that were taken in Georgia & sent here. There were about 300 of us commanded by the Governor & Col. Senf. Went about 10 miles & encamped. 5th: Marched down Edisto [River] about 15 miles to the saw Mills & crossed the River back again, finding that the enemy were likely to get between us & Charleston on this route; cooked fresh Beef & marched all night. 3 of the prisoners made their escape, one was a Lieut. of the Queens' Rangers (who came & gave himself up to us the next day). 7th: about 9 o'clock [we] halted & took Breakfast; moved on to the Four Holes Bridge; the carriage of a field piece broke down. The piece was hid in the swamp. This evening, the Artillery that was with us left us & pushed on for Town, fearing the enemy might get [there] before them. Note: They were part of the Charleston Train. I pass over the 8th & 9th days. On the 10th we got into Town & hoped to have a night's rest after our fatiguing march but an alarm took place & we had to lie on the lines all night. May 11th: This day Count Pulaski¹⁷ with his Troop of Horse arrived and in the evening the Enemy came before the lines, after they had driven in our picket guard & Pulaski's Horse together with a company of light Infantry, who had a severe skirmish with the van [sic, vanguard] of the British Army in which it was said we lost of Horse & Foot about 85 men. Straight a little after dark, a party of our men went out to set fire to Tar Barrels that were placed in front of our lines to give light during the night. At this time an alarm was given & a heavy firing of Cannon & small arms took place on the lines from one River to the other, also from the armed vessels in Cooper & Ashley Rivers. This was unfortunate for the party out firing the Tar Barrels; Major Huger¹⁸ & two others I think were killed & several wounded by our firing.

12th: Flags of truce passed between us and the enemy the chief of this day nothing done. Four men, two white & a mulatto & Negro were taken outside the lines & brought in [it being] supposed [that these 4 men were] to be deserting to the enemy; the Governor coming by at the time was asked what should be done with them. He said hang them up to the beam of the gate by which they were standing. This was immediately done & there they hung all day. 13th: last night the enemy retreated silently & crossed Ashley [River] before morning; our Light Horse brought in a number of deserters & some prisoners that were straggling behind this day. From this time to the 25th of this month we lay here & kept guard on the lines, & then marched off to join Genl Lincoln [Benjamin Lincoln],¹⁹ which we did on the 23rd at Dorchester. May 24th: this morning, perhaps two hours before day, I joined a Regular Company of 40 men who went as the advance guard of the Army. The Army followed in the morning. In the evening we got to the church at Beacon's Bridge [sic, Bacon's Bridge?], the plank of which was taken off; drove the British picket from the opposite shore; slept under arms all night. 25th: this morning a Party from our Army with a Field piece came down and repaired the bridge; returned back & we the advance guard passed over to the side next [to] the British Camp; set out sentries & remained there till evening when Pulaski with his Horse came over with 40 Foot who joined us. The Light Horse passed us on the road leading to the British Camp. We quickly formed & ran after them till the British picket fired on them & killed one of Pulaski's men; he charged on them & killed four of the guard & drove them in. At this time we were formed in his rear to cover his retreat & he came slowly back by us &

