

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of Lewis Griffin (Griffith) S21248

fn15Va.

Transcribed by Will Graves

Declaration of Lewis Griffin

In order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress of the 7th of June 1832

On the sixth day of August 1833 personally appeared before the County Court for the County of Madison in the State of Tennessee presiding, James S. Lyon, James H. Rogers and John B. Cross Justices, Lewis Griffin a resident of said County, aged seventy years, who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath take the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the Provisions, made by the act of Congress passed June 7th, 1832.

That he was born on the 6th of October 1763 in Winchester County Virginia not far from the Potomac River, and when quite small moved with his father Richard Griffin to Halifax County Virginia where he lived at the breaking out of war of the Revolutionary War. He has no registration of his birth that he can now referred to, it was recorded by his father in a book kept for that purpose, and has always understood from his father and mother, that he was born on the day above stated. He is unable to read or write, what has become of the record he is not able to state, as he left that part of the Country and moved to North Carolina, where he lived at the time his father died and has never been to Virginia since his death, the book may be in the possession of some of the family residing with or near his father at the time of his death, and being a matter this declarant felt no interest about, he has never made any inquiry about it. In the fall of 1780, about the month of September, he had gone with one of his neighbors with some tobacco to Petersburg, where he met with his brother Griffin, Griffith, who was a soldier in the Continental Service, and stationed at Petersburg under the Command of Colonel Brown. This declarant was persuaded by his brother to enlist in the Service with him, which he did for eighteen months Service. This declarant was told, that all the Service that would ever be required of him, would be, to remain at Petersburg to guard the public magazines and horses. At the time of his enlistment, there was but twelve Soldiers at Petersburg including this declarant and his brother, and he recollects of no other officer except Colonel Brown, who had been pressing horses for the public Service. At the time of his enlistment, this declarant received from Col. Brown an obligation on the State of Virginia for one thousand weight of Tobacco as his Bounty; but which he never received. This declarant does not know certainly whether his name was enrolled Griffin or Griffith. His father called and wrote his name Griffin, but always said the proper name was Griffith, and some of his Cousins wrote their name Griffith. This declarant's father married his cousin, and their first Son, was called Griffin Griffith, the brother of this declarant before of alluded to. This statement is made to explain the seeming inconsistency of the Sir name [sic, surname] of this declarant and his brother, being different. In the winter following this declarant was ordered to Chesterfield court house the quarters of General Steuben, a Frenchman, where all the guards stationed in the neighboring towns were ordered to rendezvous, with the view of forming a Regiment to be march[ed] to reinforce General Green [sic, Nathanael Greene] in North Carolina. At Chesterfield court house the Regiment was formed and this declaration [sic, the declarant] was placed in a company commanded by Captain John Culverson, or Culberson, (not being able to read or write this declarant cannot state how officers spelled their names) and the Regiment was placed under the Command of Colonel Campbell and our Lieutenant was the Son of Colonel Capbell [sic, Campbell], their first names he cannot recollect. He remained at Steuben's or Chesterfield court house one day, where we drew our Clothing and arms. He does not recollect the No. of the Regiment, the uniform was blue turned up red and was called in camp The Regiment of "Hell-fired-blues" of the Virginia line. The Regiment was marched to Petersburg and General Steuben accompanied us that far, and returned. We were then marched directly to join General Greene and crossed Dan River at its Junction with the Roanoke [River] and joined General Greene early in March, at a place called the High-rock ford of Haw River, and General Huger or Hugee, commanded the

