

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements](#)

Pension Application of **John Darwin**<sup>1</sup> S21155

Transcribed and annotated by Hugh T. Harrington

**State of South Carolina)**

**York District** )::: To wit

On the [blank space –no date] October 1834 personally appeared in open court before B. Earle, one of the Judges of the court of Common Pleas now sitting, John Darwin a resident of York District and State of South Carolina aged seventy-nine last March who being duly sworn according to law makes the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed the 7th June 1832.

I entered the service of the United States as a private in the County of Louisa, State of Virginia on the second day of February 1776 under a enlistment for two years in Captain Thomas Johnston's company in the Third Virginia Regiment commanded by Col. Mercer [Hugh Mercer, later killed at Battle of Princeton]. I marched in said Company to Fredericksburgh, where I joined said Regiment. In a short time, I marched with the Regiment to Alexandria, about the time Colonel Mercer was promoted [June 5, 1776] and when Col. Weadon [George Weedon,] took command of the Regiment, and Captain Powel [Levin Powell] the command of the Company in the place of Captain Johnston. I then marched with the regiment by way of Williamsburgh to the mouth of the Potomac River against Governor Dunmore. We then returned for Alexandria and while at a place called the Northern Neck between the Rappahanock and the Potomac we first heard of the Declaration of Independence, which was enthusiastically celebrated by the Regiment. With forced marches we then moved by way of Alexandria for the city of New York. About this time Col. Weadon was promoted [Weadon was officially promoted to Colonel the same day that the Regiment marched for New York, August 13, 1776] to Brigadier General and Col. Marshall<sup>2</sup> [Thomas Marshall, father of John Marshall] took command of our Regiment. We reached the city of New York on the night of the 15th of September 1776<sup>3</sup> [actually arrived on the 13th]. On the following morning we marched up between the East & North [Hudson] Rivers and found General Washington near fort Washington where he had entrenched himself on the North River. It was at this place I was engaged in a skirmish [3rd VA was in Major General Nathaniel Greene's Division] which took place between a party of British sent from the City of New York to reconnoiter Washington's force, in which I received a musket ball in my right arm which has made me a cripple for life. [Battle of Harlem Heights, September 16, 1776] While I was confined with this wound, and before I had recovered, I was attacked with a spell of the fever and while thus confined at the last mentioned place the British fleet passed up the North River, and Washington marched for the White Plains [Battle of White Plains, October 18, 1776]. I with the rest of the disabled & sick were carried to the Jersey side of the North River, & thence to Philadelphia. I then took the Small Pox<sup>4</sup> and was confined there about three months before I recovered. I next joined Washington's Army at Morristown [winter encampment] in the Jerseys, where the Army remained but a short time after I joined it untill we were marched to Middlebrook near Brunswick where the British had their head

quarters. When the British left the last mentioned place we took up the line of march for Trenton & Philadelphia and I continued with the army and bore an active part, as a private, in the Battle of Brandywine [September 11, 1776, 3rd Va regiment was in Brigadier General William Woodford's Brigade, Major General Adam Stephen's Division]. After this battle I with the army retreated to White Marsh Church - [out of sequence, this encampment Nov. 2 - Dec. 11, 1777] I still continued with the army & fought in the Battle of Germantown [October 4, 1777, 3rd VA in General William Woodford's Brigade but Woodford was not present due to a wound received at Brandywine; Stephen's Division. General Adam Stephen was cashiered Nov. 20th for being drunk at both Brandywine and Germantown]. After this battle we were marched to Valley Forge [out of sequence, he arrived in Valley Forge December 19, 1777] where I remained in winter quarters until I got my discharge from Col. Woodward [this is probably Brigadier General William Woodford], which was on the 3rd day of February 1778. This discharge I have lost years ago; and the only documentary evidence of my service is the affidavit of David Bullock, herewith transmitted. He is the only person now living, that I know of, who knows of my services. He lives in the State of Virginia and County of Louisa. I was born in Louisa County, State of Virginia on the 19th March 1755 where I enlisted. I left Louisa County on 12th October 1778 for York District in South Carolina & arrived there 26th of November 1778. I remained at home in York District from this time until about the year 1780. When I again entered into my country's service as a militia man and a private under a draft for the Citizens of my District [New Acquisition Militia Regiment] and was placed under the Command of Col. [William] Bratton<sup>5</sup>, my Captain's name I have forgot, my first Lieutenant's name was Humphrey Barnett<sup>6</sup>. From York District we marched against Friday's Fort [also called Fort Granby], now called Granby [now Columbia, SC. Siege May 2 – 15, 1781] which is on Congaree River in So Carolina. We laid siege to the Fort<sup>7</sup> [Siege May 2-15, 1781] but was unable to take it until we were joined by Capt. [Lt. Colonel Henry] Lee's [Lee arrived May 14] light horse & then the Fort was surrendered [May 15, 1781]. We then marched towards Ninety-Six now called Cambridge [unsuccessful siege May 22- June 19, 1781] for the purpose of joining General Green [Nathaniel Greene], & we met him either in Newberry or Union District. After meeting & remaining a short time with the General I returned home in York District having been out about three months.

