

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension Application of Constantine Clarkson: S32180

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Illinois Morgan County. S.S.

On this third day of December in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and thirty two personally appeared in open court before James Green, William Gillham and William Woods Judges of the County Commissioners court of Morgan County now sitting Constantine Clarkson a resident of the County of Morgan aforesaid aged Seventy years who makes 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 named officers and served as herein stated. In the year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy nine he volunteered to serve a tour of duty as a private in a Company commanded by Capt [James] Brewer in the county of Pittsylvania in the State of Virginia, the time of service was three months. the company was organized at a place called Pittsylvania Old Courthouse and marched from that place into South Carolina, joined the troops under the command of Gen'l Lee at a place called the Troublesome Iron Works [in Guilford County, North Carolina; see note below]. the company continued in service under Gen'l. Lee the three months, the Army and Gen'l. Lee moving[?] from place to place in South Carolina during the three months Capt. Brewer's company of Gen'l Lees Army [two or three illegible words] and returned home. This applicant was in no Engagement in this Campaign. When this applicant returned Home he found other companies of Militia of drafted men preparing to start on a campaign. He was hired by one Grimes to serve as a substitute for said Grimes. Grimes given name is believed to have been James. This applicant entered the service as the substitute of said Grimes, was attached to a company commanded by Capt. Thomas Roberts. the company marched from Pittsylvania old CourtHouse to Hillsborough in [North] Carolina, remained at that place until Gen'l. [Horatio] Gates arrived. thirty men were detailed from the Militia to accompany him to Deep River, where the Regular troops were stationed. This applicant was detailed as one of the thirty, and did accompany Gen'l. Gates to the encampment of the Regular troops on Deep River. In about one week after Col Gates arrived on Deep River the militia stationed at Hillsborough arrived at that place, and in a few days the whole Army under Gen'l Gates marched into the neighborhood of Cambdin [sic: Camden SC], where Gen'l. Gates was defeated [16 Aug 1780]. This applicant was in the Battle. the troops upon being defeated scattered, and assembled again at a place called the Moravian Towns [near present Winston-Salem NC], and then joined their companies again. This applicant never saw Gen'l Gates after the defeat, and he believes that the troops were under the command of Gen'l. Lee [see note], until the arrival of Gen'l Green [sic: Nathanael Greene]. Capt. Roberts company had served three months before Genl Greens arrival and had been discharged. This applicant having served the three months under Capt Roberts and returned Home. He immediately [see note below] joined a company of Riflemen in Pittsylvania County Virginia commanded by Capt Thomas Smith of said county as a Volunteer. The company marched into [North] Carolina and joined the Army under the command of Gen'l. Green, and continued with him until after the Battle at Guilford courthouse [15 March 1781]. This applicant was in that Battle and belonged to the Choir [Corps intended?] of Riflemen. after the Battle Gen'l Green's Army retired to a place called the Troublesome Iron Works, Capt Smiths company remained until the terms of service expired [one or two words cut off] was discharged. This applicant served in this campaign three months. the day that his term of service expired he joined a company of Mounted Riflemen commanded by Capt. John Cantrell. he volunteered in this company and furnished his own Horse and Equipment. Capt. Cantrell marched his company into Virginia, pursuing the British from Carolina into Virginia. the company was with Gen'l Greens Army, and continued with him for three months [sic: see note below]. The Army was at Petersburg and Richmond, and in Goochland County this applicant left Gen'l Green in Goochland County and returned Home having served three months and furnished his own horse during the whole time of service. Two days after this applicant returned from the Expedition under Capt Cantrell, he was hired by John Hodges of Pittsylvania County to serve as a substitute for the term of three months; this

applicant accordingly entered the service as the substitute for the said John Hodges in a company commanded by Capt Joseph Morton. the company marched from Pittsylvania County and went to Charlotte Courthouse he then returned Home by order of some officer and required to hold himself and the company in readiness to march whenever called on. the company was kept in readiness and the men held bound to service for the three months, but was never ordered to march. This applicant served twelve months as herein stated and was bound to serve for three months as the substitute for John Hodges as herein stated. He received written discharges for every tour of duty which he performed, and a discharge from Capt Joseph Morton for three months service, but these discharges he has long since lost, and he has no documentary evidence now in his possession or power by which he can prove his services. He knows of no Witness now living by whom he can prove his service. one Aaron Smith of Greene County Illinois was acquainted with this applicant during the Revolutionary war in Virginia & knows that this applicant was in service, but does not know the Length of time. This Applicant was born on the Eighteenth of December One Thousand Seven Hundred and sixty two in Goochland County Virginia, he was raised in Goochland & Bedford & Pittsylvania [several words cut off] he remained in the latter county until after the Revolutionary War [several illegible words] years of age he removed to Tennessee and settled near Knoxville. he remained there until 1819 when he removed to the State of Illinois. He now resides in the County of Morgan and State of Illinois. He has a record of his age, recorded in his family Bible which he copied from the Record made by his father. He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the roll of the agency or any State or Territory. Sworn to and subscribed this 3rd day of December 1832 Constantine hisXmark Clarkson

NOTE:

Clarkson appears to have been confused about his first tour in 1779. The only General Lee was Charles Lee, who had been relieved of command after his disastrous performance at the Battle of Monmouth on 28 June 1778. Clarkson may have been thinking of Lt. Col. Henry Lee, but he served in the North until late in 1781. The most likely explanation is that Clarkson confused the first tour with later service as part of the militia attached to Lee after the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. Clarkson's first tour probably was in South Carolina.

Clarkson was also mistaken in suggesting that the Southern Army was commanded by Lee after the Battle of Camden. Horatio Gates remained in command until relieved by Gen. Greene at Charlotte NC on 2 Dec 1780.

Clarkson's tour that included the Battle of Camden would have expired by early November of 1780, so it is impossible that he "immediately" reenlisted and served three months ending after the Battle at Guilford Courthouse on 15 March 1781. The Virginia Militia was, in fact, called out in February when it appeared that Cornwallis would pursue Greene into Virginia.

Cantrell's company of mounted riflemen may have technically been under command of Gen. Greene, but Greene himself took the main Southern Army into South Carolina for the remainder of the war.