

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of Samuel Hillis S2314

HQ14NC

fn21NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

State of Tennessee, Maury County: County Court of said County

On this seventh day of November in the year of our Lord 1836 personally appeared before the Elias Currin Frierson, Alexander Johnson and Andrew Scott Justices of the County Court of said County in open Court Samuel Hillis a resident of Marshall County, which said Marshall County is a new County in which the courts are not yet legally organized – and said Samuel Hillis resides in that part of Marshall which was taken from our said County of Maury in the State of Tennessee, aged 76 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 provision of the act of Congress passed June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States Army in the year 1776 and served as herein after stated, under the officers & for the time as herein after stated (to wit) --

Declarant was born on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of February 1760 in the County of Rowan in the State of North Carolina, at which place Declarant lived until after the close of the War of the American Revolution and until about the year 1786, when declarant moved to Kentucky and settled in a part known as Fayette County. Declarant lived about four years in said Fayette County & then moved to Bourbon County Kentucky where he lived until the year 1810 when he moved to the State of Tennessee and settled where he now lives then Maury County now Marshall as aforesaid where declarant has lived since 1810. He has now no record of his age. Declarant had his age put down in a Bible when declarant was a boy going to school by his school-master, agreeable to the dictation and memory of his father and mother (then living) – but declarant has long been blind -- & after he became blind he gave his Bible to a nephew – but declarant well recollects what age his parents told him & the time they said he was born which is as declarant has above stated.

Declarant was living in Rowan County State of North Carolina, when he entered the service of the United States, that Declarant first volunteered on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July 1776, in said Rowan County under General Rutherford (Griffy Rutherford he believes) [sic, Griffith Rutherford] his Captain's name was William Wilson,<sup>1</sup> Colonel Francis Locke was first Colonel and Alexander Dobbins was Lieutenant Colonel, John Todd was a Lieutenant under Captain Wilson and John Wales was Ensign, James Brannon and James Smith were Majors. Declarant joined the Army under Major Smith in the town of Salisbury in said Rowan County on the said 16<sup>th</sup> day of July 1776. General Rutherford had gone off towards the head of the Catawba River & had left the Majors to raise men & come on after him – in the meantime taking with him Rutherford & Locke all the men that they could then collect & leaving the Majors to raise more, if possible. Majors Smith & Brandon [sic] raised several companies – he recollects Captain Johnson, Captain Lyons & Captain Wilson and one Captain George Henry Barringer -- & a Captain Smith – all these captains had companies & went under Major Smith until they got to where General Rutherford was. Declarant marched with the troops under the Majors aforesaid on the same day he joined (16<sup>th</sup> of July 1776) – to a place near the head of the Catawba River called Pleasant Garden about 120 miles from Salisbury (as well as declarant can recollect) at which place, they found General Rutherford encamped, just at the open in of a rich tract or flat of land called the Pleasant Gardens on Buck Creek – a branch of the Catawba.

Declarant's Captain – Captain Wilson – was sent on in advance of the other troops under Majors Smith & Brandon with his company (Declarant with others) to guard two wagons that were dispatched with provisions to General Rutherford, an express having arrived from Rutherford stating that Rutherford and his men were starving -- & Wilson & his company arrived at Rutherford's Camp about a day before the rest came up. Majors Smith & Brandon were somewhat detained waiting for the different companies that joined them on their march. As Declarant in Wilson's company marched on to

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1 [William Wilson W1116](#)

