

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of William Darnell W6989

Elizabeth fn94NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

2/15/10

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Also, the handwriting of the original scribes often lends itself to varying interpretations. Users of this database are urged to view the original and to make their own decision as to how to decipher what the original scribe actually wrote. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. Folks are free to make non-commercial use this transcript in any manner they may see fit, but please extend the courtesy of acknowledging the transcriber—besides, if it turns out the transcript contains mistakes, the resulting embarrassment will fall on the transcriber.]

[fn p. 83]

For the purpose of obtaining the benefit of an act for the relief of certain surviving officers and soldiers of the Army of the Revolution approved on the 15 of May 1828 I William Darnell of the age of seventy-seven years last Christmas now in the County of Jackson and State of Tennessee do hereby declare that previous to my enlisting as a Continental soldier I served three tours in the militia as a private in the North Carolina Militia in the Revolutionary war and that I was wounded in the left leg at Gates defeat, said William Darnell further declares that while serving his third tour in the militia he enlisted in the Continental line of the Army of the Revolution for and during the war and continued in its service until its termination at which period he was a private and that he cannot now say to what Regiment he belonged. He joined the Continental Army at a place called Bryer Creek [sic, Brier Creek?] he believes in South Carolina and was there and at a place near there called Dick Golphins [Galphin's] guarding some prisoners when the Battle was at Stono and after the war was closed my discharge was handed to me by Richard Simpson who got it from the officers and handed the same to me. I afterwards drew my land warrant for six hundred forty acres of land from Raleigh North Carolina which I sold to Nathan Williams of Caswell County North Carolina my discharge got burnt in the dwelling house of William Madgeline [?] my brother-in-law in Warren County North Carolina when his house was burnt at a time when I lived with him before I married my wife, my wearing clothes and regimentals that I wore home after I was discharged from the Army was burnt in the house with my discharge. I have raised a large family of children am now and has been for a long time past in a weak and declining State of health, hard of hearing my eyesight very much failed me so that at times I can hardly tell one man from another, myself and old woman living alone no land of my own owning little property of any kind, to support on no horse nor Cow to give me milk, his as much as both of us can do to get wood to make us fires to sit by in the winter. In the summer we can work a little with the hope in chopping our corn and vegetables and if we was not aided by the neighbors we would suffer greatly. I am determined never to apply to be put on the poor list of the County when the first petition law passed I tried to get on the then petition list. I applied to Judge Stewart while he was holding Court at Williamsburg in Jackson County Tennessee. He drew a statement for me and the same as I was informed was sent on to the war department and rejected saying I was a militia man and not a regular knowing that I was a Continental for during the war after I had served in the militia and knowing I had got my land warrant from Raleigh the seat of government in North Carolina, I tried by every means in my power to get some person to make an examination there for me but never could until last summer Colonel Smith done it for me and sent on to me the Certificate of the Secretary of State of North

Carolina that now accompanies this application and informed me that the Secretary in consequence of my being and old Revolutionary Soldier would not receive any Compensation for examining the books and making the Certificate.

S/ William Darnell, X his mark

State of Tennessee Jackson County: I James W. Smith Justice of the peace for said County of Jackson do certify the above affidavit and declaration was subscribed and sworn to before me by said William Darnell this 29th day of January 1830 and that said William Darnell is by those who is acquainted with him believed an honest man and a man whose veracity is not doubted, at the same time he is quite infirm in body and little or no education.

S/ Jas. W. Smith, JP

[fn p. 79]

State of Tennessee Jackson County

This day Micager [sic, Micajah] Rackley<sup>1</sup> aged 70 or 71 years of age personally appeared before me Henry Carr one of the acting Justices of the peace in and for said County and after being duly sworn says That he was well acquainted with William Darnold [sic] in the State of North Carolina Franklin County previous to the revolutionary war and served with him a tower [tour] of duty with him as a militia man under the command of General Caswell after his Time was out I understood and believe he enlisted as a Continental Soldier though I was not with him -- at that time nor do I know the officers he served under as a Continental Soldier. After he Darnell and myself was discharged and returned home we were together at Franklin Court House and was drinking Sider [sic, cider] together: and one of us I do not now recollect which myself or William Darnell offered to throw up Cross or pile which should have both discharges and I and William Darnell each pulled out our discharges and handed them to a man by the name of Daniel Potter who read them both I well recollect hearing said Darnell discharge read and that he was honorable discharge. The same William Darnell is now a citizen of Jackson County Tennessee and is the same man whose discharge I saw and heard read. Sworn and subscribed before made this 12th day of December 1829

