

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of William Cole W5884

Mourning Cole

VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

On this 25th day of August 1835 personally appeared in open court before the justices of the County Court of Halifax now sitting, William Cole Sr. aged 82 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 volunteered and started from the County of Charlotte sometime about the 1st of June 1777 (the precise day he does not remember) in a company Commanded by Capt. Thomas Williams – Leut John Collier and Ensign Joseph Collier, that they marched from said County to Petersburg thence to Williamsburg staying some considerable time at the last named place – from thence they marched to Hampton thence to Portsmouth, where they were stationed, and there remained until his tour expired which was about the last of October as well as he now remembers. He saw a large number of the soldiers belonging to the army at Williamsburg and Hampton before he reached Portsmouth. the main body of the army in that section was stationed at Williamsburg. He does not recollect the names of the officers he saw Commanding on this tour, but he is of opinion that the Governor of the state [Patrick Henry] was in Command. He does not recollect from whom he received a discharge but that he returned home with Ensign Collier.

On the first of May 1781, or thereabout, he was drafted and started from Halifax County with a furlough from Colo. Robert Wooding, and other papers – to search for the Regiment to which he belonged – he first went to New London [then in Bedford County, now in Campbell County] thence to Cumberland Old Courthouse thence to Goochland Courthouse where he found the Regiment gave up his papers & joined it. the Regiment was commanded by Col. Charles Dabney and Maj. Alexander Dick – They marched from Goochland Courthouse to Richmond and remained some considerable time in Richmond – he marched from thence to Williamsburg – thence to Little York, at which latter place they joined the main army under the command of General Washington. Soon afterwards Dabneys Regiment was sent to join General [Henry] Knox's Artillery. They remained at Little York till Cornwallis Surrendered himself to the American Army. He saw Gen'l. Washington and several others of the American officers during the time he stayed at Little York. He saw Cornwallis when he surrendered his sword [see endnote], which he believes was sometime in October [19th] 1781. He then marched from York to Portsmouth – he was sent below Norfolk after Tories, as there were a great many Tories about there. In this last mentioned tour he received the appointment of Sergeant and served in that capacity about three months and a half. As well as he remembers he was discharged about the 1st of December 1781, and received his discharge from Maj. Alexander Dick at Portsmouth and arrived home a few days before Christmas having had to beg his way home having received no pay for his services. Many years after his return home, he placed his discharge in the hands of General Scott a member of the Virginia Assembly from this county who told him that he would endeavor to get his pay for him – which he accordingly did; that the said Scott has been dead a great while, and the discharge was never returned to him, and he knows of no person to whom he could apply with any prospect of getting the discharge again. The questions then required under the regulations of the Act Congress, and answered in substance as follows. That he was born in the County of Prince Edward Virginia, on the 12th day of December 1752 – that he has in his possession a copy taken from the old family record of one of his relations, when first called into service he resided in the County of Charlotte, when called the second time he resided in this County – having removed here the 23rd of March 1780 where he has resided ever since. That the first tour he served as a Volunteer, and the second he was drafted. The names of the officers who were with the troops where he served – the general circumstances of his service and all things relative to his several discharges are particularised in the body of his declaration. Colo. Armistead Barksdale Capt Anthony

Sydnor & Judge Wm. Leigh and the Rev'd. David Street who reside in my neighbourhood can testify as to my character for veracity and their belief of my services as a soldier of the revolution. I have no documentary evidence of my service.

I hereby relinquish every claim whatsoever to a pension or annuity except the present, and declare that my name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any State.

Sworn & subscribed the day and year aforesaid [signed] Wm Cole Sr

The affidavit of George Carter of Lawful age taken before me a justice of the Peace for the County of Halifax. This affiant being first sworn on the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God, saith that during the Revolutionary war William Cole Sen'r lived in the family of the late Joseph Petty a near neighbour to his father all of the said County of Halifax & during that & during that time the said Cole was absent fo some time & it was said by the family of the said Petty that he the said Cole was gone in the Service and that he saw the said Cole after his return & heard him say that he had served a tour of duty of eight months and he also heard him the said Col say that he had served a tour of duty from Charlott County further this affiant saith not
George hisXmark Carter

[The above application was initially rejected, in part because it claimed tours longer than the standard of three months for militiamen.]

State of Virginia }
Halifax County } SS.

This day William Cole Senieur, personally appeared before me William Bailey a Justice of the peace for the said County and made oath, that the reasons he has delayed so long to present his claim to the War Department for a pension were the following, to wit, – First, he was endeavouring to percurre positive evidence of his service before he made application – and in order to effect this he had written to Washington several times about the matter – an answer to one letter he has now, and will forward with this Certificate. That in consequence of his loosing the possession of his discharge as stated in his declaration, and being unable to regain the same, he had thought it absolutely necessary to procure positive testimony, and which he very much endeavored to do, believing that there were persons alive who could testify to it. – that after attempting to prove his service positively he found he could not do so but the nearest he could come was the circumstantial affidavit of George Carter which he had taken and will forward with this, owing to deaths, removal &c. of the persons who knew of his service. That in consequence of failing to prove his service he had abandoned all idea of applying and would not have done so at all, but being informed that he could obtain some compension upon his own declaration accompanied with evidence of good character, he was induced to apply, which fact he was ignorant of until informed and then made the application.

