

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

[Transcriber's note: This application was difficult to decipher. The reader will notice a number of question marks indicating text I was unsure of, but this applicant is a great storyteller and deserves to be allowed to tell his story, albeit challenging to decipher.]

Pension application of David Blalock (Blalack) S3011

f50NC

Transcribed by Will Graves

rev'd 9/14/10 & 7/28/14

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Where the meaning is not compromised by adhering to the spelling, punctuation or grammar, no change has been made. Corrections or additional notes have been inserted within brackets or footnotes. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. A bracketed question mark indicates that the word or words preceding it represent(s) a guess by me. The word 'illegible' or 'indecipherable' appearing in brackets indicates that at the time I made the transcription, I was unable to decipher the word or phrase in question. Only materials pertinent to the military service of the veteran and to contemporary events have been transcribed. Affidavits that provide additional information on these events are included and genealogical information is abstracted, while standard, 'boilerplate' affidavits and attestations related solely to the application, and later nineteenth and twentieth century research requests for information have been omitted. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading skills fail to catch all misinterpretations. Also, dates or numbers which the software treats as numerals rather than words are not corrected: for example, the software transcribes "the eighth of June one thousand eighty six" as "the 8th of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

State of Tennessee, Fayette County

On this ___ day of ___ 1833 David Blalock, a citizen of Fayette County, State of Tennessee, on oath made the following declaration: I am eighty two years of age in March last passed and served in the revolutionary war three tours in defense of the Liberty of my country. At an early period, several years before the war began, my father was a regulator in the State of North Carolina and was killed in a skirmish with some british troops [while he was] attempting to supply the regulators. My father's house was burned and my mother left helpless. This infused into my mind an insatiate [?]¹ feeling against that nation which I shall carry with me to my grave.

At the breaking out of the war, I was living with my mother at a place called Hickory Mountain ten miles from Pitsboro [Pittsboro] in Chatham County, State of North Carolina.

I volunteered and I joined the state troops at Pittsboro (year not recollected) from whence we moved to Ramsay Mills [sic, Ramsey's Mill] in the same county which was our place of rendezvous. I served the first tour of three months marching backwards and forwards over the western part of South Carolina and some parts of North Carolina. There were no english [English] troops in the parts of those states at that time and we were employed chiefly in keeping down the Tories who were numerous and very hostile. I served my time out under ~~in~~ Captain Nash's company: Abner Nash,² I think, and with a Spencer Stewart as Lieutenant, and [I] was discharged by order from General Ramsay³ [Ambrose Ramsey] at Ramsey's Mill in Chatham County. I did not preserve my discharge.



¹

² This is not the Abner Nash who served as one of North Carolina's governors during the Revolution. Governor Nash (c 1740-1786) survived the war. Later in this declaration, the declarant states that the Captain Nash under whom he served was killed at the Battle of Lindley's Mill on September 13, 1781. The declarant may have intended to refer to Captain Abner Hill who was one of the captains elected by his company to serve in the Chatham County militia early in the war. For an excellent discussion of the role played by Chatham County and its residents in the Revolution, see, Walter D. Siler, A History of Chatham County, North Carolina, posted at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~ncchatha/siler.htm>.

³ At the beginning of the Revolutionary War, Ramsey was a colonel and the commanding officer of the Chatham County militia. By the time of his capture by Col. David Fanning at the Chatham County Court House

The second service I engaged in was a tour of nine months; I think in the regular continental line. At all events, I was called a regular. I enlisted under a recruiting officer (his name not recollected) for the term of nine months at my usual place at Pittsboro, Chatham County, N.C. and was marched with about 150 others to the rendezvous at R. Mills [Ramsey's Mill] where I was put under the command of a brave fellow, Captain Gholson [also spelled William Goldston], a small man with red hair and a Lieutenant Robinson. I recollect Gholson better than any other officer in the whole service but General Ramsey because I served longer under him and liked him better. This company performed much detached service and mostly off on scouting excursions; we had much small and irregular skirmishing with the Tories. We attacked them in a swamp above Georgetown and drove them out of their ambush. We were most of the time in South Carolina. I recollect we drove them out of a heavy swamp called Raft Swamp [September 1, 1781]. Shortly after this we marched to the northern part of the state and joined Colonel Cleveland [Benjamin Cleveland].

There we fought in the battle of King's Mountain [October 7, 1780]. There were only a company or so of Regulars in that Battle besides Gholson, the balance picked up militia.

This battle, as well as I recollect, was about mid-day and lasted neigh an hour. The company I was in was bore hardest upon and was forced for a short time to retreat but we recruited and renewed an irregular line. We killed Ferguson [Patrick Ferguson] and defeated his band. As soon as we buried the dead we took towards the sea shore under Captain Gholson and Col. Cleveland, I think, went up towards the mountains. On our return to the swamps, we found no more organized bodies of Tories setting up resistance to us. From this quarter we were marched back to Chatham County and discharged at R's Mills [Ramsey's Mill]. I did not preserve my discharge. This was the last service performed under my brave Captain Gholson.

