

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of George Godby W7549 Elizabeth Godby VA
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 10 March 2020.

[Punctuation partly corrected.]

North Carolina } On this 6th day of November 1833 personally appeared before the subscriber
Iredell County } Absalom B. Blackburn an acting Justice of the Peace & member of the County
Court, in & for the County of Iredell & State aforesaid George Godby of Rowan County N.C. otherwise
called George Godly aged seventy three years, who first being duly sworn according to law, doth on his
oath make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of
Congress passed June 7th 1832. that he enlisted in the army of the United States in the Spring of the year
1777 (the day & month he does not recollect) with a recruiting officer by the name of Robt. Woodfork (of
what grade he cannot say) [possibly Lt. Robert Woolfolk or Robert Woolfork]. That he marched from
Caroline County Virginia where he resided at the time of his enlistment to Williamsburg in Virginia &
placed under the Command of Capt. Nathaniel Welch [R18894] of the 2nd. Virginia State Regiment
Commanded he thinks at that time by Col. — Smith [Gregory Smith]. – that at the time of his enlistment
he was only seventeen years of age & that it was his understanding that he was to serve in the State of
Virginia. That after remaining at Williamsburg for several months they were (as he believes through the
influence of Col — Smith) ordered to the North – that he marched from Williamsburg through Frederick
town Maryland on to Valley Forge on the Schuylkill River & Joined the army under Genl. Washington at
Valley Forge in the Spring of the year 1778 before they left Winter Quarters. At Valley Forge he took the
Small Pox, shortly after recovering from which the British Army evacuated Philadelphia [18 Jun 1778] &
he marched with the American Army from Valley Forge in pursuit of the British through New Jersey on
their rout to New York & was in the Battle of Monmouth Court House on the 28th of June 1778. After the
Battle at Monmouth Court House he continued with the army under Genl. Washington, sometimes in
camp, sometimes on the march, & sometimes out on detachment watching the movements of the enemy,
& was thus employed until the sitting in of Winter, when he went into winter quarters with the main Army
under Genl. Washington near Middlebrook – he remained at Middlebrook until the breaking up of Winter
Quarters late in the next spring & marched from thence with Army, but does not recollect being in any
particular service, or in any engagement, until the taking of Stony Point on the 15th of July 1779 [16 Jul
1779] which engagement he was in. After the taking of Stony Point by the Americans he was in no other
Battle of note. – he was sometimes engaged in skirmishing with the enemy & was at one time taken to
assist in manning a piece of Artillery, in which service his hearing became very much impaired & has
never since been good. He continued in this kind of service during the remainder of the Campaign of
1779. In the Winter of 1779 & 80 he set out on his return to Virginia, by way of Philadelphia, George
Town Maryland, to Fredericksburg Virgingina – he marched through cold & wet & sometimes Snow more
than twenty inches deep, with but few of the comforts & but a scanty allowance of the necessaries of life –
from Fredericksburg he marched to Williamsburg Virginia, where he was discharged having served three
years, the full term of his enlistment – during his services at the North he marched through a great many
Towns & Villages in Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, & New Jersey which he does not now
recollect. he recollects being in & about Slabtown, Trenton, Hackensack, Suffering [sic: Suffern NY],
Bonbrook [sic: Bound Brook NJ] &c. He received a written discharge signed he believes by Capt. Welch,
but having no settled residence for several years & being young (having enlisted when he was only
seventeen years of age) he left his discharge.

And he further declares that he is entirely illiterate, can neither read or write – that his proper
name is Godby, though often called by many persons indifferently either Godby or Godly & he has no
doubt but what his name is often written Godly – he knows of no other person in the Army named either
Godby or Godly except himself —

And he doth further declare that he again entered the service of the United States in the Spring of

the year 1781 (the day & month he does not now recollect) as a substitute for a private Militiaman of King William County Virginia, whose name he has forgotten, neither does he recollect the name of any Company officer under whom he served – that he marched from King William County into North Carolina near what was called the Hawfield in Orange County, where they were ordered back to Virginia & on to the Siege of York Town, when he arrived at York Town he was placed in the Artillery & continued at the siege until the Surrender of Lord Cornwallis [19 Oct 1781], & not long after the surrender he was discharged having served as well as he now recollects at least eight months. he received a written discharge which he has lost & he has no documentary evidence whatever of his Military Services. – that he resides at this time in Rowan County North Carolina more than three hundred miles from where he resided at the time he rendered his services & knows of no living witness whose evidence he can procure, who can testify to his services – but he refers to John Thomas [W6274], John Carlton & Henry Thomas who formerly resided near him in Halifax County Virginia, & now reside in Iredell County North Carolina & not far distant from him, to testify to his Character for Veracity & also of their belief as to his services as a Soldier of the Revolution – he also refers to Rev. John Angel of Surry County who has known him for several years since he has resided in Rowan County, & who he believes can testify as above.

