

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters](#)

Pension Application of Robert Burke W9373

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Kentucky } Ss:

County of Owen }

On this 3^d day of June 1833 personally appeared in open Court before the Justices of the Owen County Court now sitting, Robert Burke a resident of the said county of Owen and State of Kentucky aged 72 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 under the following named officers and served as herein stated – that is to say, being a resident of the County of Culpepper [sic: Culpeper] and State of Virginia, he did on the — day of May 1777 as well as he remembers enter the service of the United States as a volunteer soldier upon a tour of six months in the company of Captain James Browning. That immediately upon his said entry into the service he was appointed by his said Captain orderly Sergeant of his said company [see endnote] and served as such during the whole of his tour of duty which was six months as aforesaid. that he rendezvoused with his said company at the Courthouse in the said County of Culpepper and was attached to a regiment under the command of Colonel William Thorn – that the Major's name was William Roberts. He further declares that he was detached by his Capt. with a portion of the said company, and by his direction and that of his Colonel he remained in the said county instead of marching with the regiment – that he was thus detached and stationed in said County for the purpose of impressing provision, teams &c for the use of the Army; and he continued engaged in so doing and in sending the articles so impressed to the troops under & by virtue of the special direction of his said officers during the whole of his said tour, which he states and declares he served out fully and faithfully and was at the termination thereof honourably discharged and thereupon returned to his home.

He further states and declares that on the [blank] day of September 1778 [sic] as well as he remembers he again entered the service of the United States as a drafted Militia Man and private soldier upon a tour of three months in the company of Capt Geo. Johnson [George Johnson] – that he rendezvoused with his said company at the tavern house of John Corbin in the said County of Culpepper in which he still lived – that one Satchel Johnson was the lieutenant of the company to which he belonged – that from said place of rendezvous he was marched with his said company to the Barracks at Albemarle old Courthouse Va and there came under the command of Col. Walker and Major Roberts both of whom he believes were regular officers. He states that there were 4 or 500 regular soldiers stationed at that place & some militia who had in charge and was guarding about 500 prisoners [captured at Saratoga 17 Oct 1777 and brought to Albemarle Barracks Jan 1779]. He states that he continued stati'd at the said Barracks during the whole period of his said tour which was three months as aforesaid assisting in guarding the said prisoners and after having served out his tour fully and faithfully he was discharged in writing by his Captain and returned to the place of residence in Culpepper County.

He further states and declares that on the [blank] day of October 1779 as well as he remembers he again entered the service of the United States upon a tour of three months as a drafted militia man and private soldier in the Company of Capt. James Browning – that the name of the lieutenant of said Company was William Clanahan – that he again rendezvoused with his company at the tavern house of John Corbin in the said county of Culpepper where he still continued to live – that he there came under the command of Col. William Thorn and was marched from thence with his company and several other militia companies down to the bay coast – that upon the march he recollects that they passed through Spottsylvania [sic: Spotsylvania], King William and New Kent Counties – that they halted some days at Fredericksburg va. – that he was at Williamsburg va. also and was kept stationed at that place longer than

at any other during the whole of his tour. He states that the troops with which he was then serving (himself with them) were employed principally in marching from one point to another and protecting the country from the incursions of the British. He states that he served out his said tour of duty fully and faithfully, it being for three months as aforesaid, and was thereupon discharged and permitted to return home

He further states and declares that on the [blank] day of July 1780 as well as he remembers he again entered the service of the United States as a drafted militia man and private soldier upon another tour of three months in the company of Captain George Johnson – that he rendezvoused with his said company at the Courthouse in Culpepper County va. in which county he still lived and he there came under the command of Col. John Thorn. That he was marched from thence with his said Company directly to Williamsburg va. where he was stationed principally during his said tour of duty – that he was frequently one of parties that were detached to repel incursions from the British and to protect the country and the inhabitants from their depredations. He states that he served out his said tour of three months fully and faithfully and at the termination thereof was discharged and returned home.

He also further states and declares that on the [blank] day of May 1781 he again entered the service of the United States as a drafted militia man and private soldier upon a tour of three months in the company of Captain Clanahan – that he rendezvoused with his said company at the Courthouse in the County of Culpepper in which County he still resided and there came under the command of Col. John Thorn & Richard Yancy [sic: Richard Yancey] – that he was marched with his said company and various other militia companies that had been called out, to Block Bridge in Henrico County Va. not very distant from Richmond which place had a short time before been evacuated by the American troops, and taken possession of by the British under Cornwallis [late May]. He states that they remained but one night at said Bridge and the next day marched up the Country and a few days after succeeded in joining the American Army under LaFayette which was retreating up the Country and was pursued by the British Army. He states that the retreat and pursuit was continued till the army of La Fayette reached Albemarle County [mid-June] and which had in the meantime been greatly reinforced by the militia & some regulars [under Gen. Anthony Wayne] – that the British then in turn commenced a retreat and the army of Gen'l. La Fayette engaged in a distant pursuit – that the British continued their retreat to Richmond and thence to Williamsburg and finally crossed James river and went to Portsmouth – that there was a sharp action took place between some of the American troops and the British when the latter was about crossing James River in which the Americans were worsted – that he was not personally engaged in said action though he was with the army nor was any part of the Brigade to which he belonged engaged in it. He states that there was a good deal of skirmishing between parties belonging to the two armies during their retreat. He states that he continued with the Army and in actual service during the whole period of his said tour of duty and when the same expired he was discharged and permitted to return home.

