

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Benjamin Davis W4172 Lydia Davis VA
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Virginia, June, 1851 } ss.

County of Pittsylvania } On this seventeenth day of June in the year 1851, before us, Drury Blair and Pyrant Easley, Justices of the County Court (a Court of Record, for the aforesaid County, & State) personally appeared Jameson Corbin a highly respectable citizen of the aforesaid County & State, and entitled to credit, who, being first duly sworn according to law, doth, on his oath, declare or make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed on the fourth day of July 1836 entitled "An Act." Granting half pay to widows or orphans &c." (Sec. 3. 4. & 5.) – that he is the legally appointed Administrator of Benjamin Davis dec. who was a private in the company commanded by Captain John Green in the State Regiment of Virginia Troops commanded by Colonel (General) [Edward] Stevens [see endnote] in the "War of the Revolution" with Great Britain – that said Benjamin Davis was enlisted in the service of the United States or Colonies for the term of two years at "Calland's" [Callands] in the State or colony of Virginia on the nineteenth day of march in the year One thousand seven hundred and seventy nine – that he continued in said service until the ninetenth day of March in the year One thousand seven hundred and eighty one when he was honorably discharged from said service by reason of "Expiration of term of Service" – that he believes said Benjamin Davis was engaged in the Battle of "Guilford Court House" in the State of North Carolina [15 Mar 1781] – that said Benjamin Davis was detailed as a teamster in the "Army of the South" serving under the command of General [Nathanael] Greene and was discharged as such on the ninteenth day of march one thousand seven hundred and eighty one, as will appear by the "Original Discharge" herewith annexed – that he believes his Discharge as a Soldier in the foregoing Comp[any] and Regiment has been accidentally lost [or mis]laid. Deponent further swears that said Benjam[in] Davis was at the time of entering said service a [res]ident of Pittsylvania in the State of Virginia – that he was married to his wife Lydia Davis in the county of Pittsylvania and State of Virginia on the tenth day [of] May, in the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy eight, as will appear by a copy of the Family Record of marriages herewith annexed – that the name of said Lydia Davis previous to marriage was Lydia Meadows – that said Benjamin Davis resided, after the conclusion of said service, in the aforesaid County & State until the period of his death which occurred on the twenty second day of March one thousand eight hundred and thirty six (1836) in the said County & State – that his said wife Lydia Davis also died in the aforesaid County & State on the fourth day of January one thousand eight hundred and forty eight: – and deponent further swears that John Davis aged 43 years, Elizabeth Thompson, Jennings Thompson, Lydia Thompson, Samuel Thompson, Mary Thompson, & Patsey Thompson children of Samuel and Nancy Thompson deceased, and Sarah Corbin formerly Sarah Davis, are the only surviving heirs of the aforesaid Benjamin Davis deceased – And that he makes this declaration as the Administrator of the aforesaid Benjamin Davis deceased for the purpose of obtaining whatever may be due the aforesaid heirs of said Benjamin Davis under the provisions of the foregoing or any other law of Congress – And deponent swears that he has no other interest in this application. [signed] Jameson Corbin Adm'r of Benj. Davis dec.

I do Certify that Benjamin Davis is discharged from the service, with his waggon and team, and has Per[miss]ion to pass to his home to Pitsylvania in Virgi[nia] allowing him three days to perform that journey

Given Speedwell Iron works/ 19th March 1781
Sam'l. Edmiston [Samuel Edmiston]
DW.M.G'1 A [Deputy Wagon Master General] A[?]

