

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension Application of John Searcy S31355

Transcribed by Will Graves 7/14/06

[Punctuation, grammar & spelling corrected as needed for clarity;
superscript indicates insertions; strikethrough indicates deletions;
underlining is as appears in the original]

State of Kentucky, Owen County

On this 1st day of October, 1832 personally appeared before the worshipful County Court of Owen County now in session John Searcy a resident of Owen County in the State of Kentucky aged Seventy years in March last who 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 that passed June 7th 1832, ^{that he} entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated. That in the year 1780 he was a resident of Granville County in the State of North Carolina, that a draft took place and he was drafted into service for the purpose of re-enforcing the American troops in the City of Charleston then invaded by the troops of Sir Henry Clinton to whom it was afterwards surrendered—which surrender took place before this ~~Deponent~~ Declarant was mustered into service—that he was mustered into service pursuant to said draft or call and marched to Hillsborough in the same state which was the place of rendezvous. His Capt. was Isham Harris and his Lieutenant's name ^{he does not recollect.} His ensign was one Searles he thinks, Charles. On arriving at Hillsborough his Company was attached to a Regiment commanded by Col. Stephen Moore or More, the Major's name was Nall. He does not think there was any Lieutenant Colonel and if there was he has forgotten his name. There had been considerable number of American troops scattered through the country some on their way to Charleston they all, or mostly, collected at Fayetteville, North Carolina then called Cross Creek under the command of Brigadier General Caswell. To this place, Cross Creek, the Regiment of Col. Moore including the Company to which this declarant belonged was marched, the distance is not recollected but was probably 150 miles. On arriving at that place, we were attached to the troops forming Caswell's Brigade. He was an officer of Militia and was of excellent character for bravery. At the time of entering the service this Declarant was just turned of 17 years of age which was the month of May or about the first days of June. From Cross Creek the troops were ~~sent~~ marched into Seal's Settlement where provisions were more plenty (up the country from Cross Creek) and upon receiving intelligence that General Gates was marching to the South, the troops under Caswell marched in the direction of Camden as far as the Cheraw Hills in North Carolina on Great Pee Dee River & then halted before leaving Seal's Settlement. This Declarant was transferred from his company commanded by Capt. Harris to a Company of State Artillery commanded by Capt. Sam'l Ash—From the Cheraw Hills on Pee Dee River the ~~Regiment~~ Brigade of Genl Caswell progressed on their march and in South Carolina joined General Gates toward Camden in the Woods. The whole Army consisting as well as this Declarant recollects of about 10,000 ^{men} though he may be mistaken, marched on to Col. Rugeley's Mills and encamped for 5 or 6 days. The Army at the end of that period took up, in the night, the line of march for Camden district about six miles and was met by the British Army perhaps half way between the two places. A skirmish then ensued but the British shortly halted [sic,

hauled?] off and the Americans rested upon their arms. About or before Sunrise the British again appeared and gave Battle which shortly became general along the line—in about an hour and a half the American troops gave way and a general retreat took place. This Declarant with some other of the defeated troops collected at Charlottesville ~~vill~~ [sic, Charlotte] in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina and upon hearing that Genl Sumpter [sic, Thomas Sumter] had also been defeated by the British, the troops so collected went on to Salisbury in North Carolina but under no regular or specified command. And from Salisbury we went on to Hillsborough. At this place there being no officers to take command of the scattered troops the Governor of N. Carolina, whose name was Nash, gave furloughs to us and under a furlough from him this Declarant went home. This Declarant recollects while attached to the Army of General Gates he saw in the Army General De Kalb. He commanded, and amongst other troops, the Virginia Regulars. He also recollects Col. Henry Dixon--He commanded a Regiment of Militia under Genl Caswell—both of those were regular officers. The Virginia Militia joined the Army of Gates the day before the Battle and this Declarant recollects amongst their officers General John Pugh Williams.