S/ Henry M. Carr, JP

S/ Micager Rackley, X his mark

[fn p. 73]

State of North Carolina Secretary of State's Office

I William Hill Secretary of State in and for the State aforesaid, do certify that it appears from a Book in this Office called the Warrant-book, that they Warrant issued for the Military services of William Darnell a private Soldier in the Continental line of this State in the revolutionary war, which warrant is for 640 acres, the quantity allowed by law to war Soldiers, was issued at the time when such warrants were issued on the certificate of Field Officers -- say 1785.

Given under my hand this 14th day of May 1829

S/ Wm Hill

State of Tennessee Jackson County

On this 16th day of May 1833 personally appeared in open Court before the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions of said County of Jackson now sitting William Darnell a resident of Smith the adjoining County in the said State of Tennessee aged eighty-one years old next January who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in

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<sup>1</sup> [Micajah Rackley W26396](#)

order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated -- in 1779 William Darnell the applicant resided in the State of North Carolina Franklin County formally Bute, there was then a call from the State of North Carolina for soldiers to be drawn out from the militia of that State to go into the southern Army to serve nine months. Applicant volunteered or was voted in by the company don't now recollect which to serve as one of these nine months men, and was marched off from Franklin County NC under Captain Robert Temples to the Regular Army he believes in camp near Camden South Carolina, was there put under a new set of Officers, he believes Regular officers. He continued with the Regular Army in all their marches from the place where he joined them -- across Savannah River then back again into South Carolina after the British, applicant was often sent out on detached and scouting parties and before they reached Stono where the Battle was fought and not far from the place applicant was promoted to the office of orderly Sergeant and left with eight or ten soldiers under his command at a House, then called Old Dick Golphins [sic, Galphins'] to take care of the sick and guard to English prisoners that was taken and fetched [?] in by a party of the American light Horse. Applicant remained stationed at this place to take care of the sick soldiers there until his term of nine months expired and one month after the time and then was discharged and sent home, applicant cannot read or write -- don't know who signed his discharge but knows it was by those who could write considered a good an honorable discharge both before and after he got home, believes from the best of his recollection. He marched off from Franklin County in the year 1779 under Captain Temples and was discharged and sent home in 1780.

2<sup>nd</sup> In a short time after applicant returned home from serving the foregoing tour of 10 months there was a call on the militia of the State for men to go to the South to serve three months. Applicant volunteered to go and served this three months tour but cannot give a detailed statement of his officers movements and different marches in the Army but perfectly well recollects his being in the Battle at Gates Defeat<sup>2</sup> and that he was wounded in his leg there by a splinter from the Britch [sic, breech?] of his gun that was shot off by a Ball while he was in the act of loading after shooting at the British. He believes the first and one of the few guns fired by the militia before they Broke and ran, as applicant was running he saw Major Donaho [Thomas Donoho?] on his Horse & shewed him the broken gun by holding the same up. The Major ordered him to save himself if he could. Applicant squated [squatting] in a gully tyed [tied] up his leg that was then Bleeding profusely and then got into the woods in a swampy place and thus saved himself from the Enemy then made his way with some of the stragling soldiers to Hillsboro and remained there with the Army that was there until his time of service was out Received his discharge and went home was in actual service ten months the first tour three months this tour, applicant served two more three months tours of Duty after the one last mentioned but does not recollect the dates nor can he give a detailed of the marches and movements of the Army where he was more than it was in the upper Counties in North Carolina and in South Carolina the last of which two tours and while in service I listed [enlisted] as a Regular in the North Carolina troops to serve during the war before the close of the war, was permitted to go home on furlough after the war was over my certificate as a Regular soldier was sent to me by Colonel Richard simson [Simpson?] from Hillsborough Orange County NC which certificate I afterwards carried to Raleigh and with the same drew my land warrant for six hundred forty acres of land and afterwards sold the land warrant to Nathan Williams of Caswell County NC for forty dollars and clothed myself, with the same out of said Williams' store, very

