

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension Application of John Watkins: R11190

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Tennessee}

County of Giles} SS

On this 1st day of August 1842 personally appeared in open court the same being the Circuit Court of the aforesaid County of Giles and a court of record John Watkins a resident of the County and State aforesaid aged Eighty seven years by the 20th day of October next who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832. That he enlisted in the Army of the United States what year he can not precisely state, but knows it was shortly after the commencement of the Revolutionary war, with Archibald Litle [sic: Lytle] then a recruiting officer, who was afterwards Capt & then Col. Litle, and served in the said Col Litle's Regiment, which was the 1st Regiment of the North Carolina Line, under the following named officers. After the promotion of the said Archibald Litle to the office of Colonel [26 Jan 1777] which was in some two or three months after declarant enlisted declarant was in Capt William Litle's [sic: Lytle's] Company in said Colonel Litle's Regiment in which he continued to serve as aforesaid at Wilmington North Carolina (to which place they marched immediately after the troops to which he belonged left Hillsboro [sic: Hillsborough] where they had rendezvous, for about the term of Eighteen months, from which station he was marched to New burn [sic: New Bern] N.C. where his service continued for a period something short of the time he served at Wilmington, when the term of three years for which he had enlisted expired and he was discharged & left the regular service. His discharge was shortly afterwards destroyed by Capt [John] Dooly to whom this declarant handed it on his return homeward from the above service. This declarant was then pressed into the service of the united states again before he had reached home by the said Dooly, who was then Capt. as aforesaid and engaged as he understood in recruiting. Soon after declarant entered this last service as aforesaid he was marched into the state of Georgia and fell under the Command of General [John] Twiggs - And the said Dooly was promoted to the Colonelcy in a horse regiment, declarant continuing to serve until the end of this term of his service which was eight months altogether. During this service declarant was in a skirmish with the Indians in about two miles of the Skull Shoals of Ocone [sic: Oconee] River in which Lieutenant Thomas Dooly the brother of Col Do[oly] was killed under whose immediate Command at the time said skirmish took place [See note below.] declarant[?] was [two words lined through] Into this last service declarant was pressed as aforesaid & never received any bounty he therefore considers that this service was performed as a militia man. C[ol.] Dooly was also killed by one of his men upon which his regiment disbanded and declarant received no discharge. [See note below.] After the expiration of this latter service declarant voluntarily entered the service of the United States again, (for it was then regarded unsafe for any Whig to be out of the service) under the command of Col Phil Waters [Captain Philemon Waters?] in Capt. Williams Company & sometimes with General [Francis] Marion & sometimes with General Sumpter [sic: Thomas Sumter] ranging the country in every direction in pursuit of straggling parties of British & tories. During this service declarant was taken prisoner by the British & tories and confined with his leg in a large log of wood at Ninety Six [Ninety-Six SC] where he was constantly importuned by the British to take the oath of allegiance to the King & they proposed that declarant on that condition should have his liberty - which declarant & his brother who was confined with him as a prisoner refused to do, and after about four weeks confinement & starvation declarant and his brother made their escape from the above confinement and immediately rejoined Col. Water's troops where he remained until the general peace was made. He feels confident that he served in this last service for the term of seven months. Declarant states positively that he was three years in the regular service of the United States as above stated and fifteen months in the militia service of said States as above set forth during all of the aforesaid service Declarant held no civil employment and was a private soldier in said service. Declarant would have long since made application for a pension in consideration of the above

service, but he is wholly illiterate and unacquainted with the pension laws & he was informed that he could not succeed in an application for a pension without procuring a living witness or witnesses to Establish his claim, which he has been ever since the 7th June 1832 and yet is unable to do. He has no documentary evidence, and knows of no person whose testimony he can procure, who can testify to his service. He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present, and he declares that his name is not on the Pension Roll of any agency in any State. Sworn & subscribed the day & year aforesaid John hisXmark Watkins
Questions propounded to John Watkins the above declarant by the aforesaid Court

1st Where and in what year were you born?

Ans. I was born in Fairfax County in the state of Virginia in the year 1755.

2nd. Have you any record of your age, and if so where is it?

Ans. I have not myself but my brother George Watkins had it the last time I saw him which is many years ago he was then living in South Carolina but whether he is yet alive or not I can not tell.

3rd Where were you living when called into service, where have you lived since the Revolutionary war, and where do you now live

Ans I was living Eighteen miles below Hillsboro on the waters of Flat River in North Carolina when I first listed into the service; since the Revolutionary war, I lived about fourteen years after the war on the waters of the Saluda in South Carolina where I married after which my wife having died I lived a while with my mother on the head waters of Edisto in Edgfield [sic: Edgefield] County in the same state afterward I went to where his or[?] my brother lived on the Catwaby [sic: Catawba] River in the Edge of North Carolina, where I lived for Eight or nine months; I then went back to my mothers where I again married & remained there about two years and then went into Greenville County or District in four miles of Greenville Courthouse on the waters of Reedy River and there resided until I removed to Giles County Tennessee which is now about twenty nine years ago where I have lived ever since with the exception of about nine months that I lived in the state of Indiana where I became so [illegible word] that it determined me to move immediately[?] back to Giles County Tenn. where I have continued to live ever since up to the present time as above set forth

4th How were you called into service were you draughted, did you volunteer or were you a substitute, and if a substitute for whom

Ans. I enlisted for the first term of my service as set forth in my declaration in this application, was forced into the second term of my service and volunteered for the last term. and was never a substitute

5th. 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 services.

Ans. I have answered this question as far as I am able at this late period since my memory is so much impaired; see the declaration which has just been made to the court

6th. Did you ever receive a discharge from the service and if so by whom was it given and what has become of it

Ans I received three discharges from the service one from Majr Eaton [probably Pinketham Eaton] from the 1st term of my service. Having been left a short time before the expiration of my first term of service by Col. Litle under Majr. Eaton at Halifax North Carolina to guard the magazine at that place & my time of service expiring at that time my discharge was given me by said Eaton, and that was destroyed in the manner mentioned in my declaration. From my second term of service I received no discharge for the reason mentioned in my declaration also, but I received another discharge from the last term of my service from my Colonel (Waters) & afterwards from the same service I received another discharge from Gen'l. Green [sic: Nathanael Greene] to whose command Water's regiment had become attached for some short time before the expiration of my last service. both of these discharges were destroyed in my Coat pocket by geting wet as I escaped a force[?] of Briar Creek in the state of Georgia during a freshet. I never [illegible word] received a commission never having served the United States as an officer.

7th State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighbourhood and

who can testify as to your character for veracity, and their belief of your services as a soldier of the Revolution.

Ans. Rev'd [first name illegible] Boyer William [last name illegible] Majr Robt R Harney John [last name illegible] Thomas Norwood & many others

Sworn to and subscribed before me the 2nd August 1842

John hisXmark Watkins

NOTES:

According to Patrick O'Kelley in *Nothing but Blood and Slaughter*, Vol. 1 (Booklocker.com, 2004), Captain Thomas Dooly and others were killed near Oconee River in Georgia on 22 July 1777 when they pursued a band of Creek Indians who had stolen their horses. See also the pension application of Thomas Crawley (R2476).

It is usually said that Col. John Dooly was killed in Aug 1780 by Loyalists at his home, Dooly's Fort, now in Elijah Clarke State Park in Lincoln County GA. See O'Kelley, *Nothing but Blood and Slaughter*, Vol. 2.