I knew him after we had triumphed over our enemies and gained our independence. He settled in Chatham County just above the mouth of Rocky River where it empties into Deep River.

I shall always recollect one incident in my life as it is impressed indelibly on my mind.

I was sent under a Captain Page on a scouting service from the main command. We got one hundred miles or so from the main band when we lodged in a flat plain during the night. On the next morning, there came to camp before sunrise a little old man under much trepidation. It was a drizzly morning. He called for Captain Page and told the gallant captain that we should shortly be beset by a host of British troops. The news fled through the little band like lightning. We prepared ourselves for battle as soon as possible and were standing waiting for the charge of the enemy. In a short time, two persons dressed in red made their appearance approaching slowly on horseback. The gallant captain had by this time mounted his lofty steed which had been picking forage by a sapling to which he had been confined. The Red coats came on. The sight was too Bloody for our officer's nerves. He wheeled his charger and giving the word of command to his horse instead of his men, ["Go Black,["] he drove his rowels into the sides of Black and in a moment was lost to our sight from the mists of the morning.

on July 17, 1781, he had been promoted to brigadier general in the militia. He was the owner of Ramsey's Mill on Deep River, the site on an engagement March 19, 1781.]

We felt for a moment as much confused as a swarm of bees who had lost their king leader—But the Lieutenant took the command. We were put in battle array, and soon up came the enemy. They were two neighborhood ladies with the red cloaks on which were fashionable at that day.

Unnumbered curses were heaped upon the valiant Captain Page.

We knew not what to do. We waited four days to see if he would not return – But he came not – we did not know on what service we were ordered and started back for Chatham. We traced the Captain. He lost his hat that morning and was seen flying through the villages with a handkerchief on his head, on his bold black [horse]. He did not stop on the way until he got back to Chatham where he announced the sad news that we were surprised of a foggy morning in our tents by the British and Tories and cut to pieces – that the whole troop was slaughtered and that he was the only living soul that escaped being cut to pieces.

When we got back, all Chatham was in grief about our ill-starred fate. It was said and believed that on the morning of the fight the Captain's nerves were so much affected that he found it impossible to retain his excrements—and that his pantaloons stood in need of washer woman's care. He did not stop to have them cleaned until he reached the barracks.

The tale was told on this gallant soldier. He soon retreated from the public eye. As soon as he could, he fled to the western country and died in Davidson County as I am informed.

I was long taunted as one of Page's men.

I had been so ferocious on some of the Tories that I had become with some of them a selected victim of revenge. I had once on an occasion caught a certain Captain Walker of Drowning Creek without arms and off from his traitor crew and beat him most sorely with stones – He long meditated revenge – I found it unsafe to stay out of the barracks so I went to them which were about five miles from my mother's place [at] Hickory Mountain at a place called Lion's [?] old Fields in Chatham [County, NC].

I got a passport for an absence for a day or so and went down to a neighbor of my mother's by the name of Davson⁴ [? Davidson or Davison]. The news reached Walker through a slave that I was at Davson, an old grizzled Whig. They set off. I was always on the watch. I spied their approach at a distance and fled to a thicket and placed myself [at] a well known hiding place in the root of a hollow poplar. They surrounded the house; searched the house & swore they would shave the old rebel [?] head from his shoulders if he did not show where I was. But the truth he did not know. They then scoured the woods; they came all around me and I nearly believed one [of] them had got me. My hair stood on end for I knew that I would not live two minutes after I was detected.

I was nearly starved to death in that hollow poplar tree for I was detained there near two days. At length they concluded that I had made my escape to the barracks and quit the place.

I then went on safely to the barracks and I did not linger on the way. I shall never forget the hollow tree whilst I recollect a base Tory.

My last period of service was [a] 3 months tour. I was drafted in the state troops at Pittsboro [and] marched to the general rendezvous [at] Ramsey's Mill and from there to the barracks to be ready for a call.

4 *Davidson*

The first excursion was to meet Col. Fanny [sic, David Fanning], a noted Tory. News arrived at about midnight that the Colonel had plundered Hillsboro [September 12, 1781] and was making his way for the east now.

That he would be at Cane Creek better known by the name of Lindly [sic, Lindley's] Creek soon.

We started and met them. We had a desperate encounter [Lindley's Mill, September 13, 1781] for a few moments. ~~They broke our line once; dispersed our men very soon~~ They were said to be six or eight hundred strong, we were much less numerous than they—we were commanded by General Butler [John Butler] and Cols. Nall [John Nall] and Luttrell [John Luttrell]—my Captain was Matt[word runs off edge of the page]w Jones [probably Matthew Jones]—and Lieutenant Rob Jones [Robert Jones], a brother. We met them about one hour by sun on the morning. They were making their way towards the sea shore. We attempted to stop their passage by the creek side.