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<sup>2</sup> August 16, 1780

soon after the war was over while I was living with my Brother in law in Warren County North Carolina His house was burnt up and everything that he had and all my clothes with the Regimentals that I wore home from the Army and all my discharges and I have no record or documentary Evidence of any kind to prove my service by, He knows of no living witness by whom he can prove his service by except Major William Ferrell<sup>3</sup> of Jackson County Tennessee and Benjamin Perry of Smith County same State, He has so often and so long been trying to get persons to prove his service to get on the pension list and plagued and troubled people so often to make out and write papers and Judges and Justices of the Peace to write his own and other Declarations and declarations and affidavits of other persons for him to prove his service in the Revolutionary war to entitle him to claim and draw a pension from his government, Colonel Smith of Jackson County did procure for applicant a certificate from the Secretary of State of the State of North Carolina showing that applicant did on the certificate of a Field Officer draw his land warrant for 640 acres of land which was sent enclosed with other papers to the City of Washington neither that package or any previous package that he has at great labor and trouble procured and sent to the City of Washington has been received no answers from and he has sent all the Evidence that he could procure except the last affidavit of Micajah Rackley taken before Colonel James W. Smith of Jackson County Tennessee which is now appended to these papers with other affidavits and prayed to be taken as evidence in the half of applicant. He is now not able to travel about to collect people and get testimony to prove his service by and had given over his claim as a forlorn and hopeless one but being informed by one of his neighbors that Colonel Smith sent him word to come to court in the Town of Gainesboro Jackson County Tennessee today Borrowed a mare with a colt at her side from a poor widow woman and did make out by suffering much bodily pain to get to Gainesboro where I found Benjamin Perry of Smith County and Major William Ferrell and the Reverend Leonard Carlile of Jackson County and other friends that knows me and has given the old soldier their aid once more to make out and prepare his case to lay before the proper authority to enable him once more in his time of great need to claim and draw his pension from the government that he spent the prime of his life and fighting for and that at a time when it [indecipherable word] the souls of the best patriots of the Country and he hopes his papers will have a [indecipherable word] and the deliberate investigation and favorable issue to give him the provision which he now claims and [indecipherable word or words] and honestly knows himself and entitled to and that he will at this eleventh hour get some answer from the same, applicant was born in the State of the Junior in the month of January 1752 Has a Record of his age in an old Book which he is informed was taken from the Record kept by his Father, was living when called into the service in Bute County now Franklin County NC, moved from Franklin County to Warren, after the war was over then to Wilkes, then to Caswell County NC and from there to Jackson County Tennessee Has Resided something more than 20 years in Tennessee and in the County of Jackson until a few months passed I moved into Smith County where I now Reside. I was either elected by vote of the company which was sometimes the way nine and 12 months men was received, volunteered or went as a substitute every time I served in the Army do not know in whose place I substituted, General Lincon [sic, Benjamin Lincoln] was the commander in chief when I served the nine months in the South one remarkable thing I will recollect there was a soldier in the Army called Jack the Drummer, while I was in the Army in South Carolina. Jack and two old Regular soldiers went out of camp to drank cyder [cider] Jack had money, they had none Jack did not give them as much cyder as they wanted but got drunk himself they was displeased because he

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<sup>3</sup> [William Ferrell S3355](#)

did not buy more cyder for them, Returned into camp and said Jack had deserted to the enemy. A guard was sent out and brought Jack in as a deserter and he was ordered to be hanged. A gallos [gallows] was made and Jack hung on the same in presence of the Army the rope broke and let Jack fall the officer of the guard doubled the rope and tied the weight of two heavy [indecipherable word, could be "men"] on the same then hung up Jack again the rope broke and let him down the Second time the officer informed General Lincoln of the case, and the General gave orders to let him go as a scape gallows.<sup>4</sup>

General Gates commanded at Gates Defeat. Majr. Donnahoe [sic, Thomas Donoho] was a continental officer and General Butler I think was in the Army with me the second tour. He was of the militia. I Rec'd discharges But cannot read print or writing and does not know who signed them they was all burnt as before stated. I never received any commission, I am acquainted with Major William Ferrel and Benjamin Perry whose Depositions is taken and appended to this statement. I am also acquainted with the Reverend Simon Carlisle and Colonel James W. Smith both neighbors that has known me many years can testify as to my character and give their opinions as to my age veracity and whether or not applicant is reputed and believed in the neighborhood to have been a Revolutionary Soldier or not, could not get to the court house in Smith County & all his acquaintances live in Jackson County where he has [sentence appears to end of the year]

it is impossible for him to state the precise time of all his service but knows he served more than 12 months.