we wheeled about & followed after. Before we got to the bridge, we found our Army had passed it & was formed in an old field on our right. The British, however, did not choose to quit their entrenchments but laid still. We did not stop or joined the Army but marched by and kept marching & countermarching all night, often formed in line & again moving on till near daylight when we came to our Army drawn up in a line of Battle in front of the British entrenchments. We were then formed with the line on the extremity of the right wing & had liberty to sit down. At this time Genl Lincoln was examining the situation of the British & it no doubt appeared to him that they were too strongly posted for him to force their works without losing too many men, perhaps failing altogether. And so he moved back over the Bridge to the old Camp early in the morning. This was the third day from [when] we left Dorchester before day & had no sleep or rest, drinking bad water & enduring the scorching sun by day & the chilling dews by night. 21st: this day in the evening I was taken with a high Fever & was carried over the River to our baggage wagon by Captain Andrew Love & his brother. May 27, 1779: here ends my journal. I went in to Charleston to Dr. David Ramsay,²⁰ who I understood was Principle of the hospital and the City for some medicine. He sent it but advised me to be brought into the hospital. I replied I had seen the hospitals in Philadelphia, Princeton and Newark and would prefer dying in the open air of the woods rather [than be] stifled to death in a crowded hospital. I had a relation living in the City who hearing of me, sent for me to be brought to his house to live there. I was taken there in a wagon & by the time I got in I was partly insensible. My friend brought the doctor to see me and he ordered what he thought proper & called duly morning and evening to see me until the Fever was broke; how long that was, I know not now. It appears like a dream to me now. To the great care & attention of the humane & kindhearted Dr. Ramsay, under God, I am indebted for my being a living, though infirm, old man at this day.

This Fever was broke on me at the time there was a sham burying of Count Pulaski with the honors of War in this City for I can recollect the firing of Cannon all day & what it was for I was told. I continued in a convalescent state a long time. I left the City sometime in the winter to go to see my Parents in the upper part of the State & was told afterwards that the British landed about a week after I left it. Thus I have given in detail an account of the four Tours I served in the Army Regularly. After the fall of Charleston to the end of the war, I did duty as a partisan under Genl Sumpter [sic, Thomas Sumter] & others in the upper part of the State, dispersing & keeping down the Tories. Of the time I spent in this way, I am now unable to give a particular account. It was a perilous time & we were in a continued state of warfare until after Cornwallis' surrender in which warfare I had my share. He relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state and that he has no documentary evidence.

S/James Fergus

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Fergus". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored, slightly textured paper. The letters are fluid and connected, with a long horizontal stroke at the end of the word "Fergus".

Sworn to and subscribed in open court.

S/Edward Gwin, Clerk

[p 27]

State of Tennessee Carroll County: County Court September Sessions 1832

This day appeared in open Court Col. John McKenzie and made oath in due form of law and saith that in the years 1779 & 1780 he was acquainted with James Fergus and that he this affiant knows of his own knowledge that in the years aforesaid the said James Fergus was a Soldier in the Army of the Revolution in defense of his Country. Sworn to in Open Court, September 13th, 1832

S/ Jno. McKenzie²¹

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John McKenzie". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

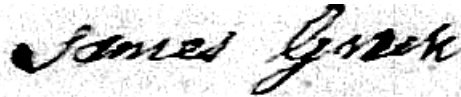
[p 29]

State of Tennessee Carroll County

Personally appeared before me William W Foreman one of the Acting Justices of the Peace in & for said County James Greer and being sworn as the law directs, deposeth & saith that he was acquainted with James Fergus and that said Ferguson did serve in the revolutionary War in Orangeburg and Charleston in the State of South Carolina.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this September 13th, 1832

S/James Greer²²

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "James Greer". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

S/ W. W. Forman, JP

[In the attestation of Greer's deposition, the justice of the peace notes that Greer is a man far advanced in years being upwards of 80 years old.]

[p 3: On the 16th day of February 1854 in Carroll County Tennessee, Susan Fergus, 69, applied for a widow's pension under the 1853 act stating that she is the widow of James Fergus, a revolutionary war pensioner; that her husband died April 2, 1837; that she married him December 19, 1825 in Cumberland County Tennessee; that they were married by Benjamin Malone, a minister of the gospel. She signed her application with her mark.]

[p 36: On July 2nd, 1856 in Carroll County Tennessee, the widow, then stating her age is 71, applied for her bounty land entitlement as the widow of a revolutionary war soldier. In this document she states that her name before her marriage was Sarah Looney, the widow of Robert Looney she being the daughter of James Williams.]

[Facts in file: The veteran married July 24, 1783 Sarah Robinson the daughter of George Robinson; the date of her death is not stated; he then married Margaret Allen the daughter of Robert Allen; she died October 24, 1802 in Cumberland County Kentucky; on December 19, 1825 in Cumberland County Kentucky he married Susanna or Susan Looney. In 1869 the widow was living in Weakley County Tennessee.]

