

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of John Taylor S7684

fn35NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

State of North Carolina, Granville County

On this 25th day of December A. D. 1832, personally appeared before me, Leonard Henderson one of the Judges of the Supreme Court for the State of North Carolina, John Taylor Sr. a resident of the said County & State, aged 76 years on the 4th instant, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath, like the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7th, 1832.

I was born as I am informed in the State of Virginia and at the age of two years was removed with my parents to the County of Mecklenburg in the same State, where I lived until the year 1777 when I removed to the County of Granville in the State of North Carolina and settled myself at my present residence where I have continued to live ever since.

In the year 1778 a company was raised in the County of Granville and was marched to the defense of South Carolina and Georgia. I am told that my brother Richard Taylor was the Captain of this company but of this fact I have no recollection. The wife of my brother Richard had had no intelligence of her husband in some time and in consequence expressed uneasiness upon the subject in my presence to this I replied that I had no family I would go and if permitted serve out his time as a substitute. Accordingly soon set out with two young men of my acquaintance, Solomon Walker and Solomon Mitchell to join the American Army. We reached the Army then stationed on the North Side of Savannah River opposite to the town of Augusta which was then in the possession of the British Army. Here I learned that my brother Richard had returned home, for what cause or under what circumstances I have no recollection but I have recently been informed and believe that by reason of pique or disappointment in not being raised to the grade of Major, he had resigned his commission, and left the service. We were gladly received into the service and I was a considerable time in the early part of my tour in the family and [indecipherable word, looks like "morlase"] of Colonel Lytle. A detachment under the command of General Ash [sic John Ashe] having been ordered across the River were directed to take their station at the point where Briar Creek empties into the Savannah River. At this time I belonged to the company of which Lieutenant Pleasant Henderson had in part the command, and I believe I was at the same mess with him. This company belonged to the detachment under General Ashe. How long we remained on duty at that post on Briar Creek I am unable to state. But a few days before the attack on our detachment which proved so fatal to it, General Ashe sent Lieutenant Henderson with dispatches to the General commanding at Purysburg I believe it was General Lincoln and I was selected to accompany him. On the instant of our departure Lieutenant Henderson seeing I had not my saddle bags, insisted that I should return and give them. I replied it would be unnecessary as we should be back again in a few days, but the solicitation being repeated I did return to my quarters and got them. We mounted our horses and had not traveled far before Henderson remarked to me that he had a particular reason for insisting on my taking my saddle bags. You nor I says he will ever see this place again-- there will be a battle here before we return. In due time we arrived at Purysburg. Here we remained perhaps three or four days when we set out to return to our station. On our return we met the stragglers of our party flying from the battleground at Briar Creek and I recollect of giving away to them all the cloths in my saddle bags. I have no recollection at this time but presume we returned and joined the Army at Purysburg. Nor do I recollect where we were discharged. I have ever thought and I now believe that I joined the Army in so short a time after the commencement of the term of service, that I was received for the whole tour though it was at the same time impressed upon my mind that the term of service was but for five months. I have however recently been informed that the term of service was for six months after being mustered at Charlotte, and it may be that I have confounded the time I actually served with the length of the whole term of service. I am satisfied I

served at least five months.

