Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Charles Alexander S21599 f31NC
Transcribed by Will Graves 6/27/07 rev'd 7/12/14

[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.]

State of Tennessee, Maury County

On this 8th day of September personally appeared before the Justices of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, in open Court now sitting for said County, Charles Alexander, a resident of said County of Maury in the State of Tennessee, aged between seventy nine & eighty years, --he will be eighty years old if he lives to see the 4th day of January next; -- he was born in the County of Mecklenburg in the State of North Carolina according to the family record contained in his father's family Bible 4th day of January 1755-- The said Charles Alexander being first 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 entered the service of his country as a private in the Army of the United States – during the revolutionary war – in the year 1775 – in Mecklenburg County North Carolina-- He entered the service in the latter part of July 1775 – in a company commanded by Captain William Alexander – in a Regiment of Militia commanded by Colonel Adam Alexander, he was marched with the Regiment – from Mecklenburg County – to the Cherokee Nation, -- which nation of Indians was at that time hostile to the white inhabitants, -- that he was in a skirmish with the Indians during this tour; -- he remembers that in their march they fell in at the Head of Swannanoa River, -- crossed the French Broad [River], -- and Big Pigeon & Little Pigeon [rivers] and the Little Tennessee [river] not as far as Hiwassee, destroyed some Indian towns & returned; -- he was gone upon this tour from the last of July to the first of November – a period of three months; and a few days more than three months upon their return home the men were disbanded.

He next entered the service as a private – in January 1776 – in Mecklenburg County North Carolina, in a company commanded by Captain William Alexander – in a Regiment of Militia commanded by Colonel Thomas Polk; The troops were marched then to Rayburn's Creek in South Carolina, -- against the Tories; -- they dispersed the Tories – and returned home; he served during this tour – two months, -- and some days, -- he is certain it was more than two months. -- This tour was familiarly known afterwards as the Snowy Campaign, a snow unusual for that climate having fallen whilst they were out; -- they returned in the month of March – The troops had no regular engagement during this campaign, but had some skirmishes with the Tories, and he well remembers among other incidents connected with it, that said William Polk, who died lately at Raleigh N. C. -- was badly wounded in the shoulder by the Tories. -- He next entered the service as a private in Mecklenburg County N. C. -- in the fall of 1776 – as well as he can remember in the month of October or November, in a company commanded by Captain William Alexander-- the name of the Colonel he thinks was Colonel Caldwell, – he remembers that Major Thomas Harris was a Major commanding in this tour of service; -- the troops were marched to the South – and went as far as Camden in South Carolina, -- where they remained until the expiration of their term of service – when they returned home and were disbanded; -- he served three months during this tour.

The next tour which he served – was an expedition to Fort Johnson – near the Mouth of Cape Fear River in North Carolina; -- he entered upon this tour in Mecklenburg County N. C. -- in a company of light horse commanded by Captain Charles Polk and Colonel Thomas Polk commanded the Regiment; he served three months during this tour; his memory does not enable him to be positively certain as to the precise period at which this service was performed; -- he knows they marched from Mecklenburg in the month of February & reached Fort Johnson in March – and as well as his memory serves him it was in the year 1777, -- though it is possible it may have been in February 1776 instead of 1777 – for he cannot remember whether it was immediately after the Snowy Campaign and before the expedition to Camden South Carolina or not. He knows he performed the service of three months – in the light horse under the command of the officers above named, -- but cannot be positively certain as to the year.

The next tour of service which he performed was as a private in a company commanded by Captain Joseph Graham, -- he does not remember the name of the Colonel but he knows that the Major William Polk, the same who had been wounded in the shoulder in the Snowy Campaign, was Major in command, and was the highest in command that went from Mecklenburg. This tour as well as his memory serves him commenced in the month of May – in the year 1778, -- he knows the tour commenced in May – and he thinks it was in the year 1778; -- The troops were marched North from Mecklenburg – in the direction of Norfolk, Virginia, but were stopped near the Virginia line, -- and there remained until their time was out, when they returned home to Mecklenburg; -- he served three months during this tour.

The next tour of service which he performed was as a private in a company commanded by Captain William Ganns [? Gower, Gonns,], -- and Stephen Alexander was Lieutenant of the company to which he belonged; -- he does not remember the name of the Colonel who commanded the Regiment, but General Rutherford [Griffith Rutherford] commanded the Militia from North Carolina; -- this tour of service commenced in November 1778 – The troops were marched from Charlotte in Mecklenburg County North Carolina to Purrysburg South Carolina – about twenty miles above Savannah, -- and near that place we joined the Regular Troops commanded by General Lincoln [Benjamin Lincoln] at a camp called Black Swamp; during this campaign the battle of Stono [June 20, 1779], a few miles East of Purrysburg was fought; -- he was in the engagement; -- This battle as well as he remembers was fought in the latter part of February or first part of March 1779[1] – The troops were marched home from that place & reached home & were disbanded in the latter part of May; -- when he commenced this tour it was for a tour of five months; -- but he actually served from the time he stated – until the troops returned within a few days & he thinks quite seven months – he knows he served more than six months on this tour & thinks he served seven months. -- He knows the troops were five months in actual service while stationed at Purrysburg South Carolina and in that neighborhood and that place was a distance of 330 miles from Mecklenburg County N. C. -- where he & the troops with whom he served lived.

