

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension Application of Thomas Poindexter W5556

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Virginia

Louisa County Sct.

On this 15th day of June 1837 personally appeared before the Subscriber a Justice of the peace, and a Judge of the Court of the said County (being a court of record) Thomas Poindexter a resident of the County aforesaid and state of Virginia aged seventy seven years, 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 June 7th 1832.

That he was born on the 25th day of May 1760 and was enlisted in the Militia, say in May 1776. That in the latter part of the summer he substituted himself for one George Crank since dead, and marched from the County of Louisa to Williamsburg, and was put under the command of Genl. [Thomas] Nelson. Nothing remarkable happened in the army while he performed this tour of duty as Dunmore [the Royal Governor, on 7 Aug 1776] had left the Capital and the state, and there was no enemy within it's territory. And that he served to the best of his belief two months as private in the militia, and was discharged. That he does not recollect the given names of the officers of the company, under whom he served, as they lived in a different part of his county, and were strangers to him, but to the best of his recollection the Capt. name was Saunders [possibly John Sanders], and the Lieut Johnsen [Johnson]. the ensign he has forgotten nor is he able to recollect any person who served with him who is now alive. Nor is this remarkable, as he has not been able to do his own business for ten years, and no man could have served this tour with him, being of lawful age for military duty, and still surviving, under 77 years of age. He distinctly remembers Gen'l. Nelson, and his personal appearance, but recollects no inferior officer. His regiment was stationed under a grove, and he thinks there was another regiment quartered in Barracks but he does not recollect anything of them and there were no regulars. That in his next tour he was drafted and marched in the early part of the summer of 1780, as private in the militia of the same county to the south. In this tour the officers were his friends, and he continued acquainted with them until their death. [John] Byars was Captain, [Thomas] Shelton Lieutenant and [Anthony] Winston ensign. Marched from his own County under the command of Byars, by Carter's Ville [probably Cartersville in Cumberland County], Prince Edward C[ourt]t. H[ous]e. to Hillsborough in North Carolina where he thinks he joined the Virginia Regiments, and were put under the command of Colo [George] Stubblefield of Spotsylvania Va. The Major's name was [William] Boyce or Glenn [Lt. Col. John Glenn] to the best of his belief. remained sometime at Hillsborough and was thence marched to join [Gen. Horatio] Gates. That during the march they suffered much from fatigue and want of provisions. They marched from 4 OC [o'clock] in the morning till 12 OC at night with an interval of short duration for dinner, (if they could procure provisions) and those were mostly unripe fruit and green corn, which the country afforded. Were detained at Deep River for several days by high water, and while there he and a fellow soldier named Hogan who was killed at Camden, swam the river to get some unripe peaches from an orchard on the other side. Joined Gates' army at Rugeley's Mill [about 12 mi N of Camden SC] about 10 OC A.M. [15 Aug 1780] and at about 10 at night they got under way with the purpose of surprising Cornwallis in Camden, as was said. About 11 or 12 OC the advance guard of the two armies met, and he heard firing. The Armies then drew off, and after the orders were given they were directed to repose themselves on their arms. Before they went to sleep, the army were marched out of the road and were formed. As it happened that he stood within a few yards of Col Stubblefield when Gen'l. Gates rode up to him and gave orders that the men should not fire until they were ordered by the commanding officer, and then directed the Col. that the army should continue to advance until they got within fifteen steps when they should fire once and charge. He considered these most indescreet orders, particularly as the militia had joined the army so lately, and many of the men had no bayonetts. He was stationed in his company in the extreme left, and in the twilight of the morning, he saw the enemy advancing through the open pine wood, in which they were stationed in very open order,

