

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Lafford (Lifford) French ¹ W7329 Elizabeth French f127SC
Transcribed by Will Graves rev'd 1/18/09 & 1/8/15

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Where the meaning is not compromised by adhering to the spelling, punctuation or grammar, no change has been made. Corrections or additional notes have been inserted within brackets or footnotes. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. A bracketed question mark indicates that the word or words preceding it represent(s) a guess by me. The word 'illegible' or 'indecipherable' appearing in brackets indicates that at the time I made the transcription, I was unable to decipher the word or phrase in question. Only materials pertinent to the military service of the veteran and to contemporary events have been transcribed. Affidavits that provide additional information on these events are included and genealogical information is abstracted, while standard, 'boilerplate' affidavits and attestations related solely to the application, and later nineteenth and twentieth century research requests for information have been omitted. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading skills fail to catch all misinterpretations. Also, dates or numbers which the software treats as numerals rather than words are not corrected: for example, the software transcribes "the eighth of June one thousand eighty six" as "the 8th of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

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State of NC, County of Rutherford

Declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th, 1832

State of North Carolina

County of Rutherford

On this 19th day of October 1832 personally appeared before me, John Mills, one of the Judges of the court of pleas and Quarter Sessions for County aforesaid at his own dwelling House in Rutherford County Lefford French age eighty 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:

He would premise that within a few years past his mental as well as his bodily faculties have very much failed—many things that were then familiar to his recollection he has now but a confused and imperfect recollection of and hence he cannot pretend to give with accuracy a detailed account of his services or the particular days of his entering and leaving the service—but as to the material facts of his service, he will state nothing but what he is certain of.

His first service was in a company of South Carolina militia commanded by Col. Thomas Senior [William Thomas] and Capt. David McDowell. We marched to Granby in pursuit of a party of Tories but before we arrived there they had dispersed—we then heard of a body of Tories in the neighborhood of Ninety Six but they hearing of our approach also dispersed. This was in the fall of 1779 or 1778 but he thinks the former and staid out as he thinks three months or over—his next service was under Col. Thomas, a son of the first mentioned Colonel Thomas—we marched from King's Creek to York District South Carolina to Musgrove's Mills on Enoree and were joined on the way by Col. Clarke [Elijah Clarke] and he thinks Col. Shelby [Isaac Shelby] at the Mills we had a skirmish with a body of Tories whom we defeated [Battle of Musgrove Mill, August 19, 1780] killing a number and taking a number of prisoners how many he does not now recollect nor can he recollect the day or month but it was not long after his first service. He was not, he thinks, more than ten days in this service—after which a party of men among whom I was ¹ rendezvoused at Mountain Creek in Rutherford County waiting the return of Col. Clarke from Salisbury where he had gone with the prisoners taken at Musgrove's Mills as soon as he arrived and other men had joined us he marched us to Augusta and laid siege to it but was not able to take it. I here was with the troops

¹ BLWt44514-160-55

on the [this portion of the document is obliterated and illegible] a Col. Williamson [sic, Col. James Williams of South Carolina was the other commanding officer at the battle of Musgrove mill] and other officers that I cannot recollect after the siege was raised he and fifteen other soldiers came back together with leave of our officers. He was about a month he thinks in this service—does not remember the day or month in which he was out.

He next entered a Militia Company commanded by Capt. Wilim [sic, William ?] Wood of Spartanburg to guard against the Indians and Tories and ranged through a part of Spartanburg & Greenville So. Ca. and Rutherford County he cannot state the day or year when he performed this three months service but would state that it was the first he performed after the first mentioned commander Col. Thomas Senior and ought to have been set down so—he prior to any of the terms of service hereinbefore mentioned served a whole summer every other week guarding a block house near the head of Pacolet River in Greenville So. Carolina against the Indians who were then committing depredations on the frontier this was in the summer of 1778 or 1779.

He served in a company of Rutherford Militia commanded by Capt. James McFadden in an expedition against the Cherokee Indians. The party besieged one of their Towns on the Tuckaseegee River and killed and took prisoners several of the Indians—he was frequently out on scouts as long as the war lasted for a week or several days at a time besides those above mentioned. He has no documentary evidence and knows of no other Person by whom he can prove his services further than is contained in the subjoined probates of John McClure² and George Salmon³—he further states that he is entirely unable to go to Rutherford Court House which is seventeen miles distant—he being a great part of the time laid up with gravel which has brought on incontinence of urine—He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any State.

Questions by Judge Mills

1st Where and in what year were you born?

Answer I was born in New Jersey in the year 1753

2nd Have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

Answer I have none

3rd Where were you living when called into service: where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live?

Answer I lived in Spartanburg South Carolina when called into service and until about 8 years ago when I moved into Rutherford County where I now live

4th How were you called into service; were you drafted; did you volunteer or were you a substitute, and if in substitute, for whom?

Answer I volunteered in every instance

5th State the names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops when you served, such Continental and militia regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service.

Answer my memory does not enable me to make any further Statement than is contained in my Declaration

6th Did you ever receive a discharge from the service, and if so, by whom was it given and what has become of it?

² [John McClure \(McCluer\) S18112](#)

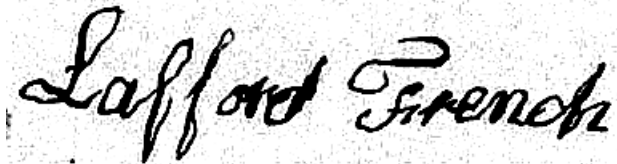
³ [George Salmon W9640](#)

Answer I never that I recollect received any written discharge
7th State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighborhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief in your services as a soldier in the revolution.