The next tour of service which he performed was shortly after Gates' defeat [Battle of Camden, August 15-16, 1780] in the year 1780 – in a company commanded by Captain William Alexander, in a Regiment commanded by Colonel William Polk – the same who was wounded as before stated in the Snowy Campaign. He entered the service in Mecklenburg County N. C. -- we were marched to S.C.-- & we had an engagement with the Tories in the Waxhaws South Carolina; -- Major William Denny Commanded in this engagement; -- he served three months during this tour –and he thinks he served several days more than three months, -- but is sure he served that long. -- The next service he performed was as a private in a company commanded by Captain William Alexander – as a guard to wagons which were sent out from Mecklenburg County N. C. to Fayetteville N.C. a distance of 150 miles – upon two trips for public salt for the Army; -- he served on this tour – guarding the salt wagons

[1] The veteran MAY have been referring to the Battle of Brier Creek, March 3, 1779.

upon these two trips – more than two months; -- he thinks as well as he remembers that he entered this service in December 1780.

The next service he performed – was as a Captain --. In the year 1781 – and he thinks about the first of September 1781 – a volunteer company of Cavalry was raised in Mecklenburg County N. C. of which he was elected Captain; -- that Major Thomas Harris was his commander; that they marched from Mecklenburg County to the Raft Swamp in Cumberland County N. C. a distance of about 130 miles against the Tories. He served during this commission in the capacity of Captain of Cavalry or light horse, five weeks & thinks a few days more than five weeks, -- when they returned home & the company was disbanded. -- In addition to the specific tours of duty – herein before set forth, --he performed various other short tours of duty – during the war in guarding against the Tories, -- and among others he states that he was in service for a few weeks at the time the battle of Ramsour's Mills was fought, but was not in the engagement; he after the battle was over, a volunteer company was raised from the Army to scour the surrounding Country for the Tories of which company he was elected Captain; -- that they marched into three of the adjoining Counties & were from two or three weeks engaged in this service. -- He would mention also that some time after Gates' defeat – when the British were approaching Charlotte N. C. -- he at his own expense secured a quantity of public powder which was at Charlotte & prevented it from falling into the hands of the British Army. --

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 agency of any State. He states that he is not enabled at this distance of time, -- and being now nearly blind & very feeble, -- to procure any other evidence of his service than that which accompanies this Declaration; -- That his whole service being as a militia man or volunteer – he received at the end of his several tours of service as herein set forth – no written discharge, but at the end of his respective terms of service he was disbanded.

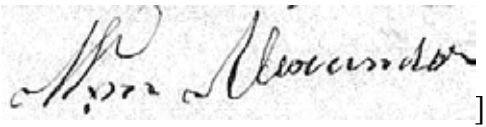
Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid in open Court.

S/ Chas. Alexander

S/ Thos J. Porter, Clerk

By S/ Wm E. Erwin, D. Clerk

[William Alexander gave a standard supporting affidavit. His relationship, if any, to the veteran is not stated.



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Interrogatories propounded to the applicant by the Court:

1st: Where and in what year were you born?

Ans: In Mecklenburg County North Carolina on the fourth of January 1755.

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

Answer: In my father's family Bible

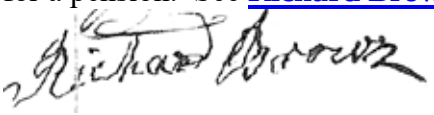
3rd Where were you living when called into service? Where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live?

Ans: I was living in Mecklenburg County North Carolina when I was in the service: after the Revolutionary War I continued to live in Mecklenburg County North Carolina until the year 1814 when I removed to Tennessee & settled in Giles County, near Lincoln County line, where he lived until about eighteen months ago, when he moved to Maury County, being an adjoining County to Giles where he now lives.

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

Answer: I volunteered upon all the tours of duty which I performed– as stated in the foregoing Declaration.
5th State the names of some of the Regular Officers who were with the troops where you served, such Continental and Militia Regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service.
Answer – I have already stated these particulars, as far as I recollect them, in the body of the foregoing declaration; -- among the Continental officers, were General Greene, Lincoln & Gates.
6th Did you ever receive a discharge from the service; and if so by whom was it given; and what has become of it?
Answer. I never received any discharge, as I already stated in my declaration.
7th Did you ever receive a commission, and if so by whom was it signed, and what has become of it?
Answer. I never received any commission.

[Note: the file contains an affidavit by Richard Brown which simply asserts that Charles Alexander "took an active part in the War of the Revolution as a volunteer in the cause of American Liberty & that he the said Alexander faithfully & actively discharged his duty as a true friend of Liberty." Brown does not identify his relationship, if any, to Alexander or give any basis for his statements in support of Alexander's application. Richard Brown, a resident of Giles County, Tenn., filed his own application for a pension. See **Richard Brown W1545**.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[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of $75.83 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service as a private for 22 months in the North Carolina militia both in the Infantry and Cavalry.]