being obliged to extend their line to make it as long as the American. When at about one hundred yards, the enemy fired a round and the line immediately halted, nor were they ordered again to advance, or indeed to do anything else. The enemy advanced rapidly about twenty yards and fired again, and had advanced, and were again about to fire, when he heard a single shot on the extreme right, and the line commenced to scattering fire. He fired, and immediately discovered the line was broken and the men flying. Col Stubblefield with much passion and many curses attempted to stop them, but finding it impossible to do so, he desisted, and ordered them to shift for themselves. He fled and in his retreat picked up a very fine Bayonette and carried it off with him. In a peach Orchard near the Battle ground he met with about seventy men with Colo [Holt] Richardson of Caroline [County VA] who took charge of the men and conducted them to Hillsborough, whither they had been ordered to rendezvous by Stubblefield when he told them to retreat. At that place he met with his Col and the regiment and after continuing there some time, he was permitted by his officers to return home, as they despaired of being able to reorganize the army to do any service. And that in this tour he is well assured that he served at least two months as a private in the militia. He saw the Army only on the day they joined, and therefor he remembers no other troops, regular or militia except Richardsons regiment from Caroline. That in his next tour he was drafted, and marched as a private in the militia from the same county in a company commanded by James Watson he thinks. But in this tour again the officers were strangers and he does not distinctly recollect them - joined the army under the Marquiss Lafayette [Marquis de Lafayette] at Richmond in the early part of the spring of 1781. He remembers that Colo Richardson was again in the service, but does not recollect that he was his Colo or who was, but [Thomas] Armistead was Major. Cornwallis was on the south side of the James River and the Marquiss was watching his movements. He marched down the river from Richmond, served sometime, at Malvern Hills [in Henrico County], Fourmile Creek [in Henrico County] and Chickahominy. Returned to Richmond and arrived there a few hours before Cornwallis got to Manchester [across the James River from Richmond] - remained there about two days, when the Marquiss marched up the Fredericksburg road to Rossin's[?] then took the Groundsqirrel road [Ground Squirrel Road near South Anna River], spent the remainder of that day in the woods four or five miles above, and in the night marched across to the Old Mountain Road [along present US 33], and the next day to Dandridge's [probably in Hanover County] where he was discharged. And that to the best of knowledge and belief he served in this tour three months as private in the militia. He saw the Marquiss and recollects his person, and remembers that there were several Militia regiments in the army, but he cannot now describe them and recollects no regular troops. And that in his last tour he was drafted; and marched in the latter part of the summer of the same year as private in the militia of the same county, in a Company commanded by Capt. White, Johnson Lieut. and Terrell [possibly Thomas Terrill] he thinks Ensign to Gloucester [sic: Gloucester] Court House and was put he thinks, under the Command of Colo Ennis [sic: James Innis]. Was stationed at that place and employed in checking the foraging parties from the British at Gloucester Town, until Gen'l. Washington attacked the enemy at Pigeon Hill, when they marched down to Sowell's old Field and was put under the command of Gen'l. [George] Weedon. Remained watching the enemy at that place where they were joined by some very fine French troops until Washington's army took the redoubts, at which time they marched down and drove in an enemy's picquite [picquet]. And that he continued to serve at that place until the enemy surrendered [19 Oct 1781] and the property was all secured, when he was discharged. And that in this tour he served at least two months as private in the militia. That in relation to his first tour of service he can only procure the testimony of James Poindexter, as he knows no one who was in the service now alive. That his other tours he will be able to prove by the testimony of Witnesses who were with him in service. And that he has no documentary evidence. That more than ten years ago he was struck with a suralitic stroke, which has recurred as often as three times, with such violence as to cause his life to be despaired of each time. That this as well as old age has much injured the tenacity of his memory so that many parts of transactions which he recollects, has escaped his memory. That this circumstance has prevented him heretofore from claiming the benefit of the Act of Congress, and now it is owing to the intervention of his friends, that he is enabled to present his claim. And that the same circumstance has always prevented and will continue to prevent his

attending the court of his county. And that he refers to Richmond Terrill Esq. Doc'r. James M Morris, Gen. Wm F Gordon and the Hon. Philip P Barbour, for his character for veracity, and the reputation of the neighbourhood as to his services in the War of the Revolution.