In the month of August 1780 a Regiment of volunteers was mustered into service at Oxford in the County of Granville under the command of Colonel Phil. Taylor of which Regiment I was a member and subject at all times to the military duty of a soldier, was frequently engaged in doing the duties of commissary. The Regiment marched through Hillsborough, Salisbury and Charlotte and finally to the Catawba River. At Salisbury the Regiment was placed under the command of Colonel Davie. I have not a recollection of many events which occurred during this tour, perhaps of none which are known at the department of war, nor are the above facts stated as of my own knowledge or recollection. I recollect of encamping at Harrisburg near Oxford, I suppose soon after the forming of the Regiment, perhaps while ~~our Regiment was forming~~ it was organized --of passing through Charlotte and being much annoyed by the [indecipherable word, looks like "junies" could it be 'juices'] of beef in marching through a reset encampment of the British Army—of purchasing on one occasion a large quantity of flour for the use of the Army. Also on one occasion our Regiment being aware of its liability to be attacked laid down to sleep upon our arms. In the course of the night we were waked with as little noise as possible and changed our ground. I think it was afterwards said that in a short time after our leaving it, the ground was covered by the Dragoons of Tarleton, who would but for our timely notice of his approach have cut us to pieces. At the Waxhaws I remember of being in company with General Davie when the latter pointed out to me a meeting house and remarked that he was educated by his uncle to succeed him as the Pastor of that house. I particularly recollect of being much affected by the solemn spectacle of the tombstones in the surrounding churchyard. I have no recollection of the length of this tour, but have been informed and believe it was for four months, nor do I remember where we were discharged. I have no recollection of serving a less period than the whole term, and believe that I did serve out the whole term. Shortly after the expiration of this tour of duty, a Regiment of mounted volunteers was raised in North Carolina and placed under the command of Colonel Malmedy and Major Pleasant Henderson. One company was raised in my neighborhood. Among other persons composing the company were James Lyne, James Lewis, Joseph P. Davis, John Farrar, James Minge Burton, two of my brothers, Lewis and Edmund Taylor, the one older and the other younger than myself, and Robert Goodloe Harper, who has since been distinguished in the public councils of his country. When the company met at Oxford, in consequence I suppose of my having some service in the Tours above recited, they were pleased to elect me their Captain. I think we marched from Oxford to Hillsboro, but my only reason for thinking so is that Hillsboro was a commonplace of meeting on such occasions. I however distinctly recollect that, after we were joined with Malmedy and the other companies of the Regiment, and within 7 miles of Guilford Courthouse, while at breakfast we heard the report of the Artillery in the battle which had just commenced. Malmedy guided by the report of the Artillery, attempted to reach the battle ground by marching through the woods instead of the more circuitous route along the road, but the ground became so rocky and uneven, that we had finally to retrace our steps to the road we had left. Here we met hundreds of our men flying from the battleground. They could give us no information as to the issue of the engagement, and we pursued our march until we arrived in sight of the ground. This we found in the possession of the Enemy. I think it was now about night. I recollect of seeing the guns of the Enemy stacked around their fires, and that a council of officers was held to consult on the propriety of attacking their camps, and I think further that the measure was opposed only by Malmedy himself. I suppose we of course after this followed on after General Green [sic, Nathanael Greene], though if we joined him and it is my impression we were with him for about half a day, it was for a very short time for Malmedy was ordered to pursue Cornwallis after the latter had left Guilford Courthouse. In the course of this pursuit I was ordered to find out the position of the British Army, with the permission to take with me as many men as I pleased. I selected seven, among them were Benjamin Hester, James Minge Burton, and Robert Goodloe Harper. My instructions were, that I should find Colonel Malmedy on such a day at such a place and on such another day at such another place &c. After, I think, two or

