

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of William Robards W8562 Elizabeth Robards VA
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 20 Aug 2015.

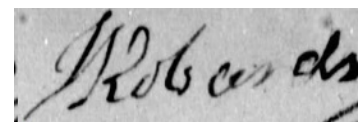
State of Kentucky Jessamine County Sct

On this 21st day of January 1839 personally appeared before Wm Bronaugh Esq'r justice of the peace in and for the County and state aforesaid Elizabeth Robards a resident of said county of Jessamine & state aforesaid, aged seventy eight years in June ninth, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on her oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of congress passed July 7 1838, entitled "An act granting half pay and pensions to certain widows", That she is the widow of William Robards, deceased late of Jessamine County Ky. who was an orderly sergeant in the militia service of the state of Virginia during the war of the revolution; and as such was in service from the month of May 1778 till some time in the month of December next – thereafter, under the command of Captain Nathaniel Masse [sic: Nathaniel Massie] and during that time was stationed at different places upon the Eastern coast of Virginia. Again in the month of January 1780 the said William Robards volunteered and marched down to the Eastern coast of Virginia, and was attached to the company of Capt. Frederick Woodson [pension application R19214] of the Virginia regulars, where he remained till the month of June of said year, when he was discharged and returned home to the the County of Goochland. In what capacity her husband served in this expedition, she does not recollect; it may have been as a private, but she has often heard him speak of being commissary at some time whilst he was in the army, and it may have been upon this tour, but she is of opinion it was in his tour to the South under General [Horatio] Gates. In this last expedition, he was under the command of Capt Edmund Curd of the Virginia militia and Thomas Roister [sic: Thomas Royster] was one of the lieutenants of the company. and she is impressed with the belief that Col. [James] Lucas commanded the regiment. She recollects distinctly that in this expedition to the South the said William marched from Goochland County in the month of July on Court day, which she thinks was the second Monday of the month [10 Jul 1780], and that he did not get back until the latter part of the month of November or the first of December. She recollects well that the weather was quite cold when he returned. She again repeats it as her best impression that he was commissary on this tour of service. Said William again volunteered about the first of Jan'y 1781 and was down upon the Easter coast of Virginia and at different places in Virginia until about the last of the summer, she thinks in the month of August of said year, when he returned home to Goochland. She recollects hearing her said husband speak of seeing Richmond on fire when it was burned by the British. But in what capacity her said husband served in this expedition she does not recollect, but she is informed as orderly sergeant. She knows her said husband was much in the army during the revolutionary war, and indeed, was but little at home when there was need of his services; but it is not to be expected that she can have a very particular recollection as to dates or officers connected with her husbands revolutionary services, except in relation to his tour to the South under General Gates of which she has a more special recollection.

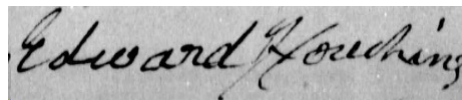
She further declares that she was married to the said William Robards decd. by Parson William Douglass [sic: William Douglas; see endnote] of Goochland County Va on the sixth day of September seventeen hundred and eighty one, that her husband, the aforesaid William Robards died on the 18th of November eighteen hundred and twenty three; that she was not married to him prior to his leaving the service, but the marriage took place previous to the first of January seventeen hundred and ninety four, viz at the time above stated. She further states that she knows of no record evidence of her marriage and that the discharges of her said husband have all been destroyed. Sworn to and subscribed on the day and year first above written before Wm Bronaugh Esqr. justice of the peace as aforesaid.

