

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Samuel Major¹ W8417

Nancy Major

f57VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

2/21/13

[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. 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 fails 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 errors or omissions to my attention.]

State of Virginia County of Dinwiddie: SS

On this 17th day of September 1832 personally appeared in open Court, before the Justices of the County Court of Dinwiddie County, now sitting, Samuel Major, a resident of the County and State aforesaid, aged 72 years, the 10th day of last August, 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 entered the service of the United States under the following officers, and served as herein stated to wit; That soon after the Declaration of Independence in the year 1776 having obtained to the age of 16 years, he was placed on the muster roll and in the regular requisition in the militia, he drew No. 1 and was immediately called into service for a tour of three months under Captain John Nicholas from the County of Dinwiddie where he was born and did then & has ever since resided, and from that day to the end of the War after the capture of Lord Cornwallis at York at which latter time he was in service under Captain Gilliam Booth, whenever No. 1 was called on he regularly performed his tour of duty. That from the time the British came around to Virginia, to the termination of hostilities, parties of the enemy were so often coming up & down the James River & its waters, that the militia resident of the County of Dinwiddie, and other Counties near Petersburg, or Richmond – or on the water courses had to perform an inordinate amount of service – That it very often happened that an individual also had but just returned home from one tour of duty would be called out again. That from his youthful age at that time – his not knowing how to write, & consequently retaining no memorandum of dates – names – places &c he finds himself unable to state the precise time at which any one of the tours he performed commenced or terminated – except the first is certified by his then coming of age & the Declaration of Independence & the very last by the capture of York which he understands was in October 1781. He remembers the names of but three Captains under whom he served – two who have been enumerated, & Baker Pegram, while he has indistinct recollections of the persons of several others. He recollects that Colonel Joseph Jones was often in command of the Regiment to which he was occasionally attached from his being a resident of the same County but does not remember the name of any other superior officer seldom seeing any of the higher officers in command. That when Petersburg was burnt by the British – when Arnold [Benedict Arnold] was there, as he has heard, he was stationed at Gravelly Run Church [?]², Hatcher's Run Church, Cabin Point, Sleepy hole Ferry in Nansemond, Williamsburg, Smithfield, the Peach

¹ BLWt31293-160-55

² *Gravelly run Church*

orchard, Williamsburg – & Prince George Court House, besides those previously mentioned, but he cannot distinguish the relative dates or tours at which he was at either. When York was captured he was not present having been with a large force above James Town where [word written through and illegible] were for some time landing from French vessels & drawn by oxen to York – occasionally guarding a large number of beeves on Hog Island collected for the American forces – & keeping guard on the River. That the ordinary towards of duty were three months & that he does not recollect serving anyone of a shorter duration. They served he thinks two distinct tours in every year from 1776 to 1781 inclusive except the first and that at least half the time of those five years he was in actual service. That he was never in any engagement with the enemy. That if any of those who served with him officers or soldiers are now alive he does not know them, with the exception of Wm Nunnally³ a resident of this County & had entirely forgotten that he had ever served with him until informed by him of it, & having his memory refreshed by some particulars. That he never received any written discharge during the service, & never saw any given to militia men, & that he has no documentary evidence whatever of his services. That he never heard of any register of his age being in existence, but does not doubt that it is what he has always informed it was, as above represented. That his memory has become very much impaired & infirm, & while he has always retained a general recollection & to always when conversing on it for the last fifty years of the aggregate period of his revolutionary services as above stated he cannot recall any of the particulars. He refers to any or all of his oldest neighbors for evidence of the traditionary belief of his having rendered the services he has stated. He the said Samuel Major hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present, & declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any State whatever. Sworn to & subscribed the day & year aforesaid

S/ Samuel Major, X his mark

a resident of Dinwiddie County do hereby certify that I have been acquainted with the declarant Samuel Major for upwards of 50 years, that I have no personal knowledge of his revolutionary services in the militia of the state except during the last tour that he speaks of. I knew that he marched as a private in Captain Booth's Company, in which I served myself, when we were called to York & that he was detained at the position on James River as he has stated. I have always understood that he rendered other services this the war & do not doubt it though I know nothing of them myself. Sworn & subscribed the day & year aforesaid.

S/ William Nunnally



[Isham E Hargrave, a clergyman, and Peter Eppes gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

[f p. 12: On June 11, 1853 in Dinwiddie County Virginia, Nancy Major, 76, filed for a widow's pension under the 1853 act stating that she is the widow of Samuel Major, a revolutionary war pensioner at the rate of \$80 per annum; that she married him in March 1800; that her husband died June 24, 1842. She signed her application with her mark.]

[f p. 13: copy of a marriage bond dated March 12, 1800 issued in Dinwiddie County Virginia to Samuel Major & William Perkins conditioned upon the marriage of Samuel Major to Nancy Perkins (spinster).]

³ [William Nunnally S5844](#)

[p. 16: William P Perkins and Elizabeth Major residents of Dinwiddie County Virginia gave testimony in support of the application of the widow for a pension. Their relationship, if any, to the applicant is not stated

Wm. P. Perkins
Elizabeth ^{her} Major
Martha]

[p. 21: In 1854, Martha Smith, 82, also of Dinwiddie County Virginia gave a separate affidavit in support of the widow's application.]

[p. 23: In 1854, Mary Hadden, 81, a resident of Dinwiddie County also gave an affidavit in support of the widow's application.]

[p. 51: In 1849, Winefred Griffin, 77, a resident of Dinwiddie County gave testimony in support of the application of the widow for a pension.]

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$80 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service as a private for 2 years in the Virginia service. His widow was pensioned in a like amount.]