This Declarant had been drafted for a three month tour but his time as was, ^{he} thinks, the regulation then, did not commence till he would have crossed the line into South Carolina[.] [A]nd in Sept. following, Brigadier General John Butler of the militia of North Carolina was joined by the scattered troops whose time of service had not expired at Hillsborough at which place this Declarant under his former Capt. Harris again went into active service, his time of 3 months not having expired. A new draft was ordered and by an Act of the legislature the term of draft was to commence from the time of rendezvous at Hillsborough—before the troops under this draft had rendezvoused General Butler with those that had joined him moved on to the trading Ford upon the Adkin [sic, Yadkin] River within several miles of Salisbury and there encamped until the new levies arrived.

At this place General Butler left the troops ~~and directed that the troops which were then left~~ to the command of Col. Stephen Moore and a Col William Moore who commanded the new drafts and they marched on to New Providence when Genl. George Davidson [sic, William Lee Davidson] with some militia troops and Genl David Morgan with his regular troops had made a stand. This declarant thinks that Genl Davidson was a regular officer. He was a single man from the North and of great promise and was afterward killed by the Tories in the following January or February upon the Catawba River.

At New Providence the time for which the Declarant had been drafted expired and he entered into the ranks of the new drafts as a substitute for a certain Jeremiah Gardner. His Capt. was then William Gilliam and his Lieutenant was Isham Harrison. The Army continued in encampment at this place for some time—during ~~Genl~~ which Genl Morgan with a detachment went to Rugeley's Mills and found a party of British and Tories with some officers in a Block house grinding meal for the British Army at Camden. He drew up a pine log mounted upon wheels like a piece of Artillery and placed it before the Block house and demanded the surrender there of which was surrendered to him after a parley of fifteen minutes. The party of British & Tories thus surrendered was commanded by Major Cooke. The prisoners were brought into camp and marched on to Salisbury under the guard of Col. William Moore's Regiment of drafted men (whose time

was about to expire) and of which Regiment this Declarant was now one. This Declarant as well as the other troops was then discharged and went home. The man for whom this Declarant substituted had served nearly a month so that the Declarant served as a substitute upwards of two months and as a draft under the first call, three month, making a total service up to this period of above five months.

In the spring of 1781 (the month of April this Declarant thinks) Genl Green [sic, Nathanael Greene] having arrived in North Carolina dispatched a Col. Malmady a French officer to ~~one~~ his part of the country with recruiting orders to raise a Regiment of mounted men to serve for two months in order to scour the country & keep the Tories in check and to break up their nests wherever they could be found. And it was a stipulation that those who would go enlist for two months and equip themselves with horse & apparatus should have a credit for a three months tour. This Declarant so enlisted & furnished his own horse and the regiment rendezvoused at Granville Courthouse (Granville County being the county in which this Declarant resided as before stated). From Granville Courthouse the Regiment took routes through Orange, Guilford, Randolph & Chatham Counties in which Counties the Tories were very numerous. This Declarant recollects that the Governor of North Carolina was at Hillsborough with his suite [?], his name was Burke. He had been a lawyer of long standing. The Tories assembled upon Haw & Rocky Rivers to the amount of about 400 and during the night made an incursion into Hillsborough and carried off the Governor & perhaps some others and took them to Wilmington at the mouth of Cape Fear River where the British shipping lay & as this Declarant understood he was detained a prisoner on board a British vessel. This incident took place according to the recollection of this Declarant in the autumn of 1781.

The Battle of the Cowpens having taken place at which Col. Tarlton [sic, Banastre Tarleton] was defeated by the American General Morgan & many prisoners taken, this Declarant thinks about 800. Lord Cornwallis, as the report was, pressed on from [word missing] towards the Trading Ford of ~~Dan~~ Adkin [sic, Yadkin] River to rescue the prisoners so taken by Morgan and Genl Greene being in his route had to retreat before him and on this retreat of General Greene, the Regiment of Mounted Men under Col. Malmory [sic, Malmedy] joined him in the woods somewhere between Guilford Court house and Dan River. Genl Greene having strengthened himself by mustering as many troops as he could obtain moved on towards Guilford Court house and there ~~fell in~~ ^{with} awaited Cornwallis and a general engagement ensued. After ~~this engagement~~ ^{the battle} had lasted sometime General Greene withdrew his troops to the Iron Works on Little Alamance Creek ^(about 12 miles) and recruited his troops and in a few days marched down upon Guilford Court house near which Cornwallis had been encamped. Upon the approach of Greene, Cornwallis retreated ~~to~~ ^{towards} Wilmington where the British shipping lay. Genl Greene pressed on rapidly after Cornwallis till the latter halted at Ramsey's Mills on Deep River and a short distance west from him Greene encamped. It was reported in the camp that Cornwallis who had a number of American prisoners sent word to Greene that if he pursued him any further he would put the American prisoners to death. At all counts Greene did not for some reason pursue him any further.