He hereby relinquishes any claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present & declares that his name is not on the pension Roll of any Agency of any State.

S/ William Darnell, X his mark

Subscribed & sworn to the day & year aforesaid

S/ William Gailbreath, Clerk

[fn p. 38: standard supporting affidavit given by William W. Smith.]

[fn p. 48: Rev. Simon Carlisle, 60, gave testimony in Jackson County, Tennessee, that he has known William Darnell about 30 years, the first 10 or 12 years while living in Caswell County, NC; that Darnell has been reputed in Caswell as well as his current neighborhood as a Revolutionary War soldier; that Darnell had a warrant for 640 acres which he sold to Nathan Williams in Caswell County; that Darnell is infirm of memory but esteemed a good and honest man.]

[fn p. 44]

State of Tennessee Jackson County: Micajah Rackley of the County of White and State of Tennessee aged between seventy-three and seventy-four years personally appeared before me James W. Smith a Justice of the peace for said County of Jackson and in the said County on this sixth day of August 1832 and declares on oath that he was acquainted with the present applicant William Darnell from the time witness was a boy to the present time, that witness's Father and William Darnell's Father resided in Franklin County North Carolina was neighbors to each other

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<sup>4</sup> Dictionary.com defines 'scapegallows' as follows: "**Scapegallows** Scape"gal' lows\, n. One who has narrowly escaped the gallows for his crimes. [Colloq.] --Dickens." Here is proof positive, however, that the term was used long before Charles Dickens employed it.

at the time and before the Commencement of the Revolutionary War and that the Families was in the habits [of] visiting and associating together, witness says William Darnell is he expects ten years older than himself, witness says William Darnell was a cheerful man when young of a brisk and lively turn rather heedless and thoughtless about the things of life, But was a willing active and faithful friend to the American Cause and known to be a faithful soldier in the Revolutionary War, witness says he served one three months tour in the North Carolina Militia with said William Darnell, Julius Alfred was their Captain and Governor Caswell was there General. They was marched from Lewis Burg [Louisburg] NC to the South to go to Charlestown. When they got near that place as he understood the British was around that place and we was marched back to Cross Creek now Fayet [sic, Fayetteville] in NC afterwards laying eight while at Fayet we was marched up Cape Fear River and crossed Sproules' Ferry and went on to near Hillsboro then we was marched to the South crossed at the narrows of the Adkin [sic, Yadkin River] and went on down to the Cheraw Hills to be convenient as witness understood to join General Gates' Army during all this time William Darnell was with witness in the Army and was esteemed by both men and officers as a faithful willing and brave soldier in consequence of his cheerful disposition and willingness at all times to serve, Darnell was often called out with witness upon fatigue and detached parties where the officers wanted brave and willing man to serve, owing to some cause not now recollected William Darnell was not discharged with witness. He rather thinks that waiting to get fired [?] Darnell did not join the Army or rendezvous as soon as witness but joined in good time and the men was reported by the Captain according to the time they joined and this was the cause they was not all discharged together. Witness was discharged from this tour having served his time out nine days before the Battle where General Gates was Defeated near Camden. Got his discharge and went home. Darnell remained with the Army and was in Gates Defeat and as witness heard was wounded in one of his legs. Darnell remained in the service after the Battle until he was Honorably discharged and then came home, and was esteemed in the Country as a true Whig faithful and brave soldier, witness says to his knowledge said William Darnell served one nine months tour in the Revolutionary War as a private in the North Carolina Militia before this tour just described and that when he returned from the service he brought home with him an honorable discharge. Witness well recollects that after the conclusion of the war that himself and William Darnell was together at a public place in their neighborhood and there was some talk about their treating, witness and Darnell had no money thought very little of their militia discharges and they agreed to throw up craps [?] and pile [?] which should have both of their discharges and the one that one was to treat with two quarts of cider. Darnell pulled out his nine months discharge which was read and examined and was about to stake it up when a man then present who had served two years and one half in the northern Army said to us Boys you had better take care of them discharges you may have a use for them hereafter, and they declined the banter. Witness says about this time they thought very little of their discharges, He was present and saw one of the men roll up his discharge for want of tobacco, light it and burned the same in his mouth as a cigar, witness says William Darnell's papers and everything he had was burned up and his brother-in-law's house and he understood and believes his discharges was burnt with his clothes and papers. Witness says he will not swear that William Darnell Enlisted in the Regular Army for during the war but thinks it quite likely. He might have done so for he was in the Army and returned at the close of the war and was just one of them kind of man that was not accustomed to deliberate on things, had but little thought on today How what he would do next day, fond of company liked to be in the service of his Country and believing as he did the life of a soldier and