On this twenty third day of July one thousand eight hundred and fifty one (1851) also personally appeared before us, Drury Blair and George Adams, Justices as aforesaid, John Myers, an aged and respectable citizen of the aforesaid County and State, aged eighty nine (89) and entitled to credit, who, being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath, declare that he was well acquainted with Benjamin Davis dec. a Revolutionary soldier and was, for many years, an intimate friend and neighbor of said Benjamin Davis – that he (said Benjamin Davis) resided in the county of Pittsylvania & State of Virginia until the spring of the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy nine (1779) when he joined the Company of Virginia State Troops commanded by capt. John Green in Colonel Stevens' Regiment when said Regiment was *en route* to join the Army of General Nathaniel Green in the South [sic: see endnote], that he was present when said Benjamin Davis was enlisted in said service at a place Called "Calland's" in said County & State on or about the nineteenth (19th) or twentieth (20th) of March one thousand seven hundred and seventy nine (1779) which enlistment was for two years – that he heard frequently from said Benjamin Davis during the Campaigns of said army in the Southern States, and received from him the details of several Battles, viz "Camden [Battle of Camden SC, 16 Aug 1780]" – "Guilford Court House," & in which he (said Benjamin Davis) was engaged, and which details were often related to him in person by said Benjamin Davis after his return from the service – that said Benjamin Davis was discharged as a soldier on or about the nineteenth day of march one thousand seven hundred and eighty one (1781), his original Discharge as such having been often seen by himself, but, which has been long since destroyed or mislaid – he further declares that said Benjamin Davis was detailed as a teamster in said army some months previous to his discharge and served as such until the end of his enlistment which occurred on the nineteenth of march in the year aforesaid, – that he has often see his discharge as teamster which bears date as aforesaid at a place near "Guilford Court House," and which discharge, he has learned, is yet in the possession of his Children – that he has often heard said Benjamin Davis declare that the waggon and team which he brought with him from the army was his own (B. Davis') and was bought by him previous to his discharge in North Carolina. He further declares that the aforesaid Benjamin Davis and Lydia Davis were married in the Spring of the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy eight in the same county & state by a Baptist Minister named James Hurt duly authorized by law to solemnize the rites of matrimony – that the name of Lydia Davis previous to marriage, was Lydia Meadows and that he well knew her father and mother residents also of the said County & State. He further swears that he believes the annexed detached portions of the Family Record of said Benjamin Davis dec. to be correct in regard to the date of the death of said Benjamin Davis and of his wife Lydia Davis – and in making this declaration at the request of the heirs and Administrator of said Benjamin Davis he is disinterested. John hisXmark Myers
[Myers made a similar statement on 20 June 1851, when he was said to be 92.]

Pittsylvania County, State of Virginia} S.S. [28 Nov 1851]

Before me, David H. Clark, a Justice of the peace in and for the aforesaid County and State, personally appeared William Dixon [pension application W3522] a Resident of the aforesaid County, aged now about ninety (90) years, who being first duly sworn according to law, does on his oath, declare that he is the identical William Dixon who was placed on the Pension Roll of the Agency of the State of Virginia in the year 1833 for services as Corporal & Private in the Virginia [sic: North Carolina] Continental Line in the war of the Revolution with Great Britain, and that he makes this affidavit at the request of those interested viz

That he was most intimately acquainted with Benjamin Davis deceased who was a Revolutionary soldier, and [that] he first became acquainted with said Benjamin Davis as early as the year seventeen hundred and seventy seven (1777) in the aforesaid County when the said Davis was only about nineteen (19) years of age, and he, the affiant, about seventeen years of age; that he distinctly remembers that said Davis was married in the following year, sometime in the Spring thereof, but he cannot remember what

month – that the name of his wife previous to marriage was Lydia Meadows daughter of Joab Meadows deceased whom he also well knew; – that said Davis continued to reside in said County until about the twenty fifth (25th) day of march seventeen hundred and seventy nine (1779) when he enlisted at a place called Calland’s in said County as a private in a company of Virginia Troops commanded at the time by one Captain John Greene of Culpeper County, in the state of Virginia in a Regiment of Troops which had been commanded for some time by Colonel (afterwards General) Edward Stevens, but that the name of Colonel of said Regiment at the time of said Davis’ enlistment is forgotten, (Colonel Stevens having resigned as Colonel of said Regiment in the fall of 1778) – that he was not present at said enlistment, but saw said Davis in two or three days afterward when he was under the command of the Recruiting Officer under whom he enlisted and was en route to join the aforesaid Company – that the name of the said Recruiting Officer was either “Fauanteroy” or “Fauntleroy,” and that he verily believes that John Myers of this County is the only surviving person who was present at the time & place of said enlistment – that he has often heard many old men now deceased, as well as the aforesaid Myers declare that they were present at the time and that it has been always believed by the entire community the said Davis enlisted as above described: – that he heard nothing more of said Davis until the fall of the same year, (about 4 or 5 months after his enlistment) when the aforesaid Regiment of Virginia Troops and several of North Carolina Troops were ordered by Congress to march to Charleston in South Carolina to reenforce the Army of General Gates – that said Davis did march to South Carolina as a private in said company, and was there engaged in some of the most important battles in said state in the Campaign of 1780 & 1781, as he verily believes from letters which were written by said Davis from the seat of war, which letters were frequently seen by him, the affiant, and from other proof which will be hereinafter adduced – that he, the affiant, having also joined the service of the United States did not meet with said Benjamin Davis until the month of January in the year seventeen hundred and eighty one (1781) when he met with him in Guilford in North Carolina about two months before the discharge of said Davis – that said Davis was then a private of the aforesaid company, and that said Captain John Greene having become Colonel of said Regiment, the said Company was then commanded by one Captain Gabriel Jones – that said Davis had been driving a waggon in the Army of General Greene for some four or five months when he first met him and continued to drive said waggon until within a few days of his expiration of service: – that he related to him, the affiant, many particulars of his service in the Southern Campaigns, and the numerous hardships which he had encountered: – that he would be discharged in about two months and would then return to his family and friends in Pittsylvania County: – he further declares that he served in the same Brigade for the balance of said Davis’ term of service which was about two months, and that he saw him nearly every day during the said two months – that said Brigade was comanded by General [Isaac] Huger, and was engaged in the Battle of Guilford Court House in North Carolina on the fifteenth day of march in the year seventeen hundred and eighty one (1781); – that on the day of said battle said Davis did abandon his waggon & team and did join the ranks of his aforesaid company in order to engage the enemy the particulars of which he, the affiant, well remembers: – that General Greene having fallen back to a place called “Speedwell Iron works about ten miles from Guilford did there await some reinforcements from Virginia, and that said Davis was there discharged from said Company & Regiment on or about the twentieth or twenty fifth day of march seventeen hundred & eighty one (1781), and that he well remembers to have see him set out for home as he was returning to the same county from which the affiant came &c; – that said Davis had been for some two or three days discharged from the Waggon Master’s Department when he was discharged from said Company, and having returned to said county did there reside until the period of his death in march 1836 – that he, the affiant, having also served his term of enlistment did return to and reside in said county as a neighbor to said Benjamin Davis from the year 1821 to the period of his death – that he did often hear from said Davis full details fo his service and did often see his original Discharge as a soldier during the time of their neighborship which discharge was dated on or about the day above mentioned and was signed by Colonel Greene; that said Discharge