A part of Col. Malmedy's Regiment was detached to Cross Creek, now Fayetteville, to destroy some American stores which were likely to fall into the hands of Cornwallis upon his retreat and the other part of the regiment with which was this

Declarant went to scour the Tory section of the country. He was dispatched by his immediate officer, John Williams Daniel ~~well~~ who was his Capt., to the County of Granville with an express to Col. Joseph Taylor the commanding Col. of the County and whilst on the trip was discharged with a credit for two months service making upwards of seven months of total service. He recollects that Col. Washington & Col. Lee who both commanded Regiments of Dragoons did with their regiments contribute a part of Gen'l Greene's Army & he often saw them.

In the summer of 1781, probably the month of August of that year, another call was made of Militia for a three months tour when this Declarant was drafted and mustered into service. His Capt. was Charles Yancey. He lived still in Granville County and after the draft rendezvoused at ~~Hillsborough~~ Granville Court house. While there a Brigade or number of ammunition wagons loaded for the south arrived and as it was necessary for them to have a guard by reason of danger from the Tories, Yancey's company to which this Declarant belonged was dispatched with the wagons for that purpose and convoyed them to within two miles of Salisbury in Rowan County to a place called Frohawk's Mills where a sergeant and some soldiers preparing cartridges for the army were stationed. It being thought necessary to strengthen the guard over the ammunition thus deposited a Sergeant named Thomas Willbourn belonging to Capt. Yancey's company with a part of the men including the Declarant was then stationed. He continued there for sometime and before the tour expired he was ~~taken sick and~~ permitted to return home ~~if he could~~ on furlough which he did and about two weeks after his return, the tour of service having expired, he with those composing the draft were discharged.

In the latter part of the year 1781 this Declarant migrated to that part of the west then called the District of Kentucky and settled at Daniel Boone's new station two miles East of Lexington, or about that distance, in the County of Fayette. In June 1782 a call for men was made by the Government and this Declarant went in obedience to that call into service under the command of Capt Robert Patterson of Lexington whose Company was directed to join Genl George Rogers Clark's ^{Army or part thereof} at the mouth of the Kentucky River upon the Bank of the Ohio. Genl Clarke was himself stationed at the Falls of Ohio River and kept a Row Galley or Barge with a body of men on board sailing up and down the River especially in the neighborhood of the mouths of Licking to the Big Bear Creek to protect the ~~settled~~ settlers in Kentucky against the incursions of the Indians from the Northwest. At the mouth of Kentucky we met the Row Galley having then on board a number of regular soldiers and two of regular officers, Capt George and Capt Pratt or Platt, their Christian names were not know to this Declarant or if known to him he has forgotten them. The Galley proceeded up the river to the mouth of Big Bear Creek. We lay there about a week and were informed that a body of Indians, about 1500 in number, was lying at a place called Mills Town in the interior on the North ^{West} side of the River but the river being low and it being supposed to be an unprofitable Campaign the Galley returned to Louisville after discharging Capt Patterson's Company. This Company (of which this Declarant was one) made their way home through the wilderness and was discharged. ~~During the~~ This Declarant does not recollect for what period he was ordered out and he is impressed that no distinct period was fixed but in this he may be mistaken. He recollects however that he was out for about one month. Shortly after his return as before stated he joined the inhabitants living in Bryant's Station about five miles North East of Lexington. This station seemed to be under the command of John Craig who was

