

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Robert Hyde Saunders S6046

f114VA

Transcribed by Will Graves

1/13/12

[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. 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 fails 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 errors or omissions to my attention.]

[f p. 75]

For the purpose of obtaining the benefits of the act entitled "An act for the relief of certain surviving Officers and Soldiers of the Army of the Revolution" approved on the 15th May 1828, I Robert H Saunders of the County of Henrico in the State of Virginia, do hereby declare that I was an officer of the Virginia Continental line in the Army of the Revolution, and served as such from the very commencement of the War in 1775 (when I entered the minute service in this state as a volunteer soldier) until 1781 when the arrangement of the Army was carried into effect pursuant to the Resolves of Congress, excepting a short period during which I was out of service in consequence of an affair of honor. I was afterwards reinstated by General Muhlenberg and when the said arrangement took place, I wished to attend the Board but was told by General Muhlenberg my services were too important at that time to be spared, and that he would attend to my interest. I was made a supernumerary Lieutenant in the arrangement as will appear by the rolls in possession of the Committee of Claims of the Legislature of this State. I was always ready and willing to render service whenever called on.

Witness my hand this 25th day of December 1829

S/ Ro H. Saunders



State of Virginia County of Henrico: SS

On this 11th day of March 1833 personally appeared before the County Court of Henrico of the State of Virginia Robert H Saunders of said County in the State aforesaid aged seventy-four 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 provision made by the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832. That he marched as a volunteer from the County of Cumberland under Major Carrington in the month of June 1775 to Williamsburg & did there enlist with the said Carrington as a minute man & was soon called upon to march to Norfolk where he arrived on the 1st day of January '76 at which time the British landed & set fire to the town & on the 15 day of February '76 he enlisted with Major Carrington as a Sergeant in Captain Charles Fleming's Company of the 7th Virginia Regiment for three years – Not long after this we were ordered to Gloucester C. H. [Gloucester Courthouse] & from thence to Gwinns Island [Gwynn's Island] where we remained till we completely dislodged the enemy & drove them off leaving their cables behind them. About August '76 he marched to Gloucester town where he obtained a recommendation from the officers of the Regiment to the executive of Virginia & was appointed an Ensign, recruited his quota received his commission & was afterwards arranged in Colonel George

Gibson's Regiment that being the 1st Virginia State Regiment. On the 6 day of July '77 he began his march from Williamsburg under the command of Colonel Gibson & on the 13th day of September of the same year he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant drew his pay & rations as such. He was then at Alexandria where he had taken the small pox & on the 21st was put under marching orders for the grand Army at the North where he continued in service till the latter part of June '78 when he returned to Virginia & was afterwards returned a supernumerary Lieutenant date of commission 13 of September 77 as appears from a Supernumerary list of officers admitted to Record by the House of Delegates of Virginia. He hereby relinquishes all claim to any other pension whatever & declares that his name is not found on the pension roll or agency of any state whatever.

S/ Ro. H. Saunders



[f p. 7]

In Henrico County Court February 2nd 1846

This court on the motion of Joseph Mosby and upon the evidence of J C Snead and Albert Snead, doth certify, that it was fully proved in open Court, that Robert H Saunders died in the County of Henrico in October 1833. That he left at his death a widow and two children Robert M Saunders and Margaret T Saunders: that these 2 children were his only legal heirs at law: that his widow died in 1834. That his son Robert M Saunders died in the year 1845 leaving a widow Mary Saunders and two children named Margaret Ann and Philip Howard Saunders, who are the only legal heirs of their father, Robert M Saunders. That Margaret T Saunders is now living and the wife of Joseph Mosby, who together with the widow and heirs of said Robert M Saunders are now residents in the city of Richmond Virginia.

[Attested by the clerk of court for and Rico County Virginia]

[f p. 59]

This is to Certify, That it appears from a List in this Office of such Officers and Soldiers of the Virginia State Line, during the Revolutionary War, as settled their Accounts, and received Certificates for the balance of their Full Pay, according to an Act of Assembly, passed the November Session 1781, that a Certificate issued on the 28th day of July 1783, in the name of Robert H Saunders as a Lieutenant of Infantry for £86.2.3, which Certificate appears to have been delivered to himself and was given for services prior to the 1st January 1782.

Given under my hand, at the Auditor's Office, Richmond, this
9th day of March 1846.

S/ Jas E. Heath, AUDITOR

[f p. 87]

Friday June 27, 1777

The Governor and Council proceeded agreeable to a resolution of the general assembly to settle the rank among the captains and subalterns in the 3 battalions belonging to this State and granted commissions to the following officers who are of the Battalion ordered to join General Washington viz.

