

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of Isham Burke (Isam Burks) S3093

Transcribed by Will Graves

State of Tennessee, McNairy County.

On this the twenty third day of September in the year of our Lord One thousand Eight hundred and thirty three personally appeared before the County Court of pleas and quarter in and for the said county in the State of aforesaid now sitting Isam Burks a resident of McNairy County in the State of Tennessee, age Seventy Two years next October, 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 of the 7<sup>th</sup> June 1832. That he was born in Amherst County State of Virginia on the twenty fourth day of October in the year of our Lord One thousand seven hundred and Sixty one. When he was very young his father moved from Virginia and settled in Spartanburg District State of South Carolina, hear [sic, here] he lived but a short time when he moved to the State of Georgia and settled in that part which was afterward called Wilks [sic, Wilkes] County Situated fifty or sixty miles above Augusta. Here I entered the service of the United States as a volunteer soldier in the year 1778 the day and month when I entered not now recollected, under Captain John Burks (my father) who had received orders from Col. John Steward to raise a Company of volunteers for the purpose of marching to the Frontiers of Georgia to guard that section from the Cherokees and Creek Indians who had assumed a hostile attitude against the whites. So Soon as my captain Succeeded in raising his Company he Joined Col. Steward's Regiment in Wilkes County State of Georgia, then the whole Regiment marched to the Frontiers of Georgia when my Captain and a Company under the Command of Captain Baldwin was stationed at a place then called or afterwards called Littel's [sic, Little's?] Station. The Balance of the Regiment was again divided and placed around the Frontiers. While we was here we built a Fort, and a scouting party was ordered out every day to watch the movements of the Indians and keep them from marching in the interior of the Country and killing the whites. Here we remained for some time, then the Regiment was ordered to march and Join General Hows [sic, Howe's ] Army who was about to start on an Expedition to Florady [sic, Florida]. So our Regiment marched to Wilkes County there Joined General Howe we then struck our march for the Floridies [sic, Floridas] – going by the way of St. Mary's River. I went about 100 miles on the route and was there discharged. I received a written discharge signed by my Captain John Burke. The same bore date as well as he now Recollects in the year 1778 (the day and month he does not recollect) how long he served he cannot now positively say Owing to Old age and the consequent loss of memory, but he is positive he Served not less than Six months for which time and Services he claims a Pension. I had my discharge for a number of years after the Revolution but not believing it would ever be of any use or benefit to me I used it so carelessly that it is now lost or destroyed.

Through the Influence of my father, Captain John Burke, Col. Clark [sic, Elijah Clarke] then of the State of Georgia Recommended me to the Governor as a proper person to be appointed Captain, upon said recommendation Governor Howley, then Governor of the State of Georgia commissioned me a Captain in the militia of this State of Georgia, he does not now Recollect the precise date when his commission bore date but believes it was the first of the year 1779. So soon as I received my commission, I raised a Company of mounted volunteers for the term of six months in Wilkes County, in a very few days after I made up my Company I was ordered to march to the Frontiers of Georgia, which place was then entirely unguarded and had remained so ever since Col Steward's Regiment was sent on the Florida campaign. So my Company alone marched to a place called Fort Knox. This place I made my head quarters, from here I extended my Company in small parties first one place and then another watching and guarding this Frontiers from the Indians which was doing all this mischief they could to the whites, after remaining here for some considerable length of time, an express arrived from Col Clarke for me to march my Company directly on to the Savannah River, there to join Col Pickens.

So soon as my junction with Col Pickens we marched in pursuit of several hundred Tories who had embodied themselves. We overtook them at a place called Kettle Creek when we had a severe battle, which I was in, this battle was of short duration, the Whigs proving Successful. This battle as well as he recollects was fought some time in the year 1779 (but do not know the precise date). From here I was ordered back to Fort Knox where I remained guarding and defending the place from the Indians until my soldiers terms was out. Then I marched back to Wilkes County and there discharged my men. This was some time in the same year above stated but do not recollect the precise date. At this time the State of Georgia was about to be overrun with the British and Indians and there was a great call for men to turn out to save the state. So I on the same day that I discharged my soldiers raised another Company of mounted horsemen for the term of six months. A great many of my old soldiers consented to serve and others joining which made up my Company. The next day after I organized my Company which was in Wilkes County, I marched to Augusta, there joined Col. Lee's Regiment of Horse. Here I continued until after the British had besieged that place and proved successful in taking it from the Americans, which was some time as he believes in the year 1779 (but the precise date I do not now recollect). After the British got possession of Augusta, I was ordered with my Company to march over the mountains to a place then called Holston or Watauga then in Washington County, State of North Carolina for the purpose of defending the that Section from the Cherokee Indians which had at this time become very Troublesome in that quarter. Here I remained ranging first from one place and then another for a long time, and until the expiration of my soldiers' term of six months had Expired—then I marched back to Wilkes County Georgia and there discharged them. This completed my term of service which made six months as a soldier and twelve months as a Captain. I am not now positive whether I ever received any discharge as Captain if I did I presume it was signed by Col Clarke as I was under his command the most of the time. Notwithstanding he was not personally present but very little during this time I served. That he has no documentary evidence and that he knows of no person now living by whom he can prove is service by.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a Pension on annuity except this present and declares that his name is not on the Pension roll of the Agency of any state.

Question: Where and in what year were you born.

Answer: I was born in Amherst County Virginia on the 24th day of October 1761.

Question: Have you any record of your age and if so where is it

Answer: I have my age now recorded in a Bible at my home which was taken from my father's Large Family Bible

Question: Where were you living when called into service, where have you lived since the Revolution and where do you now live

Answer: I was living in Wilkes County State of Georgia when I was called into service and continue to live there for several years after the Revolutionary War. Then I moved to Spartanburg District South Carolina from there I moved to Penalton [sic, Pendleton] District from there I moved to Lincoln County, Tennessee and from there I moved to McNairy County Tennessee where I now live.

Question: How were you called into service – were you drafted. Did you volunteer or were you a substitute and if a substitute for whom.

Answer: I volunteered my services as a soldier and served in that capacity for six months when I was appointed Captain and in that capacity raised two companies of volunteer Mounted Horsemen for six months each.

Question: State the names of some of the Regular Officers who were with the troops where you served such Continental and Militia Regiments as your can recollect and the general circumstances of your services.

Answer: I saw General Lincoln and General How but had no personal acquaintance with them. I became acquainted with Col Clarke, Col Lee & Col Pickens. I think Col Pickens was promoted to General before the Revolutionary War was over. I will state that I raised my Troops to defend the

Frontiers and guard the Indians consequently did not have a good opportunity of becoming acquainted with the officers and men generally. I have mentioned the General Circumstances of my service in the body of my declaration.

Question: Did you ever receive a commission and if so by whom was it signed and what has become of it –

Answer: I received a commission I think in the first of the year 1779. It was signed by Gov. Howley then Governor of the State of Georgia. I had the commission for a number of years after the Revolutionary War but it is now lost or destroyed.

Question: State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighborhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief of your services as a soldier of the Revolution.

Answer: I have been acquainted with Parson Francis Beard of McNairy County and my present neighborhood for a great number of years and I have also been acquainted with John Chambers of my neighborhood for a number of years. They can testify as to my character for veracity and their belief and the neighborhood belief of my services as a captain and as a soldier in the Revolution. Given under my hand.

Sworn to & subscribed this day and year aforesaid

S/ Isham Burke

S/ Wm. Wisdom, Clk

of McNairy County Court Tenn.