To the first Question he replies I was born on the waters of Elk Creek in the county of Louisa on the 25th day of May 1760

To the second I have no record of my age

To the Third When called into service I was living at the place where I was born. Since the war I have lived a short time in Kentucky, and since in the neigh'd of the green springs in the County of Louisa

To the Fourth In my first tour I was substitute for George Crank afterwards drafted

To the Fifth The fifth question was answered to my satisfaction

To the Sixth I never did receive a written discharge for any services rendered by me in the army

To the Seventh Richmond Terrill, Doct'r. James M. Morris Gen'l. W. F. Gordon, Judge Philip P. Barbour Thos. Diggs[?] and others

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid [signed] Thos. Poindexter

Virginia, Louisa County Sct

on this 14th day of Aug't 1837 personally appeared before me a justice of the peace in and for said County James Poindexter, a resident of said County, aged Seventy two years, and a credible person, and made oath. That he was born, by his father's register, on the 5th day of June 1765. That he recollects distinctly, that in the early part of the revolutionary War, when he was he supposes about eleven or twelve years of age, his elder Brother Thomas who is now applying for a pension, went into the service as a militiaman. he remembers his firing himself to go, and that he did go and was absent for some time from home. and that he moreover remembers that his said brother, at a subsequent period went again into the service and marched to the South at the time of Gates' defeat. These things are forcibly impressed on his memory from their living together, and his being very much distressed, at his brother being carried from home and into danger.

[signed] James Poindexter

Virginia Louisa County Sct

On this 10th day of July 1837 personally appeared before the subscriber a justice of the peace in and for the County aforesaid Nathaniel Snelson [pension application W6135] a resident of said county aged 74 years and as appears to me a credible person and made oath That in the war of the Revolution Thomas Poindexter now of the Green Springs in Louisa served the Tour to the south in the militia of that county with him. That they marched together from Louisa in a company of which Byars was captain Shelton Lieut and Winsten was Ensign. Were present together at Gates' defeat, and afterwards at Hillsborough together for some weeks, and then both as he believes recieved furloughs at the same time, and returned together to their own county.

Sworn and subscribed the day and year aforesaid

Nathaniel hisXmark Snelson

Virginia Louisa county Sct.

On this 29th day of July 1837 personally appeared before the subscriber a justice of the peace in and for the county aforesaid Thomas Bibb [pension application S9100] a resident of said county aged about 83 or 4 years, and as appears to me a credible person and made oath, That Thomas Poindexter at present a resident of the Green Springs in the County of Louisa served a tour of du[ty] with him in the Militia from the said county of Louisa un[der] Capt James Watson during the Revolutionary War in and about & below the City of Richmond Virginia. The year is not recollected, nor the season of the year but he thinks it was upon the borders of Warm weather. That the said Poindex[ter] went into service with him & was discharged with him he is fully sensible. And that he is of opinion from what he now can recollect the said Poindexter faithfully served out his tour of duty

Thomas hisXmark Bibb

Virginia Louisa County Sc

On this 28th day of August 1837 personally appeared before the subscriber a justice of the peace in and for the said county, Nelson Harris a resident of the county aforesaid, aged seventy nine years and a credible person, and made oath, that he lived in the same neighbourhood with Thomas Poindexter of the Green Springs in the said county, for the space of three years & knew him intimately in his youth. That he remembers that said Poindexter was several times in the service in the Militia in the revolution, and on one occasion at least was a substitute for some one whom he has now forgotten, and that he served a tour with said Poindexter at the seige of York, marched under Jack White, he thinks captain, who returned home and then were put under another captain, whose name he has forgotten. After their discharge he recollects that on their return in company they were compelled to shoot a hog, for provision, having no money to purchase it. given under my hand the date above written
[signed] Nelson Harris

NOTE: On 3 Nov 1846 Sally Poindexter, 77, applied for a pension stating that she married Thomas Poindexter on 28 Mar 1790, and he died 10 Apr 1843. In the file is a copy of the return of Rev. John Lasley for the marriage of Thomas Poindexter and Sarah Ragland on 18 Mar 1790. The file also contains a copy of a bond signed 24 Mar 1790 by Thomas Poindexter and John Michie for the marriage of Poindexter to Sarah Ragland. Her application for bounty land dated 12 Mar 1855 appears to spell her maiden name as Reegland, and it states that she was married by John Lastley on 18 Mar 1790. Other documents state that their first child was named Lucy, and a son, Edward, was living in Louisa County in 1846.