Ensigns

James Merewether [James Meriwether

James Withers
Robert Hyde Saunders
William McQueen
Joseph Saunders
Anthony Frazer
Samuel French
Elliott Rucker
Thomas Gaines
John Best

[certified as a true copy January 28, 1849]

[f p. 88: excerpt from the role of resigned & supernumerary officers showing that R. H. Saunders Lieutenant was commissioned September 13, 1777 and was made a supernumerary; residence listed as being Powhatan County Virginia.]

[f p. 96]

executive Department 8th of October 1832

Robert H Saunders is allowed Land Bounty for his service as a Lieutenant in the Continental Line 3 years, if not heretofore drawn

S/ John Floyd

a Warrant for 2666 2/3 acres issued (No. 7268) to said Saunders, dated November 8th 1832

[f p. 98]

Before me William Ligon a Justice of the Peace for the County of Powhatan and State of Virginia personally appeared Ferguson Taylor¹ who made oath in solemn form, that he enlisted in the 7th Virginia Regiment on Continental establishment in the revolutionary war (has lately received an allowance under the act for relief of certain surviving officers & soldiers of the Army of the revolution: approved the 15th May 1828) & well recollects that Robert H Saunders now of the County of Henrico enlisted in the same Regiment was marched with this affiant from Cumberland old courthouse together with a small party of recruits, under the command of he [indecipherable word] Mayo Carrington to Gloucester court house where we joined the Regiment & were assigned [?] to the company commanded by Captain Charles Fleming in which company the said Saunders acted in the capacity of Sergeant. The Regiment afterwards went to Gwinns Island to drive off Lord Dunmore after which we went to Williamsburg and this affiant has no recollection of being with the said Saunders after the Regiment left the latter place to go to the North, nor of what other service the said Saunders performed. This affiant is not able to say certainly whether it was in the year 1775 or 1776 that the said Saunders & himself enlisted nor can he say for what term the said Saunders did enlist, but believes enlistments were generally for 3 years.

S/ Ferguson Taylor

Sworn to and subscribed this 15th day of February 1830

I do certify to the best of my recollection the volunteer company at the commencement of the revolution did march from the County of Cumberland in June 1775 and did serve as I have understood at Williamsburg immediately after Lord Dunmore went on board of one of the Kings ships, and I have no hesitation in saying that Robert H Saunders marched with them and that he

¹ [Ferguson \(Ferguson\) Taylor W6229](#)

Robert H Saunders in some capacity or other served nearly all quite during the war as I have every reason to believe for I frequently saw him in service myself. Given under my hand this 10th day of November 1831

S/ John Goode, Senior

I do certify that during Arnold's [Benedict Arnold's] invasion which I believe was in the year 1779 or 80, the subscriber was in the service of his country at Cabin point where he saw Ro. H. Saunders actively engaged as an adjutant to one of the regiments then under the command of General Muhlenberg and in a few days after being there, the troops marched to Mackey's or Meade's Mills. Given under my hand this October 28th 1831

S/ Littleberry Stovall

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$228.33 per annum commencing March 4th, 1831, for service at as a Sergeant, Ensign & Lieutenant for a total of 24 months in the Virginia service.]

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Addendum to Robert Hyde Saunders S6046

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. 4 April 2021.

[From [bounty-land records in the Library of Virginia](#).]

The petition of Robert Hyde Saunders respectfully represents to the Governor and Council that he entered the Service of his country at the very commencement of the Revolutionary war having marched with the minute company from the County of Cumberland in June 1775, that he enlisted from that company into one of the Continental Regiments as a Sergeant and after serving a short time in that capacity was recommended by his officers to the Executive for a commission of Ensign which he received and after recruiting his quota of men marched them to the northern army where he remained until June 1778 when he was arrested for fighting a duel. The campaign of 78 had commenced and there being a great press of business before the General Court Martial he could not procure a trial until after the campaign was over, under these circumstances he was advised to resign his commission [see endnote], come back to Virginia and state his case to the Executive, and for that purpose his brother officers voluntarily gave him a certificate that he had behaved well in the affair which caused his arrest. As soon as he could travel to Virginia he presented his certificate and stated his case to Patrick Henry Esq'r then Governor who appointed him a Lieutenant as will appear by the journal of the Council, a copy of which is filed herewith. His appointment as Lt. was on the 24th of June 1778 about ten or twelve days after his resignation. He was immediately ordered on the recruiting service. previous to his resignation he had served three years in the army computing the minute service, which all the officers have been allowed for; the records of the Executive will shew this fact as well as the papers accompanying this petition.

