

# Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Annotated Pension Affidavit of Richard Clinton  
S21113

**Transcribed by Joan A. Inabinet &  
Annotated by Charles B. Baxley**

An interesting document describing Revolutionary War Patriot militia activity in South Carolina was called to my attention by Joan Inabinet who discovered it in a family's files in the Camden Archives. Joan transcribed the document and invited me to annotate it for the Kershaw County Historical Society's publication, *Update*.

Among genealogical records in the "Clanton" family folder is a photocopy of the handwritten transcript of the Revolutionary War pension application filed in Davidson County, Tennessee on June 7, 1832, for "Richard Clinton," then aged 77 years.

Inabinet pointed out that the phonetical spellings of persons and places in the Camden vicinity indicate that the Tennessee transcriber was himself unfamiliar with the names and was probably making a literal record of the pronunciation of Richard Clinton, who signing with an X, was perhaps not literate himself. The fact that the surname where it occurs in the Kershaw County, SC area is recorded as "Clanton" rather than "Clinton" also suggests phonetical transcription.

Congress passed the Revolutionary War veterans pension act in 1832, some 50 years after the war's end. Over 10,000 veterans and their widows applied for these pensions and left historians a treasure of valuable affidavits supporting their claims of Revolutionary War service. No doubt these were recollections refreshed by consultations with history books, other veterans and often enhanced by coaching and storytelling over the years, but for document less militiamen, they were essential for establishment of the requisite Revolutionary War service to qualify for the pension.

The following affidavit was typed as exactly as possible from the photocopy, indicating additional paragraphs added for ease of reading with this symbol: []. My comments and explanations have been added in square brackets and italicized text [*like this*].

## Declaration

In order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress, passed June 7th 1832

State of Tennessee

Davidson County

On this 10 day of December 1834 personally appeared in open Court before the Judge of the Circuit Court of Davidson County and State of Tennessee Richard Clinton aged Seventy Seven 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 entered the service of the United States in the Spring of 1779 in the station of a private draftsman from the town of Camden [*Camden*], County of Cashaw [*Kershaw*] in South Carolina he was about twenty three years of age when he was first draughted [*drafted*] on Beaver Creek in Cashaw County, and the Company there draughted were placed under the command of **Captain McKorkle** who marched directly for Camden & there awaited the rendezvous of some other companies from other States

[] here we lay for about two weeks when a full meeting of all the expected forces had assembled, when all started off under the Command of Colonel Marshall, a militia colonel, [*Col. John Marshall, was a Captain, commanded a company in Col. Joseph Kershaw's Camden District Patriot militia regiment.. After the war, Col. Marshall served as a justice of the peace in Lancaster County, SC.*] for the head quarters of the Regular Army under the officers Linkhorn [*Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, Patriot commander Southern Department until his surrender in Charleston May 12, 1780*], Mootery

[*B. Gen. William Moultrie, Patriot second-in-command of the Southern Continental Army until his capture May 12, 1780*], & Williamson [*B. Gen. Andrew Williamson, commander Ninety-Six District Militia Brigade*]*—*what was the respective station of each applicant does not now remember if he ever knew—The company in which applicant was placed at Cambden (**then known by the name of Pine tree**), being so very small it was thought better upon consultation that Capt. McKorkle should resign his Captainship over said Company, and it was thereby placed under some other Captain, whose forces were also small, by which a full number was completed—the name of this officer applicant does not know since he was with him so short a time as will be explained more at large hereafter:

[]In the meanwhile the Army under Col. Marshall reached the Black swamp [*Black Swamp, on the Savannah River, about 25 miles upstream from Purysburg, now Hardeeville, SC*] where was encamped the regular officers under the aforementioned officers Sinkl--- [*maybe James Sinkler of Eutaw Springs, SC*], Williamson [*Gen. Andrew Williamson*] & Wooten—the distance from Cambden to the Black swamp was about 200 miles. [*This was about April 20, 1779.*] The British forces had possession of Savanna [*Savannah*] in Georgia of the object of the Continental Army, seemed to be on attack upon them. After the Regiment under Col. Marshall had reached Black swamp, the Regular Army remained stationary for two weeks, making preparations to carry into operation the intended movements. After which time the main Army under the aforesaid officers moved off towards August in Georgia, leaving behind them at Black swamp of their aidecamps, Laurience [*Col. John Laurens, formally an aide-de-camp to Gen. George Washington*] by name, with all the militia of the Southern States.

[]On the very day of the removal of the Continental Army, our Scouts brought intelligence of the approach of the British Army. A general p[ause?] prevailed amongst our Army, occasioned by certain knowledge of our force being inadequate to meet them on the field—A hasty retreat was therefore resolved upon, and was carried into execution by Aidecamp Laurence [*Col. John Laurens. This occurred on April 28, 1779.*]*—*And directed our course towards Charleston, and was pursued with great eagerness by the British into the very suburb of the City—[*This describes the unsuccessful campaign of British Maj. Gen. Augustine Prevost against Charleston on May 11-12, 1779.*]

[]It was about 250 miles from the Black swamp to Charleston [*in reality, about 70 miles*] which was run over in the shortest space of time, cutting down & destroying every bridge or any thing else that would in the least retard the march of the pursuing foe. The British hovered around Charleston for about three weeks from their first appearance, and then proceeded to Stouough [*Stono Ferry over the Stono River, just SE of Rantowls off of US 17, South of Charleston, S.C. Patriots fought a battle against retreating British on June 20, 1779.*] about 30 miles, where their shipping met them & carried them off.