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$50.50 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service as a private of infantry for 11 months & as a Sgt. for 2 months and 15 days in the Pennsylvania and South Carolina militia. His widow was pensioned in a like amount.]

¹ James Fergus (1756-1837) was of Scotch-Irish descent.

² BLWt40919-160-55

³ There is no 'original application' in this file, nor is there any notification which I could find in the file indicating what had become of the original application.

⁴ Andrew Love was a captain under Colonel Thomas Neel in the New Acquisition militia. Bobby Gilmer Moss, *Roster of South Carolina Patriots in the American Revolution* (Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1983) (hereinafter cited as Moss, *SC Patriots*) 582.

⁵ It is not clear which engagement Fergus is describing in the foregoing text. While the Tories were active early in the war in the South Carolina backcountry as evidenced by the first battle of Ninety Six [November 18-21, 1775] and the Snow Campaign [late December 1775], they remained relatively subdued until the invasion of South Carolina by Sir Henry Clinton's forces in early 1780 and the subsequent fall of Charleston on May 12, 1780. This transcriber is unaware of any confrontation between the Tory and Whig forces "late in the season" of 1778. Although a Tory officer by the name of Robert Coleman did serve in John Harris Cruger's forces defending the star fort while under siege from the Nathanael Greene' at the siege of Ninety Six in May-June 1781, no reference could be found of a "Captain Colman" or "Captain Coleman" attacking forces under Col. Thomas Brandon in late 1778. Brandon was attacked by Tories led by Bloody Bill Cunningham in June 8, 1780 and it is possible that Fergus is making some sort of very muddled reference to that engagement.

⁶ Thomas Neel (1730-1779) was a militia colonel commanding forces from the New Acquisition territory of South Carolina. Moss, *SC Patriots*, 719.

⁷ Samuel Watson (1731-1810) served as Lt. Col. of Thomas Neel's regiment of New Acquisition militia. He succeeded to command of the regiment upon Neel's death at the Battle of Stono Ferry on June 20, 1779. Moss, *SC Patriots*, 971. See, also, the biographical sketch posted at http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~hookersbend/bio_colonel_samuel_watson.htm.

⁸ Francis Ross (1744-1779) served as a captain under Col. Thomas Neel on the Cherokee Expedition in the summer of 1776. Moss, *Roster*, p. 831. In the spring of 1779, Ross was wounded in a skirmish with the Cherokees and died from his wounds on March 31, 1779. William A. Graham. *General Joseph Graham and His Papers on North Carolina Revolutionary History*, Raleigh: 1904.

⁹ Andrew Williamson (c. 1730-1786) was the commanding officer of the South Carolina backcountry militia from the inception of the war until the fall of Charleston on May 12, 1780. He led the South Carolina militia not only during the Cherokee Expedition in 1776 but also at Briar Creek, Stono Bridge and other engagements before taking parole in June 1780. He took parole in June 1780 along with such other notable backcountry Whigs as Andrew Pickens and LeRoy Hammond. Unlike Pickens and Hammond, however, Williamson never resumed active participation in the Whig militia causing him to be labeled as the "Arnold of the South." This label is unjust because, unlike Benedict Arnold, Williamson never took up arms against his country and he did provide Nathanael Greene with intelligence regarding British activities in and around Charleston until the end of the war. His spying on behalf of the Whigs lead the South Carolina legislature to lift the confiscation order against Williamson's estate, but his estate was amerced. Mark M. Boatner III, *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution*, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, 1994), (hereinafter cited as Boatner, *Encyclopedia*), 1210.