three days search, we obtained information of the situation of the main body of the British Army, and also that on another road the enemy were driving 300 beeves and that they would be compelled to march 15 miles before they would meet the Main body. Soon after this discovery, I believe it was in a few hours, and while in the immediate neighborhood of the enemy, so much did our company and our horses require refreshment, that we were tempted to halt at a cabin and turn our horse into a wheat lot near the house, and to partake of breakfast which was promised us by the woman of the house. While the woman was frying our hominy, for it was all she could offer us, I went out on the Eastern side of the cabin in company with the rest of my man except James M. Burton who remained in the house. The morning being cool we went out to bask in the sun leaving our arms within. And in a few minutes I heard a voice inquire for the man of the house when on looking around I saw the front part of the cabin surrounded by seven or eight armed men on horseback. I whispered my party to follow me who readily obeyed, and I walked into the cabin parting as I went two horses on which were mounted as many men armed with rifles. The enemy not knowing whether we were friends or enemies, or perhaps from pure cowardice, made no attempt at resisting our progress. After getting into the house I ordered my men to get their guns, and drawing my sword, presented myself at the door and inquired of them who they were for. Having been satisfied from signs of confusion among them that they were enemies, perhaps it was by a motion [sic, notion?] among them to retreat, I ordered my men to fire. They did so, but it was in such a hurried manner, that it was without much effect, although the enemy had to march single file through a small gate in front of the house. One man, however, I observed put his hand to his back, and at the same time his hat dropped from his head, and afterwards I understood it was one Captain Dark of the British Army who died of a wound he had that instant received. The wound was well understood to have been given by Robert Harper. No sooner had the enemy departed then we became much alarmed for the danger we had passed, and catching up our horses we set out on our return to our Regiment. Malmedy was not at the place he had appointed to be at on that day, where that place was I do not recollect, nor do I remember where we joined him nor how long I was in search of him. But I remember it was esteemed particularly a matter of regret that we had lost the opportunity of taking the beeves as it would have been so easy a conquest. Soon afterwards, I have been informed it was while Cornwallis was at Ramsey's Mills, Col. Malmedy ordered an attack on Tarleton's Dragoons in order to draw them out in pursuit, that Major Pleasant Henderson with a detachment placed in an ambush might attack them when thus drawn out. The command of this attack I have recently been informed was given to DeGloback a young Frenchman, though I had always believed he was subordinate to myself. The necessary preparations having been made DeGloback and myself set out at the head of the company ordered to make the attack consisting, I think, of about 40 men. Riding side-by-side DeGloback remarked to me that one or the other of us would in all probability be killed. To which I replied if they kept double pickets perhaps we both would be. In a little time accordingly we saw to pickets after getting within about 40 yards they fired at us, and we rushed forward at full speed. The pickets ran a short distance when they joined 20 or 30 more of their fellows who had been stationed as sentries to the main body. The whole of them then ran in the direction of the main body which was perhaps two or 300 yards further on; but they were overtaken by us and three of them taken prisoners. While our attention and operations were thus directed to the guard, before we were aware of it, we were nearly surrounded by about 400 Hessians, and being unable to return in the direction in which we had made the attack, were compelled to retreat in a different direction although the enemy assailed us with a shower of shot, we sustained not the least injury and brought off our prisoners. In conversation with Major P. Henderson afterwards he said he felt 3000 shot had been fired at us. I have understood that Tarleton refused to pursue us suspecting that it was a decoy of General Greene. The prisoners were ordered by DeGloback to be executed on the pretense that the enemy would pursue us, but this order was countermanded by me. James Lyne one of my nearest neighbors, brought off a Hessian rifle which he took home with him. When Cornwallis left Ramsey's Mills for Wilmington Colonel Malmedy was ordered to pursue him for the purpose of protecting the immediate country from

his ravages. My impressions as to the length of this term have always been that it was for two months. I have recently understood that it was rated for three months by reason of our finding horses. Besides the military tours above recited, I was employed by General Davie as an assistant in his commissary department on the following occasions: the precise date of either of which I have forgotten. I have no documentary evidence on the subject, nor can I find any person who has any other than a vague and indefinite recollection of the subject. I believe however that the most if not the whole of the service, was rendered after the termination of my last military campaign. The first occasion on which I was called to act, was to go into the lower counties of the State for the purpose of receiving from the Sheriffs or collectors of the public monies the sums they may have collected and to pay them over to General Davie. I recollect of receiving sums to a very considerable amount and of my suffering some uneasiness upon my neglecting to take a receipt from General Davie. I think I was about two months in this service.

On another occasion I was ordered to follow the tract of the American Army, and to find out the situation & in whose possession were the cow hides for belonging to the public for the supply of the public tanneries. In the performance of this duty I went to the South Carolina line. I do not distinctly recollect the time I was employed in this service but suppose it must have been three months. I was again employed to find and engage beef to be delivered at different points for the use of the Army. This service took and required a long time, but how long I am unable to state. I am satisfied however that I was a year or more probably 18 months engaged by General Davie on these several occasions. I have no documentary evidence of any service which I rendered in the war of the Revolution.

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 the agency of any State.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

S/ L. Henderson, J.S. C.