fighting for the liberty and independence of the country were an Honorable life could at any time when a tour of service in the Army and about to return home at the end of his term of service have been excited to list [enlist] for during the war. It was reported and said that William Darnell did enlist towards the close of the war as a Regular in the North Carolina line to serve during the war and after the war was over got his land warrant for his Bounty of six hundred forty acres, But as to this witness will not say as his own knowledge or he was himself and the Regular Army the latter part of the war and Darnell might have listed and then in some other part of the Army and thinks it likely was the case for Darnell was always reputed to have been a man of truth whose word was relied on and an honest man. Witness further states that said William Darnell has in a considerable measure lost his reason and that his Recollection of past events has almost wholly failed him, that he cannot now give any Regular detail of his Officers or things that happened and took place in the Army while he served with witness. Things that once was familiar to him appears to be now so forgotten that when reminded of them they seem strange and he don't recollect them, witness says that he at the request of William Darnell has without fee or reward for his services rode upwards of twenty miles to attend here this day at Colonel Smith's to give a statement of what he knew about said Darnell's serving as a soldier in the Revolutionary War. Darnell has not met him here although he resides in the neighborhood and expects he has forgot that witness at his request has made this troublesome ride at his request. Witness has heretofore given written statements for Darnell to get him on the pension list knowing that Darnell served in the Army and that he was not only a true Whig but a willing faithful and Brave soldier, and his fearless way of [2 or more indecipherable words], encouraging and warmly espousing the American Cause in the Army and he is [indecipherable word] was of great advantage in them trying times, hearing that Darnell could not make out his case to entitle him to a pension witness has tried to reflect and recollect as well as he could on the subject, find his own memory has in some degree failed but has given the foregoing statement of facts to the best of his knowledge and belief. Darnell like witness never had much property, and knew very little how to take care of and add to what he had and is now in his old age and extreme poor man and must suffer if not supported by his neighbors.

Taken down from the witness's statement read over to him corrected by his direction & sworn to and subscribed in my presence this day and date first above mentioned.

S/ Jas. W. Smith, JP

S/ Micajah Rackley, X his mark

[dated May 16, 1833]

[fn p. 16: on May 12, 1837 in Smith County Tennessee Elizabeth Darnell, 76, filed an application for a widow's pension under the 1836 act stating that she is the widow of William Darnell, a pensioner of the United States for his services in the revolution; that she married him legally by a justice of the peace whose name was Hawkins on the 21st of August 1779; that her husband died October 9 1835; that she remains his widow. She gave a separate affidavit that the family Bible belonging to her late husband in which was recorded the marriage of the veteran and his wife as well as the ages of their children "has been destroyed by one Whitmore who borrowed it and in a fit of drunkenness through the same into the fire as this affiant was informed at least the Bible has been destroyed. She knows of no record or documentary evidence of the marriage or ages of her children now in existence. The youngest child Littleton Darnell is now 50 years of age and some months there was two years between him and her daughter Jane and there was 4 1/2 years between her daughter Jane and Henry Darnell the oldest living. She had been married about three years before her first child Henry was born as he was the first living child that she had born

which makes the time as near as she can calculate upwards of 59 years since their marriage. She is certain she cannot be much mistaken as to the time."]

[fn p. 24: on March seven, 1855 in Smith County Tennessee, Elizabeth Darnell, 100, widow of William Darnell, filed for her bounty land entitlement.]