

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension Application Jacob Plunk II S7321
Transcribed and annotated by William Lee Anderson III

fn32NC
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[A verbatim copy, including spelling errors, of a county court transcript written by a court clerk.]

State of North Carolina
Lincoln County

On this 1st day of November 1832 personally appeared in open court of pleas & quarter sessions now sitting Jacob Plunk a resident of the County of Lincoln North Carolina aged 83 or 84 years. Who being duly sworn according to law doth make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June the 7th 1832 — That he entered the service of the United States in the militia under the following named officers & served as herein stated. about the month of June 1776 he was drafted and served a tour of three months against the Cherokee & other Indians in the company commanded by Robert Alexander his Lieutenant Jacob Forney was at Makague's Fort [probably McGaughey's Fort] from there to Macfukins Fort [probably McFadden's Fort]. very shortly after his return & the expiration of his tour he was called out for three months and was attached to the company commanded by George Taylor — the colonel not remembered, but was under the command of General Davidson for a short time: when being a shoe maker he was ordered home to make shoes for the soldiery for the balance of his three months: about the year 1781 he was again drafted for three months and went under the command of Capt William Moore & regt commanded by Col. Phifer to Wilmington North Carolina as will appear by the depositions of Capt Moore: and his first tour by the deposition of Genl. Peter Forney herewith appended that he was born in Lancaster County Pennsylvania: that when his service was performed he was a citizen of Tryon now Lincoln County No Carolina: that he has no documentary evidence. — He 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. — Sworn to & subscribed the day & year aforesaid.

[his mark] Jacob ∞ Plunk

And the said court do hereby declare their opinion after the investigation of the matter, and after putting under interrogatories prescribed by the War department, that the above named applicant was a revolutionary soldier and served as he states. And that court further certifies that it appears to them that who has signed the certificate below as a clergyman residing in the county of Lincoln and that signed the same is a resident of the same county and is a credible person, & that their statement is entitled to credit.

I Vardry M^cBee Clerk of the County Court of Lincoln do hereby certify that the foregoing containing the original proceedings of the said court in the matter of the application of Jacob Plunk for a Pension. In testimony whereof I have here unto set my hand & seal of office this 1st day of Nov^r. 1832.

[signed] Vardry M^cBee

We Hugh Quin a clergyman residing in the county of Lincoln and Andrew Hoyl residing in the same county do hereby certify that we are well acquainted with Jacob Plunk who has subscribed & sworn to the above declaration, that we believe him to be about 83 or 84 years of age; that he is respected and believed in the neighborhood where he resides, to have been a soldier of the revolution & that we concur in that opinion. Sworn & subscribed this day & year aforesaid.

[signed] Hugh Quin
[signed] Andr Hoyl

Interrogatories

1. When & in what year were you born
A. In Lancaster County about 1747 or 1748
2. Have you any record of your age, & is so where is it
A. I have none in possession but Joseph Carpenter of Rutherford County has a memorandum I got my information from.

3. Where was you living when you were called into service. Where have you lived since the revolutionary war. Where do you now live?
A. I live then and ever since where I now do.
4. How were you called into service; were you drafted, did you volunteer or were you a substitute. And if a substitute for whom.
A. I was drafted first. — 2nd I was drafted — 3rd I was drafted. —
5. 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.
A. Robert Alexander was my Capt when I performed my first service & Jacob Forney Lieutenant in the 2nd tour Gen' Davidson & Capt Taylor. 3rd William Moore Capt. & as well as I remember Phifer was Colonel General Rutherford commanded.

[his mark] Jacob ∞ Plunk

Washington 11th Jan 1833. I am personally acquainted with Peter Forney and William Moore, who have testified to the service of Jacob Plunk, and know them to be gentlemen of high respectability & in whom every confidence may be placed.

[signed] Henry W. Connor [US Congressman]

Historical Commentary

Jacob Plunk's first and third tour of duty match recorded historical events. He participated in or supported the August–October 1776 Cherokee Campaign led by Colonel Griffith Rutherford. Plunk was probably at McGaughey's Fort near Brittain Presbyterian Church in present-day Rutherford County. His other location was probably McFadden's Fort on Mountain Creek in present-day Rutherford County. Plunk records that this tour started about June 1776. The campaign to the Cherokee Middle Towns, in extreme western North Carolina, occurred during August–October 1776.