Shortly after I returned home I was again called out under the Command of Colonel [John Moffett] Morphet<sup>8</sup> & marched to Orangeburgh District. We crossed at Granby aiming to attack a fort at Orangeburgh but did not do it [Fort surrendered to Sumter May 11, 1781] We then [illegible] about the county for about six weeks in order to keep the Tories in subjection. I again returned home being out about two months. I now remained at home a few weeks, in which time I made up a Company and took the command of it as Captain & marched them and joined Colonel [Edward] Lacy<sup>9</sup> (but I never got my Commission as Captain) and acting as Captain of my company I marched under Col Lacy to the Salt Catches [Salkehatchie] in South Carolina. After marching through this section of Country for about two months without any engagements I returned home in York District being out about three months. The next tour of duty was under a Draft which I stood in York District, for the term of three months, and I was under the command of Col Lacy and was in an engagement near Brattons, on Turkey Creek<sup>10</sup> in York District. The rest of my time was spent in marching about in the upper part of So Carolina. After this tour I remained at home some two or three months and I again joined Col. Lacy & marched to Bingham's

Church<sup>11</sup> [Biggin Church, July 17, 1781] near Charleston in South Carolina. We had a skirmish near a bridge [Quinby Bridge, July 17, 1781 – Bratton's and Lacy's regiments were both there – also Shubrick's Plantation nearby, same date] on Cooper River. After the skirmish we crossed Santee at Nelson's Ferry. We remained in this section some time & I took sick with the fever & ague & returned to York District & left the army. This was as well as I can recollect about the year 1783. The dates of my service in South Carolina are put down entirely from recollection and are not so well remembered as those of my enlistment of which I had a memorandum & lost it only a few years ago. I have lived in York District where I now live since the Revolutionary War.

If my services entitled me to a pension under the act of congress 1818, I herewith State that I never knew of said Act nor of its Provisions--if I had I certainly would have applied for it, for I am confident that my service & sufferings entitle me to a Pension if there is any man now living is entitled to one; I am a farmer & live in obscurity and not intermingling with the world are the Reasons which prevented me from Knowing of the Act of Congress 1818, for untill the information now received from the War Department I never heard of said Act.

I do hereby relinquish any claim whatever to any 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 & subscribed this  
22nd October 1843 in open court  
S/A. McWhorter/Clerk                      S/**John Darwin**

Affidavit from David Bullock

I David Bullock of the State of Virginia and County of Louisa, aged Seventy two years last April do solemnly swear, that I am well acquainted with John Darwin snr. of South Carolina, that the said Darwin enlisted in the regular service in the Revolutionary War, under the first enlistment from Louisa County, Virginia, under Captain Thomas Johnson, William White was the Lieutenant in said Company, that he marched to Alexandria, and was there transferred to some other Company, the said Lieutenant White was also transferred with the said Darwin and was killed at the battle of Brandy wine, that the said Darwin was wounded in the arm in some of the northern engagements previous to the battle of Brandy wine, but at what place he was wounded this deponent has from the great length of time, now forgot, that the said Darwin fought in the battle of Brandy wine, but received no injury there, that he served two years under the said enlistment and was discharged, that he was engaged afterwards in driving cattle for the use of the Army, but how long this deponent does not recollect, that has forgot the superior Officers under whom he served, that he recollects that of the fifty or sixty odd that enlisted along with the said Darwin, all except thirteen perished before their service expired. Given under my hand this 5th day of November 1833.

