

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Francis Coley S3197

VA NC

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

On this 28th day of November 1833 personally appeared in open Court before the wosshipfull Exeum Whitly, Solomon Debow and John Chambers justices of the Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions for the County of Smith in the State of Tennessee the same being a Court of record, Francis Coley aged 77 years according to the family Register a resident of the said County of Smith who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtaine the benifit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832. That he entered the service fo the United States in the Revolutionary War as well as he remembers from old age and the consiquent looss of memory the 18 of September 1776 that he volunteered as a minute man in the militia raised in Charles City County in the State of Virginia at the time aforesaid and was attached to the Company commanded by Captaine Richard Taylor the company rendesvoused at Charles City Court house and from there marched to a place called Sandy Point on James river Va. (just above old James Town) where Barracks were built and where the Corps to which Declarent belonged togeather with other Troops were stationed – the Military forces at this point were under the command of Major Edler perhaps the command in chief of the Derission was Genl [Thomas] Nelson who resided at Little York – but of this he cannot speak with certainty. the object of Troops being stationed at this Point was, to cut off the supplies of provissions which might be attempted to be furnished the Brittish enemy and to prevent the passage of vessels or any kind of craft up and down the river while stationed there they brought in a vessel loaded with flour this ship of flour was recaptured by two Brittish Ships that sailed in and after considerable resistance and a smart action between his Corps on land at the Fortress and the Brittish on board of their Ships. Declarent volunteered in this service for twelve months he was however only detained 8 months & 15 days in constant and active service and was discharged by Major Edler and returned home to Charles City County. Declarent was againe called into service by being drafted in the militia raised in Charles City County in the State of Virginia the last of July or the first of August 1778 and was attached to the Company commanded by Captaine Peter Royster – his company rendesvoused at Charles City Courthouse and marched from there to Williamsburg in Va. the then seat of Government of Virginia – there his corps joined other Militia forces and some Regular Troops that were stationed there for the purpose of guarding the public records, Defending the Town and the person of the Governour and there held in readiness to do any other service they might be called on to perform. Declarent was engaged in this Sirvice for thee months and was discharged and returned home to Charles City County. in the year 1779 Declarent emigrated to the County of Halifax in the State of North Carolina in the month of October 1779 he volunteerd under Captaine Thomas Scurlock for six months in the militia raised in that County his Company rendesvoused at Halifax Court House and there joined the Troops raised for the Southern Expedition and was placed under the command of Generals [John] Ashe & Eaton [sic: Col. Pinketham Eaton], Colos. Etherton and [James] Clinch & Major Alston [possibly Col. Philip Alston] the army marched through North and South Carolina into the State of Georgia crossed the Savannah river and fought the battle of Brier Creek [Briar Creek, 3 Mar 1779]. then recrossed the said river at the mouth of Brier Creek marched to Purisburg where the Troops under the command of Genl Lincoln were stationed. there his Corps remained until he was discharged having in this tour of duty seved six months. after Declarent was discharged he againe returned to Virginia and settled in Brunswick County and entered upon the business of an overseer for one Olben Wyrick[?] of that County. while living in Brunswick County, Declarent againe volunteered under Captaine William Harrison for six months Rendesvoused at Geesbridge[?] and marched from there to a place called the High Rock ford on Haw River in North Carolina [3 mi W of

Matkins] where his Corps joined the maine Army under the Command of Genl Green [sic: Southern Department under Nathanael Greene] and was attached to the Rigiment Commanded by Colo [Robert] Munford – while in this service Declarent was engaged in the battle of Guilford in N. Carolina [Guilford Courthouse NC, 15 Mar 1781] after the battle the Troops rallied at a place called the Iron Works [on Troublesome Creek] from there they marched to Ramsys Mills [sic: Ramsey’s Mills, 19 Mar – 7 Apr] on deep river and were stationed there until discharged. Declarent entered upon this tour of duty as well as he remembers in February 1781 – he served six months and was discharged and returned to Brunswick County Va. about the middle of August 1781 as well as declarent remembers – he was drafted in the militia raised in Brunswick Cty. and was attached to the company command by Captaine Jones his corps was stationed at a place called Swan Point [sic: Swanns Point in Surry county] on James River and were engaged in Defending the supplies of provissions that were sent across the river for the American army that was there engaged in preparing for the siege of York Declarent was engaged in this service for two months and was discharged – having sered in all in the different tours herein mentioned 2 years – 1 month & 15 days his discharges he has long since lost or mislaid he has no documentary evidence of his services. neither does he know of any living witness by whom he can prove his services and must rest his application for a pension on traditionary evidence and his own statement Declarents character for veracity he believes can be supported by all who know him amongst others, by John Chambers Esqr. Maj Ha[rest illegible] Andrew Payne, George Sutton Esq &c.

Declarent was born in the State of Virginia Charles City Cty. on the 14th of September 1757 according to family tradition from Va. he moved to North Carolina – from thence to Smith County Tennessee where he has resided ever since. he hereby relenquishes every claim to a pension or annuity except the present and he declares that his name is not on the Pension rool of any agency in any state – in the United States.

Francis hisXmark Coley

[signed] J. Pickett Clk

Sworn to in open Court 28th Nov. 1833.

NOTE:

The Commissioner of Pensions, J. L. Edwards, rejected the claim with the following statement dated 30 Dec 1833: “The applicants declaration should be drawn up by a competent person according to the within form and the accompanying notes, and if he can produce the testimony of witnesses who had a personal knowledge of the applicants service he should do so. The applicant could not have been in actual service during a longer period than six months. His tour under Captain Harrison was for three months instead of six. He entered on this tour in Feb. 1781, and the battle of Guilford took place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month. The militia were retained but a short time after that battle. 20 months will be allowed in the case.”

There is also the following note: “N.B. The original Declaration would have been returned but it was so badly written and so unskilfully drawn that no sense could be made of it and amounted to no declaration & calculated only to embarriss and perplex the Department Certificate to be payable at Nashville R M Burton”

No other application is in the file.

A note on the pension certificate, dated 31 Dec 1833, states that Coley died on 19 Sep 1840.