Plunk's third tour was the October–November 1781 campaign to drive British forces from Wilmington led also by Rutherford then a brigadier general. This occurred near the end of active military activities, immediately after the Yorktown victory.

Jacob Plunk's second tour of duty was either during the summer or fall 1780. It is not likely that this tour occurred "very shortly after" his first tour in 1776. Beginning mid-April 1776, Major William Lee Davidson was a Continental Army officer in the North Carolina Fourth Regiment. In late 1776, he was stationed along the North Carolina coast [Davidson:1951:39]. In 1777, he joined General George Washington's army in the North. He returned to the Carolinas during spring 1780 and was appointed brigadier general of militia in September 1780.

The [pension application of James Owenby](#) offers a possible explanation. Like Jacob Plunk II, Owenby lived in Tryon County. Both served under Captain George Taylor but not necessarily at the same time as Plunk. Owenby testified that beginning November 1778, he served 5 months under Captain George Taylor, Colonel Hugh Brevard, and General Griffith Rutherford and that he marched to Purrysburgh, South Carolina, to counter the British occupation of Savannah, Georgia [Owenby:1833:NARA]. Plunk's tour of duty was 3 months. So, it is unlikely this was the time Plunk made shoes at home. Nonetheless, this evidence is included to inform future research.

The [pension application of Christian Arney](#) offers a more likely explanation. Arney's experiences are very similar to Plunk's. Both made soldier's shoes. On 19 July 1832, Arney testified that he "was ordered by General Davidson to make shoes, during the term of service, he made 85 pair of shoes." [Arney:1832:NARA] On 14 November 1833, Arney testified "That he was drafted again Shortly before the Battle of Ramsour [Mill] under the Command of General Davidson that he was employed in the Service Scouting in Lincoln County and Served three months." [Arney:1833:NARA]

Jacob Plunk, age 84, testified in support of Christian Arney's application. Plunk testified that both served "three months under General Davidson." These three months were probably June–August 1780. In mid June, as the British Army advanced through South Carolina and threatened to invade North Carolina, the

Salisbury District militia was called up. Both Plunk and Arney's militia company joined Brigadier General Griffith Rutherford, and his subordinate Lieutenant Colonel William Lee Davidson, at Tuckasegee Ford on Catawba River. Meanwhile, loyalist Colonel John Moore, whose home on Indian Creek, called for loyalists to assemble at Ramsour's Mill. Plunk would have expected to defend North Carolina against the advancing British soldiers. But on the morning of 20 June, all of Rutherford's troops marched to Ramsour's Mill to engage the 1000 encamped loyalists. Although Rutherford's troops arrived a few hours after the battle, Plunk would have discovered that many of the defeated and dead loyalists were his neighbors. He was in a very precarious position. Even 52 years later, it may have been too painful to describe completely. All that Plunk and Arney recorded is that they were ordered home to make soldier's shoes for three months.

Another possibility is that Jacob Plunk II served under Brigadier General William Lee Davidson during September–December 1780 when Davidson's militia brigade camped in succession at McAlpine Creek, Rocky River, and Camp New Providence in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. Reports from that time indicated a shortage of shoes and many barefooted soldiers. But had either Plunk or Arney been at these locations they would have listed a different set of Continental Army and militia officers, including Generals Smallwood, Sumner, Morgan, and Lieutenant Colonel William Washington.

Throughout the Revolutionary War, Jacob Plunk II lived in a dangerous neighborhood. Many of his neighbors were influential loyalists. Life was very precarious for Patriots like Jacob Plunk II.

Pat Caswell Cloninger discovered the tradition and wrote, "Jacob Plunk II was a shoe-maker and carried a drawing of each man's feet so he could make shoes for them. All they had to do was to tell Jacob they needed a new pair of shoes. He would pull the pattern out of his saddle bag along with some leather and make the shoes." [Cloninger:2006].

Robert C. Carpenter, author of *Carpenters A Plenty*, indicates that the Joseph Carpenter, from whom Jacob Plunk got his age, lived in the South Mountains near Carpenters Knob Creek.

Sources:

Carpenter, Robert C., 1982, *Carpenters A Plenty*, Gateway Press.

Cloninger, Pat Caswell, 2006, email correspondence.

Davidson, Chalmers G., 1951, *Piedmont Partisan, The Life and Times of Brigadier General William Lee Davidson*, Davidson College, Davidson, NC.

NARA, 1997, *Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, 1800–1900*, *Microfilm publication M804*, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC, <http://www.nara.gov/publications/microfilm/military/>.