[signed] Elizabeth Robards

The deposition of Jesse Robards [pension application W8563] of Garrard County aged seventy seven years, who being sworn upon oath states that Elizabeth Robards of Jessamine County is the surviving widow of William Robards deceased who was a soldier in the war of the revolution; & deponent recollects that said William Robards, and the said Elizabeth were married some time during the year seventeen hundred and eighty one. Deponent was not present at the marriage, but they were said to have been regularly married, and continued to live together as man and wife, in good repute, until the death of said William, and he never heard the legality of their marriage ever questioned. That said William Robards dec'd. in the month of May 1788 [sic] volunteered in the Virginia militia, in the County of Goochland, under Capt. Nathaniel Massie and was orderly sargeant in said Harris's [sic] company – that he marched with the said company down to Richmond thru to Williamsburg, and York, near the sea Board, and remained with the said Company stationed at different places upon the eastern coast of Virginia, till the month of December next thereafter, when he was discharge & returned home. General [Thomas] Nelson was commander in chief of the Virginia militia during this expedition, and their object was to prevent the depredations of the British under Mathews and others [sic: Commodore George Collier and Gen Edward Mathew, May 1779]. Again in the month of January 1780, the British fleet being upon the coast of Virginia, the said William Robards volunteered and marched down to York in the Eastern part of Virginia, and was in service in that portion of Virginia, under the command of Capt. Frederick Woodson, who belonged to the Virginia regulars, until the month of June of said year, he then came up to Richmond with his brother George Robards [pension application S31339] (who had four men under his charge,) for ammuniton, got it and forwarded it down. But whilst in Richmond said William Robards was discharged, and suffered to return home to Goochland County, where he remained a few weeks when General Gates passed through Virginia on his way to the South. William Robards again volunteered under the command of Capt Edmond Curd of Virginia militia, & was a sargeant when he left home, and has no doubt he continued as such, though deponent was not with him. William, with his said company, left Goochland in the summer of 1780, in the month of July or August, and marched to South Carolina, & was in General Gates' defeat near Camden [Battle of Camden, 16 Aug 1780]. He then returned home again; but what time he arrived, deponent cannot say certainly. Said William Robards again volunteered in the month of January 1781 and marched down to Richmond, which he found on fire. This deponent thinks was on the 5th of January. He was then an orderly sargeant under Capt. Lewis Robards [W581] of the Virginia militia. Richmond was burned by Arnold and Simcoe [Gen. Benedict Arnold and Lt. Col. John Graves Simcoe]; but Arnold had retreated to his vessels in James River a few miles below Richmond, just before the arrival of said Robards. His company then left Richmond and went some miles down James River, where they had a skirmish in the night with some of Arnold's men who came out from their vessels. It was then heard that Simcoe had gone to Charles City Courthouse, & said Wm. Robards together with the company to which he belonged, marched to that place. They then went below about York and other places upon the Eastern coast of Virginia, where they remained until about the month of April, when upon the arrival of Lord Cornwallis in Petersburg [20 May], said company left the sea cost and went above, and pursued Tarlton [sic: Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton] to the Point of Fork [at the confluence of James and Rivanna rivers] and to Albemarle County [4 Jun 1781], but had not sufficient strength to attack Tarlton. They then beat down below Richmond to a place called Shirley Hundred up on James River in the month of July of said year. William had been acting as orderly sargeant to that time. Deponent then volunteered to go with a portion of Col. Pleasant's regiment that had been detailed to go under Col. Nathaniel Morris and attack some of the British who had burnt some vessels in James River. And after this, deponent saw no more of said William in the army. Sworn and subscribed to this 27th day of November 1838

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jesse Robards". The ink is dark and the handwriting is somewhat slanted and fluid.

The deposition of Edward Houchins [W11318] of Mercer County Ky aged seventy eight years who being first sworn upon oath states, that he was well acquainted with William Robards, decd. late of Jessamine County Ky & He recollects that said William Robards, decd, belonged to the minute service of Virginia, and turned out in the summer of 1780 under the command of Capt. Edmund Curd of the Virginia militia. Nathaniel Morris was Major, and Lucas whose given name deponent does not recollect, was the Colonel. They marched from Goochland County Va. (for deponent was in the same company) he thinks in the month of June of said year he knows it was not later than July, to Hillsborough in North Carolina, where they remained for some time, and then upon the arrival of General Gates at that place, they marched down into South Carolina, and fought the battle near Camden, where they were defeated by the british. Deponent knows that said William Robards served in said company from the time they left Goochland, as an officer of some grade, and he thinks it was as commissary what time said Robards got home deponent does not know, for he was wounded in said battle, and carried off of the ground by George Robards, a brother of the said William Robards, and was in consequence of his wound, detained in the South till the rest of the Company got home. Deponent lived during the revolutionary war in Goochland county Va. about six miles from William Robards's. He was not at his marriage, but he knows it took place some short time before Lord Cornwallis was captured at Little York he thinks in September 1781. Elizabeth Robards his widow, now lives in Jessamine County Ky. And she and her husband lived together in good repute as man and wife till the death of said Wm Robards. He has not the least doubt they were lawfully married. Sworn to this 14th day of December 1838.



State of Kentucky Mercer County July 3rd 1841 Jesse Robards states he has been call on to make some alteratin the Deposition & the Declaration of Eliz'h Robards widow of William Dec'd. in her Pension Claim he states that he cannot make any alteration as his Brother was always a Volunteer this was in the State of Virginia Volunteer & Minut men they always served as long as necessaty required & he nos of Law Respecty of Either Class, Militia served sometimes six months never longer as he recollect & therefore their cannot be any alteration in Either Declaration or Deposition but suppose she ought at any rate Draw six months pay although sometimes he served longer I well no he served six months with Gen'l. Gates for I went on apart of the way & was turnd back I testify he is a man of good Character age upward of 79

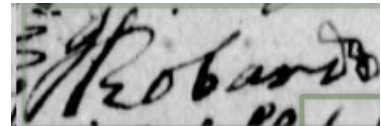
[The handwriting in the following is barely legible.]

