

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of William White S1735

Transcribed by Will Graves

State of Tennessee Lincoln County: County Court: October term, 1832

On this 17th day of October, 1832, personally appeared before the justices of the County Court of Lincoln County, Tennessee, William White, a resident of said county and state, aged about 78 years the 10th of January next, who being duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath, make the following declaration in order to attain the benefit of a provision made by act of Congress passed June 7th, 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following officers and served as herein stated, viz.: That he volunteered in Colonel Stephen's Regiment of Minutemen in Fauquier County, Virginia some time in the month of September in the year 1775 (as he thinks), Major Thomas Marshall also commanded in said regiment. The company to which I belonged was commanded by Captain John Shelton who was afterwards killed at the Battle of Brandywine or Germantown [I now forget which] and also by Lieutenant John Marshall, son of Major Thomas. Marshall, and now Chief Justice of the United States. In the same month we marched from our county to Culpepper Courthouse in Virginia, where we commenced building barracks, but before we completed them an express arrived for us to go to the lower country where Gov. Dunmore was raising a disturbance. We immediately marched to Williamsburg, and were there stationed in the Capitol three or four weeks during the time our regiment was stationed at Williamsburg. I volunteered and went with a rifle company commanded by a Capt. Bluford [Abraham or Henry Buford?] to Hampton Road and at Hampton we had an action with five small British vessels called "tenders" lying in a creek a small distance away from the bay, one of which we took and drove the others off. From Hampton we marched back to Williamsburg and I joined my regiment. We then started towards Norfolk, where Gov. Dunmore had established himself, and came to a bridge about 14 or 15 miles from Norfolk, called at that time " the long bridge" at which place was a British fort about 5 miles below the bridge at a ferry which was guarded by some Tories and Negroes. Genl. Scott, being with our army at his time, beat up for volunteers to storm the lower fort, and I and several of my company besides others went and stormed the forts during the night. We completely routed them and took several Negroes and one white man prisoner. We marched back to the long bridge and raised breastworks against the fort where Fordyce [Charles Fordyce] commanded. In 3 or 4 days afterwards, Fordyce marched out of the fort to storm our breastworks, and we killed, wounded and took prisoner his whole company except one Ensign who made his escape. Capt. Fordyce was shot through the body with ten balls. We then marched to Norfolk against Dunmore who retreated to his vessels and set fire to the town. We lay at Norfolk a few weeks and were then marched back home where we were discharged about the middle of April, having been in service between 7 and 8 months. In the middle of May following, I went to Alexandria, now in the District of Columbia, to see my brother, John White, who had enlisted in a company commanded by the same Capt Shelton, and who was so unwell as to be unable to do service. I then became a substitute for my brother for three months, after which he returned and took his place. During the time I was a substitute, we lay the greater part of that time at Alexandria, but 3 or 4 weeks before I left that service, we marched over to the Washington side of the Potomac River, and after remaining there 2 or 3 weeks, we started towards Philadelphia, but before we had gone far, my brother came and I returned home.

Sometime in the latter part of 1780, I enlisted in the service of the United States for the term of 18 months, in the company commanded by Capt. Warman (or some such name) attached to the regiment of regulars commanded by Colonel Gaskins and Major John Willis, in Fauquier County, Virginia. We assembled at Fredericksburg, where, as soon as the different companies arrived, they were sent to Powhatan Courthouse to be disciplined by Genl Steuben. As soon as I arrived at Fredericksburg, I was appointed Orderly Sergeant in which capacity I continued to act during the time I was in service. Part of the company to which I belonged, under Capt. Field, and the other under a Lieut.

whose name I now forget, were on our way to Powhatan Courthouse for the purpose before stated. When we had proceeded some distance, an express arrived, informing us that the British had burnt Manchester, and us to cut across the country to Point of Forks in order to avoid them as we had not yet received any arms, and to guard that place as our arms and public stores were there. Here we joined Genl Steuben and drew our arms. We remained there 3 or 3 days when an express arrived that they British, under Col. Tarleton were marching upon us. Steuben became alarmed and ordered us cross over James River and remove our stores, but before we had entirely succeeded, Tarleton came up and took some of the stores, 2 of the baggage wagons, and made prisoners of the guard. On that night Steuben ordered a large quantity of rails to be produced to made fires and ordered the army to retreat leaving one Ensign and a small company to keep up the fires in order to deceive the British. He had sent up and down the river 4 or 5 miles to destroy all the boats to prevent the enemy from crossing to pursue us. We retreated to Halifax Old Town, marching 3 days and nights without provision and without rest. We stayed there a few days and nights and were ordered to return to James River and join Genl Wayne [Anthony Wayne] and Lafayette who were then pursuing Lord Cornwallis. We crossed the River at Carter's Ferry and joined Genl Wayne at headquarters and our regiment was attached to his forces as light infantry. Cornwallis and his army retreated down the river and our army under Genl Wayne continued to maneuver so as to harass them very much in their march, especially at Green Springs where they crossed the river, we attacked their rear and did them considerable injury. After crossing the river, which was near Old Jamestown, they marched to Williamsburg and proceeded to Yorktown, and all which route we followed them and finally besieged and took them all prisoner at that place. After the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, our regiment was marched back to Powhatan Courthouse where we remained until the latter part of the succeeding April, our regiment being then ordered to Savannah and I being very unwell, I procured a substitute to go in my place and I returned home, and was not in service any more during the war. I had a written discharge, but it is now lost. I think the term of my service was from the time I enlisted until the time I left the service was about 14 or 15 months, during all which time I acted as Orderly Sergeant in our regiment. In addition to the officers before mentioned, I was acquainted with Genl Washington, Col Hamilton, his aid, (who commanded us at the time we were drawing in the entrenchments at the siege of Yorktown) also with Genls Wayne, Green [sic, Nathanael Greene], Lee [presumably, Henry Lee, "Light Horse Harry"], Scott, Woodford [William Woodford], Sumpter [sic, Thomas Sumter], Morgan [presumably, Daniel Morgan] and others.

I was born in Fauquier County, Virginia on the 10th day of January, 1755. I have a record of my age now in my possession. I lived there when I entered service. After the Revolutionary War, I moved to Rowan County, North Carolina, where I lived about 30 years, then came to this county where I now live. At the time I left the service, a new Colonel had just been appointed to the command of our regiment from whom I secured my discharge, but whose name I now forget. I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declare that my name is not on the pension roll of any agency in any state. In court with me I now have no evidence of my service, nor do I know of any person whose testimony I can procure to testify to the service unless it be Chief Justice Marshall, with whom I served in a regiment of what was then called "Minutemen" at the beginning of the war. As to my character for veracity and my revolutionary services, I would refer to the Rev. Cumberland Wilson, Col. Wm. Moore, and Col. Isaac Holman, and to Mr. James Bright.

S/ William White, X his mark

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

Test: Robert Binge [?], Clerk