was in possession of said Davis until about the year eighteen hundred & twenty five (1825) or (1826) when, as he verily believes, said discharge was lost or mislaid by him and has never been found: that, when the affiant applied for and obtained pension, he tried to prevail upon said Davis also to apply, and that said Davis declined doing so for the following reasons viz: "that he had lost his discharge, his Captain & Colonel, whose affidavits of his service would be required, had been for many years dead, and he had been informed by some public officer at Richmond or Washington that his name was omitted on the Muster Rolls of his Regiment, and that in the absence of all these proofs it would be useless for him to apply." – that he verily believes, that, for the above reasons neither the said Davis nor his surviving widow did ever apply for pension: but, that he remembers to have seen a letter addressed in the year 1846 or 1847 by one Capt. Philip Slaughter of Culpeper County to the said widow, the purport of which was "that he knew the said Benjamin Davis as a private in Captain Greene's (afterward Captain Jones') Company – that he had served two years therein and that he was surprised to hear said Davis had not been pensioned &c" – that he has heard that said letter has been lost since the death of the said Widow – that Benjamin Davis died in said County & State on or about the 20th day of March in the year 1836 – that his aforesaid widow died in the same county and state on or about the fourth (4th) day of January in the year 1848 – and that John Davis and Sarah Corbin, formerly Sarah Davis, both of whom he well knows, are the only surviving children of the aforesaid Benjamin Davis and Lydia Davis: He further declares that for the last five months, he (the affiant) has been entirely unable from frustration by sickness to make this affidavit; but, having recovered therefrom, he now states what he distinctly remembers concerning said Davis & his service in the Revolution, and that he is disinterested. William hisXmark Dixon

NOTE:

Of the 60 pages in this file only the ones that appeared most informative are transcribed.

Col. Edward Stevens resigned from the Virginia Continental Army on 31 Jan 1778 to become a General of Militia. John Green was last a Captain on 13 Aug 1776 when he was promoted to Major. In 1779 he was Colonel in the 6th Virginia Regiment.

The General who was en route to command the Southern Army in 1779 was Horatio Gates. Gen. Nathanael Greene was en route to Charlotte NC to replace Gates in Nov 1780.

On 23 July 1851 Jameson Corbin certified that the excerpts transcribed below were written by Corbin about 17 years before in "an old and much tattered Family Bible" belonging to Benjamin Davis. Corbin also stated that he also copied the family record into a Bible belonging to his wife, Sarah Corbin, formerly Sarah Davis.

Benjamin Davis and Lydia Meadows were married on the tenth day May in the year one thousand seven hundred & seventy eight

Benjamin Davis died on the 22 day of march one thousand eight hundred and thirty six

Lydia Davis died on the 4th day of January in the year one thousand eight hundred and forty eight

Lydia M. Davis was born on the 5 day of April the year of our Lord 1779

James Turner Davis was born on the 16th day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty

On 26 Nov 1851 Mary Shelton, 89, wife of Vincent Shelton, stated that Benjamin Davis and Lydia Meadows were married at the house of her father, Joab Meadows. On the same day Vincent Shelton and John Butcher stated that the only surviving children of Benjamin and Lydia Davis were John Davis, about 43, and Sarah Corbin, about 52 or 53.