He also further states and declares that he performed several other short tours of duty in the revolutionary war (besides those mentioned above) under Capts. Browning, Johnson and Clanahan amounting in all in addition to the services above enumerated to at least six months, which services were performed as a private militia soldier: but that from the great lapse of time, his old age and consequent loss of memory he is unable to say at what times or in what years they were performed nor what the particular duration of each of said tours. And from the same causes he cannot swear positively to the date of the several tours above set forth but according to his best recollection he served at the times and in the manner above stated and set forth and that he did not serve in the war of the revolution less than six months as an orderly sergeant and eighteen months as a private militia soldier and for said services he claims a pension. He states that he has no documentary evidence, and that he know of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to any part of his service. He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid
Interrogatories put to the abovenamed applicant by the Court

Robert hisXmark Burke

1st. Where and in what year were you born?

Answer. I was born in Culpepper county and State of Virginia in the year 1761 according to my information

2^d. Have you any record of your age; and if so, where is it?

Answer. I have no record of age. The record of my age was contained in a Book in the possession of William Daniel who carried it with him to the State of Georgia a number of years ago and I have not seen it since then and my present knowledge of my age consequently depends upon my recollection of its contents and upon the information which I derived from my father.

3^d. Where were you living when called into the service; where have you lived since the revolutionary war, and where do you now live?

Answer. I lived in Culpepper county, Virginia when I was called into the service upon each of my tours of duty and continued to live in the same county for some years after the revolution and then moved to Shenandoah County Virginia where I remained till about the year 1798 and I then moved to the county of Fayette in the State of Ky about 5 miles from the town of Lexington where I remained till the year 1806 and then I moved on Eagle Creek in the then county of Gallatin now Owen county Ky and continued to live in the same neighbourhood until about one year ago and then moved on Twin Creek in the same county where I still live.

4th. How were you called into the service. were you drafted did you volunteer, or were you a substitute? And if a substitute for whom?

Answer Upon my first tour I was a volunteer. upon all the other tours which I performed I was a drafted militia man.

5th. State the names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops where you served; Such Continental and militia regiments as you can recollect, and the general circumstances of your service.

Answer. Upon my first tour I was a volunteer for six months, and served as orderly sergeant. I was stationed in Culpepper County Va with a small party of my company for the purpose of impressing articles for the use of the army – and was engaged in that kind of service during the whole of my tour. I do not recollect to have seen whilst upon this tour any officers except those under whose command I was –Viz. Col. Wm. Thorn Major William Roberts and my own company officers none of whom were regular officers. Upon my second tour I was stationed at the Barracks at Albemarle Old Courthouse assisting in guarding some prisoners. He was there under the command of Col. Walker and Major Roberts both of whom he believes were regular officers. I do not recollect to have seen upon said tour any other field officers besides those mentioned who were stationed with said troops. Upon my third tour I was under the command of Col. Thorn. I do not recollect the name of any other field officer who was with the troops. I was marched down to the bay coast was a part of the time at Williamsburg Va and was employed principally during the tour in aiding in the protection and defence of the country. Upon my fourth tour I was under the command of Col. John Thorn and I do not now remember the name of any of the other field officers. Nor do I rember the names of any officers who were wit the troops except those under whose command I was. I was employed upon this tour as I was in the preceding in the aiding in protecting the country from the incursions of the British. Upon my fifth tour I was under the command of Col. Jno Thorn and Major Richard Yancy. I was marched to Block Bridge in Henrico county Va. and from thence we followed the army of La Fayette and joined it in a few days. Cornwallis with the British Army pursued us up to Albemarle County and then he commenced a retreat and we pursued him – there was a good deal of skirmishing between the parties of the two armies and when the British crossed James River a smart action took place in which our troops were worsted and had to retreat – upon this tour I recollect to have seen Gen'l. La Fayette, Wayne & Rutherford. I cannot say that I recollect at this time the names of any of the other field officers who were with the army during this tour. I recollect however that Col.

[Abraham] Buford, Col Clarke, Col. Greene [sic: John Green] and Col. [Daniel] Morgan were regular officers and that they served with the troops where I did upon some of my tours but which of them I can't say. Upon the short tours of duty which I served I was under the command of Captains alone as well as I remember and those tours were performed in repelling sudden and unexpected incursions of the British. I am satisfied that I did not serve less than two years during the revolutionary war and six months of that time I served as a sergeant.

6th. Did you ever receive a discharge from the service, and if so, by whom was it given, and what has become of it?

Answer. I never received but one discharge in writing which was upon the termination of my second tour of duty and was signed by Capt Geo. Johnson which I have since lost.

7th. State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighbourhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity, and their belief of your services as a soldier of the revolution

Answer I will name John Searcy & Sandford Johnson [sic: Sanford Johnston] as persons who live in my present neighbourhood and to whom I am known

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid Robert hisXmark Burke

NOTES:

Because the function of an Orderly Sergeant was to copy orders into the company's orderly book, Burke would be expected to sign his name in full if physically able.

On 29 Sep 1846 Hannah Burke, 74, applied for a pension stating that she married Robert Burke on 13 Jan 1790, and he died 28 Aug 1845. On 10 Aug 1848 she applied again, and the Justice of the Peace stated that she "has children about fifty six years of age judging from their appearance." On an application for bounty land dated 10 May 1855 her age was given as 84, and she stated that she was married in Shenandoah County by Lewis Corbin, a Baptist minister, on 13 Jan 1788. The file includes a copy of a marriage return dated 10 Jan 1793 for the marriage of Robert Burke and Hannah Jones.