Rutherford's Camp, he saw four children murdered and lying by the road (the children of a Mr. Burchfield) murdered by the Cherokee Indians – another, a girl of the same Burchfield family was shot through the groin & left for dead but recovered – several bodies of murdered men were found before they arrived at Rutherford's Camp. Declarant thinks it was four or five days after they started from Salisbury before they got to Rutherford's Camp. And that they remained at said Camp but a few days or a short time when Rutherford moved us down about 2 miles close to a Fort upon the bank of the Catawba called Cathey's Fort – and shortly after this the men from Guilford County under Colonel Martin arrived. Rutherford & Locke left the men encamped near said Fort & went home to arrange their business before they started with the Army over the mountain after the Indians. Rutherford and Locke was at a meeting house called Cathey's Meeting House when they first heard of the outrages committed by the Indians that caused this campaign -- & they started from the meeting house with what men that he is could collect – to the relief of the people in the country where the Indians were murdering them. While Rutherford & Locke were gone the provisions were coming in – one Robert King [could be Kay or Key] was commissary. Rutherford & Locke were gone but a few days – after the return of Rutherford & Locke the Army waited but a few days until it marched for the Indian towns. It was said that the Army there amounted to 1700 men -- & as well as declarant recollects there were as stated among the Army 1700 horses packed with provisions – the Army crossed the Blue Ridge at the Gap at the head of the Catawba and went down Swannanoa [River] nearly to its mouth & then crossed French Broad River & then across Pigeon River – and then across another mountain, in the gap of which the spies that went before the Army were attacked by the enemy, and one Billy Alexander was shot, the ball went in about his shoe buckle and out at his heel -- & made him lame ever afterwards, no other man was touched – the Indians were concealed near the turn of the Ridge and in a few jumps were out of sight – so that none of them were killed – The Army crossed a little River named Tuckasegee before Billy Alexander was shot. After Billy Alexander was shot the Army went on to the Tennessee River to the Cowee towns. We found the towns evacuated – the Indians had left the towns the day before & some of their houses were burnt – the storehouses were Burnt & some of the other houses had fire in them – we found some of the Indians corn growing and some hard and some in roasting ears. We were cut down their corn & used what we roasted & threw the balance in the River – we burnt their towns. The Army lived upon the sweet potatoes of the Indians. After the taking of the Cowee towns General Rutherford left the baggage under a guard & took the balance of the Army, went over to the towns called Valley towns or Hiwassee towns – Rutherford came back with some prisoners a white man named Scott and one named Hicks – and some Indian prisoners – he understood that Rutherford burnt all the towns he came to. Declarant was at the taking of & burning of five or six of the Cowee towns. The Army then returned to their home – crossed the main mountain where they crossed going out. The Army was discharged about the place called Pleasant Gardens & declarant got home on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of October 1776 – having been just three months under in service. Sometime in 1779 about June – Captain Wilson called a muster & told us that four men were called for out of his company to go to keep the Tories in subjection in Lincoln County & the Captain told us if four of us would volunteer it should stand for a tour of duty-- accordingly Alexander McNairy, Robert McBride & Thomas Ferguson & Declarant volunteered – Declarant recollects that on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 1779 a great hailstorm took place and on the next day he left home for the trip against the Tories – recollects the road was covered with green leaves. They rendezvoused at Sherrill's Ford upon the Catawba River – under the same Colonel Locke – about 120 men were at said Ford. Declarant was under Captain Gilbert Falls who was afterwards killed – they marched thence to Major Wilthong's – some more men about Major Wilthong's joined Locke's Army – a Major Davidson a brother to the General of that name that was killed was also along with Locke – from Major Wilthong's we marched up the Catawba up the South fork of the Catawba – sending out scouts through the Tories settlements endeavoring to scare them into subjection. We went near to the head of the South fork of Catawba & took a sweep round the country back to Major Wilthong's – during this trip we took a William Ramsey, a George Sealy and

Adam Overwinter, a Dutchman & some others Tories prisoners. Ramsey made his escape & Captain McCorkle, Alexander McNairy & Robin Brazil & Declarant were sent in pursuit but returned without being able to take him. Colonel Locke after we had got back to Wilthong's took a John Clemmens and went after Ramsey & took him but Ramsey again made his escape. Sealy & Overwinters cursed some of our officers and we petitioned the officers and they permitted the soldiers to make them run the gauntlet, we all got switches and whipped them through. From Wilthong's, Locke sent a detachment up the main Catawba under a Captain McMullen – of which declarant was one – in all of about 15 men. We did nothing but threaten the Tories, we came back to Sherrill's Ford & again met Locke. Locke then discharge us -- & Declarant then went home. Declarant cannot precisely recollect how long we was in service this trip but believes he was in service from 14 June until some time in the early part of August ensuing – about 1 ½ months – shortly after this trip – a call was made for some men to guard the jail in the town of Salisbury, said Jail contained some Tory prisoners, the jail was very much crowded & it was feared that the Tories would break the jail. Captain Wilson told his men that if they would volunteer to guard the jail it should stand for a tour of duty. Declarant & his brother Robert, and three other volunteered & went to Salisbury -- & went under the command of Captain George Lowman & guarded said jail for a period not less than seven weeks – the precise period he cannot recollect. Declarant remained as a guard until the trial of the prisoners – 10 of the prisoners were condemned. The Governor reprieved seven & the other three were along. Richardson, Fisher & Armstrong were hung. Declarant was discharged a few days before the hanging – the hanging took place on the fifth day of November 1779 – and that evening declarant had a fight with one Richie Maguire & got both his eyes put out & has never seen the light of day since & has never served since – the whole of the above time for which declarant served amounts [a fold in the paper obscures the text for several words] months and some days. Declarant always volunteered & was never a substitute – he never was under any of the regular officers -- & saw none of them while he was in service. Declarant never received a written discharge and has no documentary testimony of his services. That Robert McCord a minister of the Gospel and Samuel McConnel both residents of the same neighborhood with declarant will testify as to my character for veracity and their belief of my services as a soldier of the Revolution. Declarant knows of no one living by whom he can prove his services but David Dobbins who was along in the three months trip first spoke above – the two last trips he knows of no one living by whom he can prove them. Declarant some time in 1833 as well as he recollects made out a declaration for to obtain the benefit of said act -- & employed one Mr. Martin to send it on to the War Department but after waiting two or three years he got Colonel Polk to write in for him and make inquiry about the matter & the enclosed letter was received – declarant would have applied earlier but that he did not know but his first declaration had been received & rejected.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or an annuity except the present & he declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any Agency of any State.

S/ Samuel Hillis, X his mark

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid in open Court.

S/ Wm E. Erwin, Clerk

[Robert McCord, a clergyman, and Samuel McConnell gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

David Dobbins<sup>2</sup> a resident of Maury County and a credible man makes oath that he was in the Army under General Rutherford as detailed in the foregoing declaration that he well recollects that this same Samuel Hillis was along with that campaign & served as he therein states – that he has always believed said Hillis to be a credible man & has full faith & credit in what he says.

Sworn to & subscribed the day & year aforesaid in open Court.

S/ David Dobbins

S/ Wm E. Erwin, Clerk