They made a desperate charge upon us—Cols Nall and Luttrell and my Captain in the first tour of three months, Nash [Abner Nash], fell. I deeply regretted Nash for he was a good man and brave soldier. The death of our officers insured our total defeat, but the Tory Colonel made no halt to bury the dead but passed right off. In counting the dead we found we had lost fifty and had killed fifteen Tories.

We buried the dead on the creek side, putting all the Tories into one pit, and marched back to the barracks at Loo's [?]⁵ Old Fields.

There I remained until an order came from [? looks like "Washing" possibly "Washington"?] to General Ramsey to send as many troops as could be raised to assist in the taking of Cornwallis.

I was put into Captain Dilliard's Company under the Regiment of Col. Roger Griffis [Roger Griffith]. We started on hard and fatiguing marches but by this time we got half way to Little York an express came informing us of the glorious capture of Lord Cornwallis. We were drawn into a hollow charge [?]⁶ and our colonel informed us of the long wished for news – the probable end of all our toils and the happy possession of our liberty. We fired a round of musketry and rested upon our arms.

We rested there a day and wheeled for home and I now felt what I had not felt for years before—that myself and my country's liberty were safe. I took my final leave of the war at Ramsey's Mill by a general discharge from Ramsey.

Never expecting to have any use for these discharges, I have kept none of them.

This is the most perfect narrative that I can now give of the events that I knew in the war. I am eighty years of age, very infirm, and have lost my memory. I have forgot all about dates and don't know the date of my entrance into service or my discharges at any time. I cannot state much about my officers except those immediately over me as I was shifted about from one commanding officer to another. I was under at times Gen. Butler, Ramsey, Brinkly, Col. Tailor [Taylor?], Nall, Luttrell, Cleveland at the battle.

5

6

Looz
Charge

I dare say I have transposed some events, but have given those events only, detached as they may be, which have made an indelible impression on my mind.

I have served two tours of three months each and one of nine months as the most substantial fact that I can relate and with most certainty.

I hereby relinquish all claims to any other pension than that I now claim of my country and my name is not to my knowledge on the pension roll of any agency of any state.

1st Question: When and where were you born? In Brunswick County, Va. 1752

2nd: Where were you called into service? I volunteered the first three months – In the second tour of nine months, I volunteered. And the last tour of three months I was drafted.

[3rd.:] Where do you live and where have you lived since the war? I stated that I lived on Hickory Mountain N. C., Chatham County during the war. I now live in Fayette County on Muddy Creek. I lived about 15 years on Haw River – I went from there to Montgomery County, N.C. From there I came to Tennessee, Rutherford's County; From there to Franklin County; From there to Lincoln [County] and from there to Fayette County District where I now reside.

[4th.:] Have you any record of your age? If so where is it? Answer: I have not. My brother took it with him to Little Miami [?] ⁷ in Ohio State.

[5th.:] State some of the Regular Officers and such militia and Continental regulars as you may recollect. Answer: I have stated all I can recollect in my declaration.

[6th.:] Question: Where are your discharges? Ans: I have lost them. I have stated all I recollect about them in my declaration. I was engaged in no civil pursuit during the war but simply as a common volunteer in the ranks.

[7th.:] State the names of the persons who are known to you in your present neighborhood who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief as to your services as soldier. Answer: Josiah Halty, a member of the Legislature of Tennessee whose affidavit is annexed. William Myrick, Jehu Smart, Edmund Rives.

S/ David Blalock, X his mark

Sworn to in open Court this 15th day of October, 1833

S/ Thos. C. Hudson, Clerk

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Of this applicant states that he knows of no clergyman in his neighborhood by whom he can prove the facts required in the laws for revolutionary applicants.

S/ David Laylock [sic], X his mark

Sworn to and subscribed in open Court 17th of January 1834

S/ Thomas C Hudson, Clerk

[p 14: On September 10, 1857 in Shelby County Tennessee, Margaret Robinson one of the surviving children of David Blalock filed a power of attorney in which she states that she and her sister Mary Webb are the only two surviving children of the veteran; that her father died

leaving no widow surviving him; that he died on February 28, 1842. She signed this document with her mark.]

[p 25]

State of North Carolina Secretary's Office

I William Hill Secretary of State in and for the State aforesaid do certify that it appears from a list of settlements of the Army accounts for services performed in the Continental line of this State in the revolutionary war that David Blalock was allowed for his services the sum of 41 pounds 15 shillings and one penny (£41.15.1).

Given under my hand this 7th day of April 1834

S/ Wm Hill

The militia during the revolution were drafted to serve at different periods 9, 12 & 18 months.

S/ Wm Hill

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$40 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for one year service in the North Carolina militia as a private.]