

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of John Williamson W26061 Cynthia Williamson VA
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 16 Jan 2015.

State of Tennessee }
Davidson County } Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for said County & State

On this 2nd day of August AD 1832 personally appeared before the Judges of said court of pleas and quarter sessions for Davidson County, John Williamson a resident of Nashville in the County of Davidson and State of Tennessee aged Seventy two years on the 27th day of October last, who being first duly Sworn, according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

That he enlisted in the army of the United States with John Fuquah on the 15th day of March 1778 and served in the First Regiment of the Virginia line, under the following named officers To wit Captain Sharp, Major John Purty, Col. John Mays, and General Morgan.

The applicant further states that he enlisted to serve during the war and continued to serve as hereafter mentioned until the month of September 1781 [see endnote]. when he was discharged in due form and in writing by Col. John Mays. he kept said discharge for many years and some time in April 1828 when it was destroyed with the rest of his property when his house was burnt down or destroyed by a set of rioters – and is the reason why he does not now produce it. The applicant further states that at the time he enlisted as aforesaid he was a resident of the County of Halifax in the State of Virginia and he enlisted at Halifax court House in the State & County aforesaid. After said enlistment the applicant was marched from Halifax Court house to near the Cowpens [SC] when he was placed in said Regiment of Captain Sharp’s Company – whether in the Regular service or with Virginia State troops the applicant does not now recollect with precision but his impression is that he belonged to the Continental troops. The applicant well recollects that shortly after the enlisted troops were in line that the battle of the Cowpens was fought [17 Jan 1781], in which engagement the applicant was as a private Soldier – the engagement commenced before day and was continued for some hours with considerable obstinacy until many were killed on both sides when the Brittish gave way and retreated – the American light Horse were commanded by Col. [William] Washington, and the infantry by General Morgan and he believes Gen’l. Green [sic: Nathanael Greene], but whether Green was actively engaged in the fight the applicant cannot now remember The Brittish were commanded by the famous Col. Tarlton [sic: Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton] and Earl Cornwallis as commander in chief, as well as he now remembers. After the battle at the Cowpens Gen’l. Morgan marched and found Gen’l. Green the commanding General at Guilford Court House [NC], without any other engagements until the battle of Guilford in which engagement the applicant fought [15 Mar 1781] under Captain Sharpe, and the officers aforesaid. This engagement commenced with Morgan’s troops who were with the baggage; the troops then fell into the main Army commanded by General Greene when the battle raged for some time – until the line of the American Army was broken by the brittish and a retreat was ordered – in this retreat the applicant was wounded in the neck –. Many men were killed and wounded on both sides – but more of the Brittish were slain than of the Americans – The American Army retreated and halted at Hogan’s Creek where they once again formed a line a short distance from the scene of action; when the Brittish came up in force and the battle was resumed and after a hard fight the American troops were called off and fell back a short distance again – and after the dead were buried the Brittish Army marched from the field of battle through one edge of North Carolina & on through Virginia– The American forces were commanded in this battle by Gen’l. Green, Brig. Gen’l. Morgan, and other field & General officers which the applicant cannot now remember, Col. Mays commanded the regiment of which Sharps company was a part, and in which the applicant fought. The Brittish troops were commanded by Lord Cornwallis – in chief, but the names of the inferior officers the applicant has forgotten if he ever heard–. After the battle of Guilford the American Gen’l. Green & Brig Gen’l. Morgan with the greater part of the troops followed the Brittish –

two Regiments were left to guard the North Carolina & Virginia line to which your applicant belonged After remaining some time on the lines of the Two states as aforesaid the said Regiment was ordered up to join their Brigade at Little York [Yorktown VA] and then the applicant joined the main army in Gen'l. Morgan's brigade – The applicant continued to serve in the army from the time his regiment joined the troops besieging York until its surrender and the capitulation of the British [19 Oct 1781] The American troops were commanded by Gen'l. Washington in Chief–. at this place the French and American troops were united under the Command of Washington – LaFayette, Green, [Benjamin] Lincoln Morgan and many other officers whose names age has caused the applicant to forget– The French fleet was commanded by Count De Grasse.– The British were commanded by Lord Cornwallis in Chief and other officers whose names are not now recollected. After the taking of York the Regiment to which the applicant belonged was marched back to the first place of rendezvous where he had found the Army at or near the Cowpens – where they remained until they were discharged in the fall of the year 1781. and which discharge has been lost as aforesaid

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or an annuity except the present, and he declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any agency in any State, or (if any) only on that of the agency in the State of Virginia. The applicant is now poor, feeble and helpless and desires to avail himself of his country's bounty — Sworn to and subscribed in open court

John hisXmark Williamson

NOTES:

There are many discrepancies in Williamson's declaration. None of the officers he named were in the Virginia Continental or State Line except Daniel Morgan, who was not a General in 1778. Williamson stated that he was discharged in September 1781 but served until after the surrender of Cornwallis, which occurred on 19 Oct 1781. He also stated that he continued to serve under Gen. Daniel Morgan after the Battle of Cowpens in South Carolina, but about a month after that battle Morgan retired because of chronic "rheumatism." At the time of the Battle of Cowpens, Gen. Nathanael Greene, Commander-in-Chief of the southern army, was in winter quarters near Cheraw SC, and Gen. Cornwallis was encamped at Winnsboro SC. I could find no record of a Hogan's Creek near the field of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse NC, and there was no second line of battle after the initial American retreat. Greene was not at the Siege of Yorktown. It is not likely that Cowpens, being remote from main roads and provisions, was a place of rendezvous.

On 4 April 1853 in Davidson County, Cynthia Williamson, age about 52, applied for a pension stating that she married John Williamson in Davidson County in May 1816, and he died on 12 Jan 1849. On 26 April 1855 George W. Williamson and Robert McGuinnis certified that John and Cynthia Williamson were married. On 26 June 1855 Cynthia Williamson, 60, applied for bounty land stating that her name before marriage was Cynthia Montgomery and that her husband died in Nashville on 6 Jan 1849.

On 17 Feb 1866 Cynthia Williamson, 84, applied for restoration of her pension, which had been suspended during the Civil War, during which period she lived five miles from Nashville on Charlotte Pike with the family of Kinchen Tant. On 3 Oct 1868 at age 75 she applied for an increase in pension.