S/ John Taylor, Senior

I William Hunt¹ on the County of Granville and State of North Carolina do hereby certify that in the month of August in the year 1780, a Regiment of mounted volunteers was mustered into service in the town of Oxford in the County of Granville and State of North Carolina, the command of which was given to Phil Taylor as Colonel and myself has Major. After the organization of our Regiment we marched through Hillsborough, to Salisbury. At Salisbury we joined embodied a Regiment of volunteers under the command of Colonel Davie who took the command in chief of both regiments. From Salisbury we marched to Charlotte. Between Salisbury and Charlotte an attachment [sic, detachment?] of our main body in advance had an engagement with the rear of the British Army in which a son of General Locke was killed. This took place in the neighborhood of Charlotte and I believe in a day or two after our arrival at Salisbury, we remained at the latter place, I believe but one night. From Charlotte we marched further south having no particular place of destination our object being to follow on after Cornwallis to harass him and to protect the country from his ravages. We were however for short periods at six mile Creek, twelve mile Creek and at Waxhaw Creek, when Cornwallis crossed the Catawba River, we returned to a place or settlement called Providence [sic, New Providence ?] where we remained until relieved by General Smallwood. Our term of service was for three months, but by reason of the protectless [sic] situation of the Country the General in command refused to discharge us until about one month afterwards, when we were relieved by General Smallwood as above stated. I further certify that the above applicant John Taylor Senior was a soldier in the Regiment of which I had in part the command. That he was subject to military duty but was occasionally employed in the commissary department, and that he served out the whole term as above stated. I further certify that I have heard the declaration of the above applicant radiated, and that I believe his statements to be substantially true, not only from his character for truth and veracity – but

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from Universal report of his services rendered during the Revolutionary war.
Dec. 25th 1832 Sworn to before me. S/ Wm Hunt
S/ Leonard Henderson,
one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of North Carolina

Granville County, State of North Carolina: February term A.D. 1833

On this 5th day of February 1833 personally appeared in open Court Benjamin Hester² who being duly sworn made the following affidavit Viz.: That he joined the Army of General Greene at Trouble [sic, Troublesome] Iron works the day after the battle of Guilford Courthouse and in a day or two afterwards took the place of a man by the name of Bridges in the company of Captain Taylor who was accordingly discharged. I distinctly recollect the two incidents recited in the above declaration of the applicant John Taylor Sr of the affair at the cabin in the neighborhood of the British Army and of the attack upon Tarleton's Dragoons. I think in the affair of the cabin as above recited the reason why we were permitted to return from without to the inner part where we had left our arms was owing to an impression among the enemy (who I think were Tories) that we were on their side. At the least I think we came to this conclusion afterwards. ~~In the attack upon the British Army as above stated.~~ In retreating the gate in front of the house being narrow a part of the enemy charged the fence. I think the person who is represented as having received a wound on the occasion of which he afterwards died was one Captain Crump. His hat which is represented as falling from his head at the instant of receiving the wound, was taken possession of my brother Jo. who was one of the party. My brother John Hester was another of the party. The attack upon the British Army as above related was conducted by Captain Taylor and DeGoback at the least I recollect of their riding side-by-side at head of the attacking party. But DeGoback had no commission for I well recollect of being afterwards by him near to Wilmington when he received his commission. His expression at the time of receiving it was "Dam'em I'll fight them to the very hell." The three prisoners who were represented as having been taken in the attack were each of them wounded by my own sword. The two first were of the sentries at their post. In making our retreat I was for a minute or so thrown off from the rest of the company and in the mean time I came across the third Hessian behind a tree and drove him along before me until I came up with the rest of the company. DeGloback immediately ordered me to kill him. I gave him a severe cut upon the head, and aimed a second blow across his face but being on horse back I missed my aim and my sword fell across his breast without any effect. I then desisted whether of my own accord or by the orders I do not recollect. We pursued on after Cornwallis in his retreat towards Wilmington as related in the declaration of the applicant and was carried in the pursuit within sight of the Town. A short time before the expiration of our term of service I was sent with my two brothers John and Jo. with dispatches to General Greene and as the term would have expired before our return we were discharged. Captain Taylor served in the capacity of Captain from the commencement of the tour until my discharge and I have no doubt but that he served out the whole term. The term of service was for three months. It was discharged however by our serving two months on horseback which was a privilege usually allowed in the service at that day. I have heard the whole of the declaration of the above applicant read and although I have no personal knowledge of his serving any other tour than the one under Colonel Malmedy, yet I have always understood that he is rendered other service and from this circumstance and his general character I have no hesitation in saying that I believe in the truth of the statements in his declaration.

Sworn to in open Court.

S/ Benjamin Hunt, X his mark

S/ Stephen Sneed, Clk

[Willis Harris, a clergyman, and William M. Sneed gave the standard supporting affidavit In support of John Taylor Senior's application.]

[facts in the file: the Veteran died April 23, 1837; his widow is not named; his son, John C. Taylor was a resident of Granville County, NC in 1852; no other children are named.