¹⁰ John Ashe (1725-1781) was brigadier general of the North Carolina State Troops set by General Richard Caswell to reinforce General Benjamin Lincoln in his assault on Savannah. A surprise attack on his troops at the Battle of Briar Creek resulted in its almost total loss. Ashe was court-martialed (General William Moultrie was the preceding officer) and severely censured for "want of sufficient vigilance." Greatly depressed from this experience, Ashe returned to North Carolina and died there from smallpox in 1781. Powell, Ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, Vol. 1, 51-52.

¹¹ Samuel Elbert (1740-1788) as a Savannah merchant who served in the Georgia militia rising to the rank of Major General in the militia. Wounded and captured at the Battle of Briar Creek, he was exchanged in June 1781. Toward the end of the Revolution, he was brevetted as a brigadier general in the Continental line. He was elected Governor of Georgia in 1785. <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.com/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-672>

¹² Traditionally spelled "pirogue," the term describes a flat-hulled boat or canoe intended for use on still water such as in the Louisiana swamp or marsh areas. The Lewis and Clark expedition used pirogue because their light weight allowed for easy portage between rivers.

¹³ The battle described by Fergus is the Battle of Briar Creek which occurred on March 3, 1779. Patrick O'Kelley, *Nothing but Blood and Slaughter: The Revolutionary War in the Carolinas, Volume One: 1771-1779*, (N.p.: Booklocker.com, Inc., 2004)(hereinafter cited as O'Kelley, *Slaughter One*) 253-262.

¹⁴ The Battle of Stono Ferry was fought on June 20, 1779 with the American Whig forces under the command of Major General Benjamin Lincoln and the British forces under the command of Lieutenant Colonel John Maitland. O'Kelley, *Slaughter One* 291-299. Col. Thomas Neel was killed in this battle along with 33 other Whigs.

¹⁵ Col. John (Johann) Christian Senf (?- 1808) was a Hessian engineer originally employed in the service of British General John Burgoyne. Senf was captured at the Battle of Saratoga and decided to switch his allegiance to the American cause. He was assigned to serve in the Southern Department of the Continental Army under General Horatio Gates. He was present at the ill-fated Battle of Camden on August 16, 1780. After the war, he remained in South Carolina. In 1793, he engineered and supervised the construction of America's first summit canal, the 22-mile long Santee Canal which connected the Santee and Cooper Rivers. Senf died in Great Falls, South Carolina in 1808 and is believed to be buried on one of the islands created by the impounding of the Catawba River for hydro electrical production in the early 1900s.

¹⁶ John Rutledge (1739-1800) was the first president of South Carolina under the new constitution passed in 1776. He later served terms as the Governor of the South Carolina under the Constitution passed in 1778, U. S. Congressman, associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court and as the interim Chief Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court. See, David Paul Reuwer, "South Carolina's Supreme Court Nominee Rejected," *Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution*, August 2005, Vol. 2, No. 8, posted at www.southerncampaign.org and James Haw, *John & Edward Rutledge of South Carolina*, The University of Georgia Press, Athens and London, 1997.

¹⁷ Casimir Pulaski, c 1748-1779, a Polish nobleman who volunteered to serve in the Continental Army. Appointed by Congress as a brigadier general, he commanded a brigade of dragoons serving under Washington. He was killed during an ill-fated cavalry charge at the Siege of Savannah in October 1779. Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, 900-901.

¹⁸ Benjamin Huger (1746-1779) was a major in the First Regiment of South Carolina State Troops. Moss, *SC Patriots*, 470.

¹⁹ Benjamin Lincoln, 1733-1810, was the commander of the Southern branch of the Continental Army from September 25, 1778 until his surrender of his army at Charleston on May 12, 1780. David B. Matten, *Benjamin Lincoln and the American Revolution* (University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, 1995).

²⁰ Dr. David Ramsay (1749-1815) was a physician (educated at Princeton and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania's medical school), Continental Congressman and historian (author of histories of South Carolina in the Revolution, a 3-volume history of the United States and a biography of George Washington, among other works). He practiced medicine in Charleston and served as a surgeon during the Revolution.

²¹ [John McKenzie W1049](#)

²² probably the same man as [James Greer R4277](#)