

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of William Johnson S8764

Transcribed by Will Graves

State of North Carolina, County of Wilkes

On this 31st day of October 1832 personally appeared in open Court, before the Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions of the County of Wilkes and State of North Carolina, now sitting, William Johnson a resident of the County of Wilkes & State of North Carolina aged Eighty one years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth, on his oath, make the following declaration, in order to attain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7th, 1832.

That he was born in the County of Fauquier in the State of Virginia on the 6th day of April 1751 (the record of which was entered in his Bible by direction of his father) where he continued to reside until he was about 15 or 16 years of age, when he removed with his father to the County of Loudoun in the same State – where he lived about two years, when he again removed with his father to Rowan (now Wilkes) County in North Carolina.

In the spring of the year 1776, the Cherokee Indians were very troublesome on the Western side of the Blue Ridge [Mountains] in that part of the Country particularly now embraced in the limits of Ashe County N. C. and a requisition was made upon the militia of Wilkes County for a company to guard the frontier settlements on the Western side of the ridge from there depredations. This deponent among others volunteered himself in the latter part of May in the year 1776 in the said County of Wilkes, and joined the company of volunteers commanded by Captain Joseph Herndon, and marched directly across the Blue Ridge near to where Ashe Court House now stands, where they found a number of the frontier inhabitants engaged in the erection of a fort – upon reaching that place, Captain Herndon endeavored to prevail upon the inhabitants to abandon the Country and remove to the Eastern side of the mountains, but this they declined to do – and after remaining there for some time in scouring the surrounding country, they returned home and was discharged. In this expedition this deponent believes he served about two weeks.

About the first of August following, this deponent again volunteered himself and joined Captain Benjamin Cleveland's company and rendezvoused near where Wilkes C.H. now stands, and as soon as the company could be properly organized, and the necessary arrangements made, they marched to the Pleasant Gardens in the County of Burke, where they joined the troops under General Rutherford [Griffith Rutherford]. In a few days after joining General Rutherford they marched direct to the Cherokee Towns of Cowee, Watauga, Oconoluflee [?] and some others not particularly recollected – at what was called the Middle Towns, (the troops being a good deal sickly from eating roasting ears & fresh beef) a proposition was made by General Rutherford for a thousand volunteers of the ablest and stoutest man to turn out and march to the Valley Towns – this deponent was one of the number, and as soon as the requisite number was made up they marched immediately to the Valley Towns, a distance of about sixty miles – upon their arrival, they found a few straggling Indians (the balance having fled) whom they captured and kept prisoners – after burning the Towns and destroying their corn and all the property they could find, they returned again to the middle Towns, where they rejoined that portion of the Army they had left – After remaining a few days at the Middle Town until they rested and recruited, they set out upon their return to North Carolina, and after reaching the County of Wilkes, Captain Cleveland discharged his company & this deponent returned home, which place he reached about the last of October, having been gone about three months. From the time that the deponent returned from the Cherokee Nation until about the month of August 1780 embracing a period of nearly four years this deponent performed sundry short tours of duty against the Tories (who at that time were very troublesome) two of which were performed under Captain William Lenoir on the North Western side of the Blue Ridge – in these two tours this deponent believes he served about a month – and the particular periods of the other tours performed against the Tories cannot now be recollected – About

the latter part of August 1780 information was received by Colonel Benjamin Cleveland, that Major Ferguson [Patrick Ferguson] of the British Army was supposed to be approaching North Carolina from the South with a large number of British and Tories – upon which Col. Cleveland issued orders immediately for all the militia in the County of Wilkes to rendezvous at the Court House – this deponent immediately repaired thither and joined the company commanded by Captain William Lenoir – after remaining at Wilkes C. H. for some time until the troops could be organized, they set out upon their march to oppose Major Ferguson – upon the way they were joined by Colonel Campbell [William Campbell], with a Regiment from Virginia, as also by other troops from North Carolina – when they had advanced perhaps to the Cherokee ford on Broad River it was ascertained that Major Ferguson was endeavoring to post himself on King's Mountain – upon which it was proposed that all those who had horses or who could procure them, should proceed with all possible dispatch to engage with him – this deponent having no horse, and not being able to procure one was necessarily left behind with the foot men, and did not reach the battle ground – the battle having been fought – and the Americans being on their return with their prisoners a short distance, when the foot men rejoined them – after rejoining the Army, this deponent was detailed by Colonel Cleveland with others to take charge of the wounded (among whom was a brother¹ of this deponent) and after making what preparations they could, and administering to their wants as much as possible, they set out in advance of the Army and proceeded on until they reached Wilkes C H when Col. Cleveland directed this deponent to convey his brother home, as he was in a very helpless condition, and to remain with him until he should recover – which this deponent accordingly did – In this expedition, this deponent believes he was absent nearly 3 months, from the time that he rendezvoused at Wilkes C. H. until his return to that place – not counting the time that he remained with his brother after their return – though it was counted to him for a three months tour, and he drew pay for that length of time. -- In the spring of the year 1781 when Lord Cornwallis was marching through North Carolina, this deponent again volunteered himself and joined a company commanded by Captain Nathaniel Gordon -- the company to which this deponent belonged endeavored to form a Junction with General Greene's Army, which was supposed to be at that time somewhere on the waters of Dan River in the borders of Virginia – but before they had reached the Shallow Ford of the Yadkin, it was ascertained that Lord Cornwallis was ahead of them, and that he kept scouting and foraging parties constantly scouring the country so that they found it would be impossible to reach General Greene without running a great risk of falling into the hands of the enemy – they accordingly took post at a place in the County of Surry where the village of Jonesville now stands – and where they remained until they were discharged. -- In this expedition this deponent believes he served about two weeks.

This deponent has resided in Wilkes County ever since the revolutionary War, and resides there at this time – He never received any written discharge from the service, nor has he any documentary evidence to prove it – but refers to Mr. Elijah Vikes² who served with him most of the time, whose affidavit is hereto annexed, as a witness who can testify to his service.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present, and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any State.

Sworn to & subscribed the day & year aforesaid.

S/ R. Martin C.W.C.C.

S/ William Johnson

On the day and year aforesaid, personally appeared in open Court before the Court aforesaid, Elijah Vikes who being first duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith, that he served with William Johnson the above applicant during the following tours of service – to wit: first under Captain

1 It is probable that Johnson's brother was Lt. Samuel Johnson (Johnston) FPA W5012 whose wife and son sought a pension. Moss states that Lt. Johnson was wounded in the abdomen during the battle at King's Mountain. Moss, Kings Mtn. Patriots, p. 137.

2 NPA W4368

Joseph Herndon to the Western side of the Blue Ridge against the Cherokee Indians – secondly, under General Rutherford to the Cherokee Nation, and thirdly, under Colonel Cleveland to King's Mountain and further, that the said three several tours of duty as set forth and specified in the foregoing declaration as having been performed by the said William Johnson, were performed by him – and that the remaining tour of duty set forth in the said declaration, he believes (from his knowledge of the character of said William Johnson) was performed by him.

Sworn to & subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

S/ R. Martin C. W. C. C.

S/ Elijah Vickers, X his mark