And he declares as a reason for his making this declaration out of the County in which he resides & before a Justice of the Peace, that he is old & infirm his hearing & sight very defective – that he resides at a considerable distance (between twenty & thirty miles) from any Court House – that none of the persons to whom he refers for evidence in support of his character for Veracity (persons who have known him longest) reside in the county in which he resides, but reside in adjacent Counties & not far from him – that his age & infirmities, & also his circumstances in life are such that he feels himself poorly able to undergo the fatigue & expense of attending at the Court House to prove his services

And he declares that the reason why his declaration has not been prepared & forwarded earlier was owing to the negligence of the Agent who he employed more than twelve months ago to attend to it for him & was repeatedly assured by said agent that he was doing so – that he never ascertained until very lately that his declaration had not been completed & forwarded in due time as it ought to have been & as he had a right to expect it had been.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present & declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any agency in any State to his knowledge.

Answers to Interrogatories.

- 1 – I was born in Caroline County Virginia in the year 1760.
- 2 – I have no record of my age
- 3 – I lived in Caroline County Virginia when I first enlisted. I lived in King William County when I substituted. I afterward lived in Halifax County Virginia & removed from thence to Rowan County North Carolina in 1820 where I reside at this time
- 4 – I first enlisted as a private Soldier in the second Regiment of Virginia State line of Infantry. I afterwards substituted for a drafted Militiaman of King William County Virginia, whose name I do not recollect.
- 5 – I knew Capt Welch, Ensign or Lieutenant Edmondson. Col — Smith & an adjutant whose name he thinks was Bounds – he also knew personally many other officers whose names he has forgotten. I also recollect the names of a great many officers but did not know them by sight; among others Generals [Anthony] Wayne, Green [sic: Nathanael Greene], [Charles] Lee, Dickinson, [Horatio] Gates, Lafayette & many others. I knew Genl. Washington when I saw him, which was often. I have forgotten the names of the Company officers under whom I served when a private Militiaman at York Town on our march to North Carolina we were rationed with one pint of very coarse Corn meal per day & a small allowance of beef I had a discharge for my three years service signed (as I think) by Capt. Welch which I lost, as well as the one given me at York Town – by whom the latter one was signed I do not recollect.
- 7 I refer to John Thomas, John Carlton & Henry Thomas of Iredell County N.C. who live near me & have known me for a great many years. I also refer to Rev. John Angel of Surry County who has

known me for several years, since I resided in N. Carolina. George hisXmark Godby

[The following is from [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia](#). Most of the documents in the file are illegible.]

Halifax County Sct

I do Certify that in the year 1777 as near as I can remember George Godby then of Caroline County enlisted as a Soldier in the 2 [undeciphered word] Regiment for the term of three years and that he continued in the service of the state untill the Regiment marched to join the northern Army & from thence to the end of the term. [undeciphered] Continental Establishment as I have always understood & believe [undeciphered] discharged after which he returned home. I further Certify that after the service aforesaid he saw George Godby again enlist in the service for the term of Eighteen months and marched as I believe & understood to the southward where he fully served the last mentioned term, & was in the service & present at the taking of the British Army at York Town & from thence to the Close of the war. given under my hand this 28th Octo'r 1811.

Russel Godbey

NOTES:

A size roll compiled at Chesterfield Courthouse after 1 Sep 1780 includes the following for Godby: age 20/ height 5 9/ carpenter/ born in Caroline County/ residing in King William County/ hair brown/ eyes gray/ complexion dark/ enlisted 1 Sep 1780 for 18 months.

On 24 Aug 1853 Elizabeth Godby, about 80, of Davie County NC, applied for a pension stating that she married George Godby about the middle of Nov in 1807, and that he had lived in North Carolina about 14 years before he died on 28 Jan 1835. On 16 Apr 1855 she applied for bounty land. The file includes a copy of a bond signed in Halifax County on 10 Nov 1807 by George Godby and Jesse Murphy of Halifax County for the marriage of Godby to Elizabeth Murphy.