Answer I name John Granway and John Moore and John Mills

Sworn and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

S/ Lafford French

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lafford French". The ink is dark and the background is a light, textured paper.

S/ Jno Mills, J

[John Moore gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

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South Carolina Greenville District

Personally came before me one of the Justices of the Quorum for said District, George Salmon & made oath in due form of law & saith that in the Revolutionary War, he served with Lifford French then an inhabitant he thinks of South Carolina Spartanburg District, and in a company of South Carolina Militia at the siege of Augusta and marched he thinks out under the command of Cunningham & Williamson & Col. Clarke afterwards taking the Command, being the first siege after the reduction of Charlestown, in the year 1780.

Sworn to and subscribed this 6th of October A.D. 1832

S/ Aaron Springfield, J. Q.

S/ Geo. Salmon

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Geo Salmon". The ink is dark and the background is a light, textured paper.

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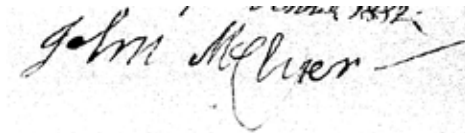
State of South Carolina Spartanburg District

Personally came before me William Kelso he Justice of the peace for said District John McClure after being duly sworn saith that he knew Lefford French in the Revolutionary war he was a resident of South Carolina now Spartanburg District and further saith that said French and myself was in the service together sometimes But how long he cannot recollect further saith that said French was under an honest character and was a good Whig and he believes done much in behalf of the is Country further saith not

Sworn to and subscribed Before me this 17th of October 1832

S/ Wm Kelso, JP

S/ John McCluer

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John McCluer". The ink is dark and the background is a light, textured paper.

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Comptroller General's Office
 Columbia May 27th 1856

herby certify that it appears
 by the Records of this Office that William French received £13. 6^{ts}
 for Militia duty performed in Roebuck's Regiment before since the fall of
 Charleston; that Simon French received £ 54..5. 6^{ts} for duty (militia)
 since the fall of Charleston performed in Roebuck's Regiment; and Joseph
 French received £107..5. 6^{ts} for Militia duty performed in Roebuck's Regi-
 ment since the fall of Charleston; and Jonas Dawsitt also received
 £12. 17. 11^{ts} for duty in the militia performed in Roebuck's Regiment since
 the fall of Charleston. He further certifies that the accounts showing the
 above evidence, No. 3503, W^m French, £3562 Simon French, £3499,
 Joseph French, and £3464 Jonas Dawsitt, are now of file in this Office.

Given Under my hand
 Wm Dawsitt
 Dep Compt Genl

No Seal of Office

[p 9: On November 9, 1854 in Spartanburg district South Carolina, Jane McMillan , 85, gave testimony that she was present at the marriage between Lafford French and his widow Elizabeth which she thinks occurred about the year 1805 or 1806. That Elizabeth maiden name was Gregory; that they were married in the house of William Renfroe in Spartanburg district South Carolina. In her statement, Jane McMillan says French served under her father, Capt. David McDowell and her Brother as well as Cols. Roebuck and Thomas. French served with his brothers, William, Simon & Joseph French as well as James Beaty, Alexander Copeland, William Moore and Hugh Moore. The Affiant signed her affidavit with her mark.]

[p 14: Elizabeth French, Lafford's widow, made an application on November 10, 1854 in Spartanburg South Carolina for a pension under the 1853 act saying that she is about 70 years of age; that her husband served almost constantly during the entire war in Col. Benjamin Roebuck's regiment as a mounted horseman, but that due to his failing body and mind when he gave his statement in 1832, he could not detail his full service and therefore the pension awarded him was not what he was entitled to receive. She states that Lafford French died Sept. 11, 1834. Her maiden name was Elizabeth Gregory. She says that she was married in the month

of January 1706 by William McDowell Esq. of Spartanburg district South Carolina. She signed her application with her mark]

[Rebecca Copeland, widow of Alexander Copeland, filed a widow's pension application (W9395) in which she stated that her husband served in Spartanburg District under Capt. David McDowell. The war dept. papers indicate that McDowell was under Benjamin Roebuck.]

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John French a highly respectable citizen of said District & son of the said Lafford & Elizabeth French aged about fifty years on oath says that his father Lafford French was for some two or three years before his death confined to bed & much afflicted both in body & mind sometimes his mind was so much impaired & his recollection so bad that he did not know his near neighbors and said Lafford French made his declaration while thus confined to his bed. Deponent says that he went himself after Judge Mills of Rutherford County North Carolina to take his father's affidavit to obtain his pension, deponent further says that he recollects very well to have heard his father Lafford French often say that he served in Col. Roebuck's Regiment throughout the War. He also knows that he was not confident to make a satisfactory declaration at the time Judge Mills took his affidavit. He further states that he has often heard his father speak of his three brothers William French Joseph French & Simon French who also served with him throughout the war, but that they had moved off (as he has been informed) to the state of Kentucky & he supposes that they are all dead. Deponent further states that he has heard his father Lafford French say that a man by the name of John Bingham paid him his money for his services in the Revolution & that he has no interest in this application as his mother Elizabeth French is still living & very poor.

Sworn to & subscribed before me this 21st day of September 1855

Test

S/ W. C. Cannon

S/ John French, X his mark

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$24.10 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service as a private for 7 months and 11 days in the South Carolina militia. His widow was pensioned in a like amount.]