When the State of Virginia was attacked he was ordered into service and received the appointment of Adjutant to one of the Regiments in General Mullenbergs [Peter Muhlenberg BLWt1495-850] Brigade, in which he served until he was disbanded, he was at the Siege of York [28 Sep - 19 Oct 1781] and continued in service as long as there was any fighting in this part of the country; when in 1782[?] a board of officers assembled at Chesterfield to arrange the rank of officers he was put down as a Supernuary [supernumerary], a certificate of this fact from the Clerk of the House of Delegates is also filed herewith [not found]. So that he is entitled to his Land bounty for serving to the end of the war; officers similarly situated have long since received both the land bounty and commutation pay as appears by the certificate of Judge Johnston [Peter Johnston W27629] to which the Executive are respectfully refered. It will be seen by that certificate that Judge Johnson served to the end of the war was appointed by Col. [Henry] Lee and never had a commission. I (R. H. S.) was appointed by the Governor and Council a Lieutenant, and an Adjutant by General Mullenberg, and paid as such after the war & was recognized as Lieutenant by the Board of officers convened for the purpose of arranging the Virginia line; the certificate of the Clerk of the House of Delegates before mentioned together with that of the Auditor of Public accounts establish these facts.

These certificates predicated on official records together with the [undeciphered word] of Gen. Mughlenburg and other documents enclosed he hopes will prove satisfactorily that he is entitled to his land bounty both because he served three years previous to his resignation and because subsequently he reentered the army and serv'd until the war ended.

Your petitioner prays that he may now receive what he was promised more than fifty years ago.

June 24th 1778.

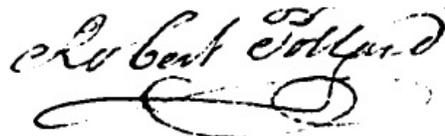
Robert Hyde Saunders and William Hardaway are appointed to recruit twenty men first Lieutenancies.

Extract from a Journal of the 24th of June 1778. Attest, J W Pleasants A. C. C.

In the army of the revolutionary war, it was the usage, for commanding officers of brigades, and regiments, to appoint subaltern officers, merely by issuing an order prescribing their rank, and the troop, or company, in which they they were to perform duty. My knowledge on this subject is positive, and precise, derived from an acquaintance with many gentlemen who were appointed in the manner above mentioned, and continued in service to the close of the war, received their pay, commutation &c, were reported on the muster rolls of their regiments, and corps, without ever receiving a written commission. In my own case, I repaired to the continental army in the year 1780, joined the Legion commanded by Lieut. Colo. Henry Lee, and soon afterwards he issued orders to his corps by which I was made an ensign of his infantry. In the course of some months I was promoted to a Lieutenancy, and continued in service to the close of the war, without ever receiving a written commission. Yet my name will be found, with the rank above stated, in the rolls in the auditor's office at this place, and in the war office at the city I present some Certificates from Gen'l Edward Stevens & others respecting the Services of John Yancey [VAS2071], to the Hon'ble the Executive of Virginia in the month of Nov'r or Decem'r 1811 (who was a Lieut. I think in the 10 Virg Regiment & resigned, upon which he obtained a Land warrant for 2666 $\frac{2}{3}$ acres Land, amongst those Certificates was one of my own, stating from my own knowledge that Mr Yancey entered in the Minute Service in the Culpeper Battalion of Minute Men in 1775 – that while a Minute Man, he enlisted with Capt. John Jameson [R15404] in the Troop of Cavalry & while a Soldier in the Cavalry received a Commission in the infantry. I understood the Council that they took into consideration his services from the Commencement in '75

Robert Pollard [S5944]

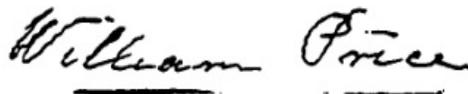
Richmond Nov. 14 1829



I do hereby certify that I am very well acquainted with Col Ro. H. Saunders and was well acquainted with him at Valley Forge, he was then an officer of the Virginia Continental Line – he returned to the South, I did not, and know no more of his services except from hearsay.

Given under my hand this 23 Decr 1829. I was a Lieutenant myself in the Virginia Continental Line when at Valley Forge with Colonel Saunders who now resides in this County.

William Price [BLWt1440-200 & VAS280]



Powhatan C H/ Tuesday 2 Feby 1830

Dear Uncle Your letter of the [blank space] with its contents was received by me on Sunday (having myself been several days from home) and on yesterday was attaked with a pleurisy (not however severe) which as yet confines me to the house, and of course has prevented me from seeing such persons as are most likely to aid in establishing your claims. The prospect however I consided as good Mr. Hatcher informs me by note (he also is confined to the house) that his brother Daniel [Daniel Hatcher W7675] now dead belonged to the 7 Reg't and has often heard him speak of you being with him in the same Reg't and at the places you mention. This evidence tho' not conducive would be corroborative The Fife Major of of same Reg't Ferguson Taylor [W6229] has within the last week obtained a Certificate of allowance from the Sec'y of the Treasury, and was with me a a few days ago to close some documents by which he will be enabled to draw his money. It is highly probable his evidence will aid you

