

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension Application of William P. Riggan: S9077

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of No. Carolina}                      Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions  
Warren County}                              August Term AD. 1832.

On this 28th day of August AD. 1832. personally appeared in open Court before the Justices of the said Court now sitting, William P. Riggan now a Resident of the County of Halifax & State of No Carolina aged 71 years, who being first duly sworn according to Law doth on his oath make the following Declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7th. 1832.

That he was born in the County of Bute (now Warren) & State of No. Carolina in the year 1761, as he has been told, for he has no record of his birth. That about the 10th of September 1780 as well as he can remember he was drafted in the militia service in a Tour of Three months. Gen'l Allen Jones of Halifax County No. C. commanded the militia drafted in this section of county at that time. The regiment to which he belonged was under the command of Col. Hart of Edgecombe N. C. and his Captain's name was John White his neighbor & countryman long since dead. he also remembers an officer at that time, Col. Branch of Halifax & Maj. Hill of Franklin N. C. After being drafted this affiant, together with his neighbor Robin Harris whose certificate accompanies this declaration were marched first to Louisburg - Franklin Cty No. Car. - meeting there with the drafted men from the adjacent counties. they marched to Wake C. H. near the City of Raleigh - from thence to Hillsboro [sic: Hillsborough] - from thence to Salisbury - from Salisbury towards the So. Carolina line - leaving the Town of Charlotte - Mecklenburg Cty. No. Car. some miles to the right - in order to avoid the small-pox which was said to be then raging there. Some miles below Charlotte, at a place called New Providence or Six mile creek they fell in with the Regular Army under the command of Gen'ls. [William] Smallwood & Green [sic: Nathanael Greene] - and this being about the time that Gen'l. Green was ordered to the South to supersede Gen'l. [Horatio] Gates in the command of the southern army. this affiant recollects well the fact of the latter General's shedding tears when he resigned his sword to the former. He had more opportunities of observing particulars at this time than many others because he was one of the attendants on the person & camp of his commanding General - Jones. at General Jones's quarters he frequently saw the officers of the army - among them he distinctly recollects Col. [William] Washington who commanded a troop of horse. he was the finest looking man he ever saw. While stationed at this place information was rec'd. that a large number of Tories had collected together at Rudgeley's Mills [sic: Rugeley's Mill in Kershaw County SC] under the command of Col. Rudgeley [sic: Henry Rugeley] a celebrated Tory of that day - a detachment of Troops was ordered out to put the Tories to the route, but finding that their numbers exceeded all expectation the expedition was about to prove fruitless when a stratagem was resolved on - which resulted in the surrender of the whole Tory force [4 Dec 1780]. This stratagem was nothing more than a log of wood, as was said at the time - made to resemble as much as possible a piece of artillery or cannon. The Tories being taken were brought forthwith into camp. After continuing in New Providence for some time the company to which this affiant belonged and others were ordered to take this gang of Tories to Salisbury No. Car. for the purpose of committing them to prison. when they arrived at Salisbury the prison was found to be inadequate to the purpose of properly entertaining the gentlemen & they were all stored away in what was then called a Bull Pen - a large enclosure consisting of stakes or logs of wood of many feet in length planted near each other in the earth. Here we remained guarding the Tories until his Term expired when he was discharged & went home. he reached home about Christmas. Robin Harris was taken sick & left some time before he did - but both reached home about same time. he once had a regular discharge, but never expecting it would be of use to him he took no pains to preserve it.

About the 20th of April 1781 he was again drafted on a Tour of service for 3 mos. Those of his neighbors who were drafted with him and who yet survive are Robin Harris & James Durham of Warren Cty. N. C. His captain's name was Joel Renn [or Wren]. among the officers he recollects

the names of Col. Lenten - Col. Sitgreaves & Col. Jr.[?] Harkins - the last commanded a troop of Horse. After being drafted he marched to Blacks Ferry on Roanoke - thence cross the Ferry into Mecklenburg Va. thence up the Roanoke to Taylor's Ferry - again crossed to the N. C. side, thence down the river to Halifax. Cornwallis was about this time in this section of N. Ca. and it was the object of our men to throw as many obstacles in his way as possible - hence we were ordered to destroy all the boats and flats on the Roanoke before he reached Halifax however he had passed that place & proceeded to Va. From Halifax we were ordered to Tarboro - the object being to check the Tories who had been encouraged by Cornwallis in his way thru the eastern part of the State & had become very troublesome. A few miles below Tarboro at a place called Town creek this affiant & James Durham were discharged from the draft provided they would enlist under one Capt. Twitty, who it was believed was recruiting about this time for a horse company. This affiant does not know whether Captain Twitty belonged to the Regular army or not but he well knows that he & Durham enlisted with him for 18 mos. Robin Harris continued with the company & did not enlist with Capt. Twitty. After enlisting we were ordered to meet at a certain time in Halifax. we met there & were disch'd to meet again at a fixed time. we met again & again, but before we were called into action [illegible word] Cornwallis was taken at little York & the war ended. This affiant has once been in possession of papers which would explain all he has said, but has lost them.

He hereby relinquishes all claims to a pension or annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any State agency whatever -  
Sworn to & subscribed in open Co. this day & year aforesaid. [signed] William P Riggan