S/David Bullock

- <sup>1</sup> John Darwin, 1755-1833, is listed in Bobby Gilmer Moss, *Roster of South Carolina Patriots in the American Revolution*, Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1983, (hereinafter, Moss, *Patriots*), p. 232. Darwin initially served in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Continental Regiment seeing action at Harlem Heights, Brandywine and Germantown. He moved to York District, SC in 1778 where he served as a Lieutenant under Col. Bratton and was at the siege of Friday's Fort. In addition, he served for a short period under Col. Moffett. Later he became a Captain under Major John Wallace and also under Col. Lacey. He was in the engagement at Turkey Creek and probably at Cowpens.
- <sup>2</sup> Sellers, John Robert, PhD Dissertation, "The Virginia Continental Line, 1775-1780," Tulane University, 1969, (hereinafter "Sellers, *Virginia Continental*), p. 62. Thomas Marshall was selected by the Virginia Convention to be the first Major of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Regiment. Marshall was the father of future Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall who also served in the 3<sup>rd</sup> VA.
- <sup>3</sup> Sellers, *Virginia Continental*, p. 152. 3<sup>rd</sup> VA regiment arrived on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September.
- <sup>4</sup> Sellers, *Virginia Continental*, p. 30. Virginia law prohibited the practice of inoculation.
- <sup>5</sup> William Bratton, 1743-1815, is listed in Moss, *Patriots*, p. 96. He served as a Colonel in the militia and was commander of the forces in the action at Williamson's Plantation, 12 July 1780 where he was severely wounded.
- <sup>6</sup> Humphrey Barnett, d. 1826, is listed in Moss, *Patriots*, p. 46. Served under Captains Jacob Barnett and William McCulloch. Under McCulloch he was a Lieutenant. Before and after the fall of Charleston he was in Brandon's regiment.
- <sup>7</sup> Fort Granby, or Friday's Fort, was unsuccessfully under siege February 19-21, 1781 by Sumter. As Darwin refers to Light Horse Harry Lee and the surrender of the fort he clearly means the May 2-15, 1781 siege. See Patrick O'Kelley, *Nothing But Blood and Slaughter*, vl. 3, p.88 and 218.
- <sup>8</sup> John Moffett, born c. 1742 died 1792, is listed in Moss, *Patriots*, p. 690. In Chester District he served as Captain on the Snow Campaign. He was with Sumter during all his movements in 1780 and distinguished himself at Fishing Creek. His company was under Col. Lacy at Kings Mtn. Afterwards he was under Sumter's command and was in the battle of Cowpens. he was a Colonel before the war ended.
- <sup>9</sup> Edward Lacy, 1742-1813, is listed in Moss, *Patriots*, p. 547. At age 13 was at Braddock's Defeat. Age 16 ran away to Chester District, SC. Entered service as a Captain under General Williamson went on Cherokee campaign. He was commander of the Patriots at Huck's Defeat and served with Sumter at Rocky Mount, Carey's Fort, Hanging Rock, and Fishing Creek. He Commanded group "The Chester Troops" at Kings Mtn. Commanded Turkey Creek volunteer militia. He was at Fish Dam Ford, Blackstocks Plantation, Orangeburg, Biggin Church, Quinby Bridge and Eutaw Springs. After the war he moved to Kentucky.
- <sup>10</sup> Turkey Creek, skirmish, September 6, 1781. Loyalist partisan Hezekiah Williams attacked a body of militia who were patrolling on Turkey Creek in Edgefield County. He killed or wounded ten of the Patriots and scattered the rest. See O'Kelley, *Blood*, p. 333. Lacy had a fort on Turkey Creek and there were some minor skirmishes there.
- <sup>11</sup> Biggin's Church, SC, July 16, 1781. Lacy's mounted riflemen involved with Fraser's dragoons. The following day, July 17, 1781 the battles of Quinby Bridge and Shubrick's Plantation, SC took place. Lacy's militias, under command of Sumter, were again engaged. After the battle Sumter marched to Nelson's Ferry. See O'Kelley, *Blood*, pp. 289-299 for descriptions of Biggin's Church, Quinby Bridge and Shubrick's Plantation actions.