[]Aidecamp Laurience [*Col. John Laurens*] then discharged all the militia, so placed under his command at Black swamp, giving to applicant a written discharge, which has been lost, not deeming it of any value, or any other writing which he may have occasion to speak of hereafter—Applicant was draughted for three months and served perhaps something more—

Applicant after his di[s]charge at Charleston, returned to Camden & there remained for at least 9 months, when the British having been successful in taking Charleston, [*Charleston fell to a combined Naval and Army assault lead by British Lt. Gen. Henry Clinton and Admiral Arbuthnot on May 12, 1780*] covered almost the whole of the State of So. Carolina with their marauders. Camden soon became a stand for them, & applicant was necessarily compelled to surrender his home [*Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton and his loyalist British Legion entered Camden on May 29, 1780 chasing SC Gov. John Rutledge and Col. Abraham Buford.*]*—*he betook himself to a --- - company of men, under Capt. [*Luke*] Petty [*also seen as "Petit," maybe a former Continental cavalry officer with B. Gen. "Count" Cashmir Pulaski's Legion, which was decimated at the Battle of Savannah Oct. 9, 1779 or there was a local Camden District Patriot*

*militia Captain named Petty*] & Majr. Davie [*Maj. William Richardson Davie, Mecklenburg NC Militia cavalry*], of about [60?] men who done all the mischief in the power, by harrassing the British in every possible way within the compass of a fair area—However, applicant will say that the mischief they done the British was very considerable when the good they done for thier Country was in proportion—

[]In one of their excursions, which shall soon be related, applicant was so unfortunate as to lose his finger. Proceeding upon the principle laid down of doing all the injury in our power to our enemies & benefitting our Country & ourselves as much as possible, we crossed one evening a rock called flat rock [*still called Flat Rock, located on the Flat Rock Road in northern Kershaw County, site of a granite quarry*] about a quarter of a mile in length, & thence poceeded a few steps into a very wooded Country where the British passed with their provisions, forage &c for the detachment of their Army stationed at the hanging rock. [*This interdiction took place on July 21, 1780.*]

[]On the evening spoken of, the British had passing a couple of waggons loaded with a hogshead of rum in each. We seized upon these with the drivers & attendants-- made them all [*13 in number*] prisoners and emptied the Contents of the hogsheads upon the earth. After doing this, we were making our way to the head quarters of Genl Sumpter's army in the Wax-saw [*Waxhaws or Catawba Indian Nation in upper Lancaster County, SC and eastern York County "the New Acquisition District" along the Catawba River*] settlement, when having crossed the flat rock [*in order to avoid detection, the rock serving the prints of the horses feet*], & had proceeded, say 6 miles from the Rock, when we came across a man by the name of Shaw.

[]Some of the company proposed carrying him along with us for that evening & then loosing him but others proposed swearing him, which was accordingly done. Major Davie stepped up to him & made him take a Solemn oath that he would not let the British know of our being in the Country & having the prisoners until the rise of the sun on the morrow, & then discharged him—he was then dismissed, & applicant has since heard, as soon as let go, that the faithless being run with all his speed to the hanging rock, which was about 6 miles off & informed the British of every thing we could have wished them not to know--

[]that night we stopped to procure some provisions for ourselves, & food for our horses, started off from the place, through a lane, at the end of which we were alarmed by the report of firearms—we fled in precipitation, not knowing from whence they proceed & not doubting but that we had been betrayed by this faithless man alreedy spoken of—such occurrences of faithlessness happening every day-- Every man amongst us commenced shifting for himself, as we did not see each other until we had rendezvoused the next day at Genl Sumpter [*B. Gen. Thomas Sumter, elected commadant of the South Carolina Militia*] camp. 2 of our men was killed & all the prisoners lost save three—In this skirmish, applicant lost his finger. Capt. Petty was also shot in the arm, which caused the loss of it—

When the battle of Eutaw springs [*Sept. 8, 1781*] was fought, Genl Sumpter made an attempt to arrive there to assist the American Army as much as possible & rushed all haste from the Wax-saw settlement, but when he arrived at the --- of battle, it was over, the British under Lord Rawdon [*Col. Francis Rawdon-Hastings, British commandant of Royal South Carolina was not present at Eutaw Springs for this battle; Rawdon, sick sailed for England leaving Lt. Col. Alexander Stewart in command. Lt. Col. Stewart commanded the British forces at Eutaw Springs.*] having been defeated—Applicant was with Genl Sumpter in these marches—The whole American forces then pursued the retreating foe, as far as Broughton's swamp, when it was accessed inexpedient to pursue them any farther, they having gained so great a distance upon us—here, at Broughton's swamp, Genl. Sumpter dismissed all of this men, giving to none of them, as applicant knows of, a written discharge—

[]Applicant served, he believes about 6 months in these excursionary services—making with the first three months 9 months service—Applicant has no documentary evidence, that he knows of no person, whose testimony he can procure, who can testify to his service—Applicant upon reflection, will state most positively that he

served at least 9 months—He hereby releaves every claim whatever to a pension-- and believes that his name is not on the pensioners of the agency of any State his

Richard X Clinton  
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