Boyle County State of Kentucky November 1st 1844

The affadavid of Jesse Robards age Eighty Two years and Fifteen day Came before me one of the Justices of the peace for s'd County & State and made oath that he was well acquand with William Robards & Eliz'h Robards his wife both of the [undeciphered word] Persons William Robards is half Brother & Eliz'h Robards full cozen, and that we were raised and Born in the Couny of Goochland & state of Virginia, and that he was married to Eliz'h Lewis in the mounth of Sep'r. 1782 and moved to the state of Kentucky in the year 1783 I was in company with him in moving to s'd state, and that they have lived together as man & wife to their deaths and that she remained a widow to her death in the year 1840 and that all the children was over sixteen at his death, in the year 1778 he enter the service of the Revolutionary war with Britain for three months under the Command of Nath'n Massie Capt and Solomon Williams Lieutenat & Charles Price Ensign and randevous in the County of Gooch'd and State of Virginia and march down through Richmond and to the low parts of Virginia and I was order to Albermail Barrack [sic: Albemarle Barracks] at the same time in the year 1778 and that last of our Towers was three months, also he william Robards was appointed sergant in the Compay he served other Towers 1780 & 1781 refference to my affadavid in the case of the Pension & that he was all way a Volenteer I served with him Two Towers and he was a Sergant; and as to being anny fixed time for

volenting I never new or believ they all servd as long as the necessary require some time longer than others he william Robards served a Tower of six months in the year 1780 under General Gates to the South six monthis as Serjant under Major Endund Curd George Robards Lieutent & Thos. Ryster Ensign. I understand he william Robards was promoted to Comassery this was Infomation he and George Robards was with Volenteers. I state the circumstances General Gates came to Richmond and sent forty miles for my Brother George Robards who was at my father, [undeciphered word] and sent Horse and a many[?] by the name of Toney for him Stated if he would come & go with him to the South he would give him a Commision he did appoint him Lieutenant and as well as I now reccollect Thos. Jefferson was Govner of Virginia or signd his Commission my brother had been a Continaly soldier under General Gates three years a part of his time under Gates and as he told me well acquainted with Gates I [undeciphered word] with my Two Brothers at Goochland County State of Virginia and William Robards act as sergant he was their Two day the balance of men were drafts I Hire myself to one Bucher Parrish for a negro Girl Twelve years old, and my father came to the place of Randavouse and told Major Curd that he had then five sons in the army & that I was under age I must go home I did so and gave Parrish his negro Girl back Refference to George Robards statement in his Pension case I certify that I have been well acquainted with Jesse Robards Sr upwd of Thirty years & he has always has been a man of Honest and good carrater and would make no statement but what is Just given under my hand by myself as above stated

November 2nd 1844

A small, rectangular image showing a handwritten signature in dark ink on a light-colored background. The signature is cursive and appears to read "W Robards".

NOTES:

On 6 March 1845 Otho Robards, son of William and Elizabeth Robards, of Danville in Boyle County KY wrote that he had heard his father refer to Capt. Stockley Towles and Lt. Thomas Royster, and that his father had the following brothers with him in the army – John Robards, Lewis Robards (W581), George Robards (S31339), and Jesse Robards (W8563) – all but the last of them dead.

In the file is a copy of a bond signed in Goochland County on 29 Aug 1781 by William Robards and Lewis Robards for the marriage of William Robards to Elizabeth Lewis. *The Douglas Register* transcribed by William Macfarlane Jones states that William Robards and Elizabeth Lewis, both of Goochland County, were married on 7 Sep 1781.

On 21 Jan 1839 Otho Robards stated that he was the seventh son of William and Elizabeth Robards, and that he was 44 on 24 Feb 1838. On 23 Sep 1844 Otho Robards stated that William Robards died 18 Nov 1823 at 10:05 AM, and Elizabeth Robards died 24 Feb 1840 at 7:10 AM. He listed the children who survived William Robards as follows: “Nancy Caldwell wife of William Caldwell, William Robards, Susannah Robards, Rebekah Singleton wife of Lewis Singleton, Kitty Harvey wife of James Harvey & myself all over sixteen years of age.” Of these, the following were living when their mother died: “Nancy Caldwell, William Robards Susannah Robards, Kitty T. Singleton and myself.” He also stated that, “Mr. James Taylor undertook to Obtain her pension which appears to have been taken from the Law 7th June I suppose Mr. Taylor Drew her Declaration to suit himself as he finally Deceived her.” On 5 Jan 1845 Otho Robards stated that the children still surviving, besides himself, were Nancy Caldwell, William Robards, and Susan Robards, and that at age 50 he was the youngest.