Virginia Continentals, and our Regiment. On the 14th of March the Army moved to Guilford Court house, and the British Army was at a Quaker meeting house called center meeting house a few miles distant. On the next day the battle commenced between the advance of American and British armies, and our line of battle was formed, the first line composed of the North Carolina militia, the second time of Virginia Militia, and the third of the Continental troops, and Col. Washington's horse in the rear. The North Carolina militia fled at the onset. The Virginia Militia stood their ground and fought manfully, and we were ordered up to their assistance – at this juncture the battle became bloody, each party making an obstinate stand – but we were about to be Surrounded and were ordered to retreat. General Huger was wounded in the right hand in my view. I saw him with his Sword in his hand raised above his head encouraging his men when a shot penetrated his hand and his Sword fell in his lap, which he caught up with his left, drew from his pocket a handkerchief, tied up his hand, and moved on, not long after this occurrence we were ordered to retreat. The brother of this declarant before mentioned was also badly wounded in the thigh. We retreated that night about fifteen miles to Troublesome Iron Works, where we remained two days, and on the third day learning of the retreat of Cornwallis we commenced a pursuit. We returned to near Guilford courthouse, and truck [sic, struck or took?] the trail of the British Army and pursued them in their zig-zag retreat, keeping no road, for five or six days, as far as Ramsey's Mill on Deep River, here we came up with them at Breakfast. The British retreated across the River on a bridge made with fence rails, laid on the rocks, the River being shoaly at this place. They left their breakfast on the fire, which we eat [sic, ate], a very acceptable thing as we had eat nothing for four days and nights. Here we halted, two or three days, or possibly longer, when we crossed the River and continued our march towards the British position at Camden – not far from this place, Colonel Campbell gave us a parole to return to Guilford Court house, where my brother was left wounded in the hospital – the old court house. I arrived there, in the last of June or first of July in very warm whether. There I continued waiting on my wounded brother and other sick until the month of October, when the Surgeon permitted me to take my brother home, and gave both of us an instrument of writing, I understood my brother being so badly wounded was discharged from any further service provided, he should not become a charge upon the United States, and this declarant was to remain with his brother until notified to repair to the Army. Shortly after, we arrived home we heard of the Surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Little York [Yorktown] after which this declarant was never called upon to perform any Service. The paper writing given him by the Surgeon at Guilford Court house, was in his pocket book, which with his coat, was stolen from him, on his way from Guilford home. This declarant lived about five years in Halifax, Pittsylvania and Henry Counties Virginia after the war, and then moved to North Carolina and lived about 30 years in Randolph County and then moved to Tennessee, Wilson County where he lived ever since, except the last 10 years, which he has lived in this County. He has no documentary evidence in his possession or knowledge, by which he could prove the performance of his Services, nor does he know of any person living by whom he can prove the services, by an eyewitness, except Colonel Robert Weakley, who lived the last time heard from in Davidson County Tennessee, a distance of 150 miles from this, we were raised in the same neighborhood, and I recollect seeing him at the High-rock ford on Haw River the day after we joined General Greene and I also saw him after the battle of Guilford – he belonged to the Virginia militia, to the best of this declarant's memory. This declarant was in actual Service including the time he waited at the Hospital 13 months, and his term of enlistment was for 18 months. He refers to William Harris and John Shaw who will state the character of this deponent and their belief of his Services. 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 & subscribed in open court sixth of August 1833

S/ Lewis Griffin, X his mark

S/ R. McIver, Clerk

[William Harris and John Shaw gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

Jackson Tennessee November 5th, 1834

Dear Sir --

Enclosed you have the application of Lewis Griffin for a pension under the act of 1832. This application was returned with the objection (which is also enclosed) that the applicant name not being on the roll, proof of service must be made by at least one witness. This proof now accompanies the application, being the evidence of Colonel Robert Weakley of Davidson County, a man of high respectability, formerly a member of Congress, and for many years a member of the Legislature & lately a member of the Tennessee convention.

You will observe the affidavit of Colonel Weakley is not appended to the declaration as required by the rule because it has been obtained since the declaration was made and certified. It clearly when taken in connection with the declaration identifies the applicant. I observe in the "Statement" you have made from the declaration "showing the service of Lewis Griffin or Griffith," you have under the head of "character of claimant's Service" "10 years" -- this is a clear mistake, he enlisted for 18 months but was furloughed at the expiration of 13 months, and never returned his services not being required after the Surrender of Cornwallis. This application was originally forwarded by me through the Honorable David Crockett, the representative of this district and returned by him to me with the accompanying objections. Col. Weakley is well known by Major Lewis and his deposition is in his own handwriting, to which I have no doubt Major Lewis can testify.

Your &c.

S/ Jos. H. Talbot

State of Tennessee, Davidson County

October 9th, 1834. This day Robert Weakley a Citizen of said County aged seventy years personally appeared before me Wm Armstrong an Acting Justice of the peace in & for said County, and being duly sworn, on the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God, deposed and saith, that himself and Lewis Griffin or Griffith were raised in Halifax County and State of Virginia from he could remember, until they were both subject to Military duty within less than two miles of each other, that said Griffin, or Griffith went in the Continental Service, about the year 1780 as this deponent believes, and in the month of March 1781 he saw said Griffin or Griffith in the Continental service, both before and after the Battle of Guilford Court House, as he this said deponent, was in the said Battle,

Sworn to & Subscribed before me 9th October – 1834 in the City of Nashville

S/ Wm Armstrong, JP DC

S/ R. Weakley