Horatio says he knows that Gen'l Muhlenburg lived in his fathers family, when the troops were at C. C. H. He says also that it was but a short time ago that some person was relating to him cercumstances which occured when you and himself were together and went so far as to describe your horse &c saying also that you acquired the appulation of the Pacing Adjutant but Horatio cannot recollect who it was. We will try and find out, Y[page damaged] Wm Ligon

*Can you tell us who their [page damaged]

Rich'd 8 Sep. 1830

Being asked whether a Letter, or certificate of appointment, from proper authority, constitutes an officer, altho' he may not actually have received a Commission, I can not hesitate to say that I do, when I know the fact, that the whole army of the United States, raised by authority of Laws passed at the Session of Congress 1811-12, were officered by persons holding only letters or certificates of appointment upon which they not only performed duty, but received pay regularly. The Commissions were not made out for several months after the officers were in actual service, & a still longer time elapsed before they were in possession of them. During this period no one doubted the validity of the acts of these person's, or questioned their authority, as officers regularly in the Service of the United States, and I cannot doubt, if they had been kill'd in Battle, but that their representatives would have been entitled to, & would have rec'd from the Government, all the allowances which would have been [undeciphered word] had they been in actual possession of Commissions.

B. Peyton

I was not personally acquainted with Mr. Robert Hyde Saunders during the war of our revolution. I have known him very well since the peace and have understood from others that he was in the army. I know that when the officers of the revolution assembled in Richmond to receive General Lafayette Mr. Saunders was invited among them as an officer of the revolutionary army and formed one of the company in that character

John Marshall [S5731]



[first part missing] of Washington; I have received m commutation, & all the pay allowed to those of my grade, and am allowed at this time the benefits of the act of Congress in favor of those officers who served until the termination of the war. When the regiments were first raised, I have no doubt that all the officers, then appointed, obtained written commissions. But afterwards when vacancies occurred, they never, generally, if not uniformly, filled in the manned above mentioned. Any other mode of managing the subject would have been attended with much injury to the service. Given under my hand, in the City of Richmond, on this seventeenth day of November, in the year 1830.

Peter Johnston



On the application of Colo. Rob't H. Sanders I do Certify, as well as I recollect, that he Came Down to Williamsburg with the Troops from the County of Powhatan & Cumberland, about the Time Lord Dunmore went on Board the Brittish Ship of War [8 Jun 1775], that I frequently saw him In Differant Detatchm'ts Early in the Commensm't Of the Revelutionary war But what Post or Commission he fill'd I cannot say.

Given under my hand this 20th Day of Oct'r 1831

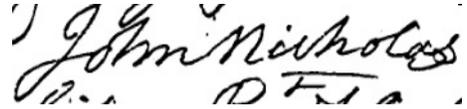
Frans Smith [Francis Smith R9732]

Now in the 90th year of my age

At the request of Robert Hide Saunders of Virginia, I hereby certify that the said Saunders was a Lieutenant in Col. George Gibson's Reg't in the Revolutionary war, first on State, & then on Continental establishment. When the said Saunders fought a Duel with a Cap Williams of the Navy, in which he was reported to have behaved courageously. Early in 1778 he had another personal affair with a Lt. Coleman [possibly Wyatt Coleman] of Gibson's Reg't at Valley Forge, in which he was said to have acted rashly but not dishonorably; but being threatened with an arrest & trial, rather than stand said trial under the Articles of War which were preemptory, he resigned his Commission & returned to Va After that I had no

personal acquaintance with him or his services, but understood & believe it to be the fact, that he served on the South side of James River in Va with Baron Steuben & Gen. Muhlenburg in some capacity or another till after the seige of Yourk, but have no positive knowledge of the fact, having served in the Carolinas myself part of the time & in the North side of James River with LaFayette the residue.
Washington Ja'y 4th 1832

John Nicholas[S46397] former Cap.
Gibsons Reg't & Col. R. A. after

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Nicholas". Below the name, there are some faint, illegible initials or a date, possibly "D.F.A.".

City of Richmond, to wit;

This day Peter Foster [S46443] personally appeared before me a justice of the peace for the City aforesaid and made oath that Robert Hyde Saunders was an Officer in the army of the Revolution that he was with him at Valley Forge and that a short time before the battle of Monmouth [28 Jun 1778], he thinks about the middle of June the said R. H. Saunders resigned and returned to Virginia. He understood the said Saunders entered the army again but does not know the fact of his own knowledge.

Given under my hand this third day of September 1832 A. W. Rootes

NOTE: A payroll for the company of Capt. Abner Crump in the First Virginia Regiment under Col. George Gibson notes that Robert Hyde Saunders resigned on 8 June 1778.