styled "Capt" but this Declarant thinks that he was not in commission but of this he knows nothing certain. On the 16th August same year (1782) a body of Indians under the command of Simon Girty and Col. McKee appeared before the Fort and demanded a surrender after having first made a very violent assault and attempted to take the fort by storm. The attack was renewed and continued about twenty four hours when the assailants withdrew. The number of Indians was supposed to be about Five hundred and after the attack on the fort they withdrew towards the Blue licks and within a few days they were followed by a Body of Whites under the command of Cols. John Todd, Stephen Trigg & Daniel Boone. The battle of the Blue Licks shortly took place and Cols. Todd and Trigg were killed. This Declarant was not one of the party that followed the Indians—he received a wound or rather violent bruise upon one of his feet by ~~the~~ a fall of a heavy piece of timber during the attack of the Indians upon the fort as before mentioned which wholly disabled him for a time from walking. In the attack on the Fort, John Frederick Mitchell and John Adkins were killed in the Fort and James McConnell and Charles Hunter were killed on the outside of the fort. These two were of a party of about 40 men that came from Lexington to the relief of the Fort of which only Sixteen got in, the residue except those killed were driven back. In October [of the] same year (1782), the Militia were generally called out ~~to~~ to join General George Rogers Clarke upon the North West Bank of the Ohio River ~~up~~ opposite the mouth of Licking. This Declarant was one of those who attended the call and he with the Army proceeded under the command of General Clarke to the Shawnee towns on the Big Miami River 86 miles from where the army started. There was no general engagement only some nightly skirmishes. We burnt the Indian towns. The most of the Indians it was understood were out hunting. After somewhat less than a month ~~above~~ across the River we returned to the point where we left the river and the Militia was then sent home. This Declarant was upon this occasion commanded by Capt. Charles Hazelrigg. Capt. Wm. McConnell from Lexington and Capt. John Constant from Strode's Station were out upon this campaign. We were in service above a month but how long precisely is not recollected by this Declarant. Some five weeks after the attack on Bryant's Station this Declarant went to Boone's Station to live and from that place went out under Capt. Hazelrigg as before mentioned and this was the last campaign of this Declarant till the Treaty of Peace between the United States and Great Britain. This Declarant further states that he has no Documentary evidence and that he knows of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to his service. 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 the agency of any state.

Sworn to and Subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

S/ John Searcy

Interrogatories put by the Court

1. When and in what year were you born?

Ans: I was born in the State of North Carolina, Granville County in the year 1762.

2. Have you any record of your age & if so where is it?

Ans: I have no record of my age. My father had a record of my age which I often saw and well recollected what is stated but it has long since been lost.

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

Ans: I lived when called into service originally in North Carolina Granville County. I moved to Ky in 1781 Fayette County, thence to Woodford, thence to Madison County, thence to Clarke County, thence again to Woodford County, thence to Gallatin & now lives in Owen which since his removal was formed including part of Gallatin & his residence.

4. How were you called into service - were you drafted - were you volunteer or were you a substitute - and if a substitute for whom?

Ans: I was originally drafted. I once substituted for Jeremiah Gardner—and volunteered under Col Malmedy as stated.

5. 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.

Ans: I recollect Col. Henry Dixon, Col. Armong [?] (as he was called). He commanded regulars & also Col. Dixon. I recollect Genl Gates, Genl Morgan, Genl Greene, Col. Lee, Col. Washington. I recollect the regiments as before stated. I recollect the Tories were very abundant in the South—and that ~~Col.~~ General Davidson was killed by the Tories on the Catawba River. The first Campaign I was in was under Genl Caswell and the last under General Clarke when we burnt the Shawnee towns.

6. Did you ever receive a discharge from the service - if you did by whom was it given and what has become of it?

Ans: I received while in ~~Service~~ the South discharges from the Colonels commanding except when on Furlough—but in Kentucky never any discharge but by word of mouth - my discharges are long since lost.

7. State the names of persons to whom you are known in your neighborhood and who can testify to your character for veracity and their belief of your services as a soldier of the Revolution.

Ans: I am know to Tobias Willhoite, ^{a clergyman,} John McGibney, Jos. Jones & John Garnett.