With regard to the length of time which he served, to the best of his recollection and belief it is as stated in his declaration. He did not and could not state in his declaration the precise length of time he served but stated that he started about such a time & returned at another time. He had in his possession some time ago a very old paper which was a certificate from General Charles Dabney that he was to serve six months given that he might know when his time expired – and that he was absent on that tour “eight months” – He states that he is old & infirm and has in consequence thereof not as good a memory as formerly but believes yet that the time stated in his declaration is correct. Given under my hand this fifth day of November 1835.

Sir Your of the 15th Sept came to hand – and I have prepared the above certificate – in answer to the same. Your will perceive that that the affidavit of Carter is for eight months as well as he remembers – the three months I believe is also correct. Please answer this as soon as possible – Yours &c

[signed] Wm Cole Sr

P.S. You must have mistaken the declaration I only claim for 8 months & 3 months.

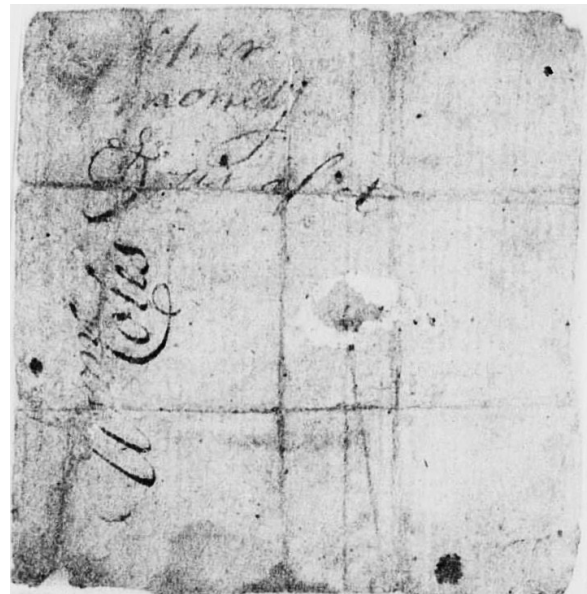
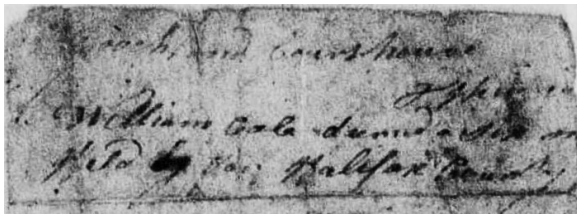
[signed] Wm Cole Sr

[17 Dec 1835] Memo. for Capt. [Walter] Coles from Wm. Cole.

In 1777, Wm Cole served a Tour of duty as a volunteer from the County of Charlotte as will appear from the affidavit of Rich'd Lumpkin enclosed. For which tour he was to have one allowed him whenever regularly drafted in his turn. He afterwards moved to Halifax and was called out in No. 7 and discharged by Col Coleman upon exhibiting the affidavit of Lumpkin in 1780. In '81 a man by the name of Joshua Adams appeared before the Court Martial and made oath that Wm Cole told him (Adams) that he had served his own tour from Charlotte, & not as volunteer. Upon this oath of Adams the Court sentenced Wm Cole to serve six months in the Va. State Regiment. He then obtained a furlough of one week from Col. Wooden, proceeded to Charlotte and obtained from the Clerk of the Court a Certificate that he had served a tour as volunteer, and not his own tour: this Certificate he produced before Col Wooden, but the Col. told him, he had not the power to discharge him as he was sentenced by the Court Martial.

Wm Cole then set out for the State Regiment and joined Col Dabney at Goochland Co. House as will appear from the enclosed Certificate of Col Dabney, part of which is destroyed. After joining Col Dabney, he marched to Yorktown & acted as Serjeant at the Siege of York and remained in the Service until sometime in the following December.

[The following appear to be the fragments of Dabney's certificate.]



NOTES:

Cornwallis did not personally surrender his sword at Yorktown. Being indisposed, he delegated that duty to his second-in-command, Gen. Charles O'Hara.

On 26 Oct 1844 Mourning Cole, 88, applied for a pension stating that she married William Cole in June 1786, and he died 14 Oct 1838. Nancy Cole, 73, stated that she was at the marriage of William Cole and Mourning Hilson, and that they had three children before the birth of her own second child, who was then 53. Nancy Cole also stated that at age 16 she married the brother of William Cole. The file includes a copy of a bond signed in Halifax County on 28 Dec 1789 by Robert Cole and Richard Carter for the marriage of Cole to Nancy Carter. On 5 July 1844 David B. Tucker, 30, listed the children of William and Mourning Cole as Nancy Cole, Joel Cole, Patsey Cole, James Cole, and Sally Cole, all over age 50.