

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension Application of Robert Cunningham W1031

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

The State of Alabama } SS.

Tuscaloosa County }

On this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of March 1833 personally appeared in open Court before the Honourable H G Perry Judge of the Circuit Court of said County now sitting, Robert Cunningham a resident of said County and State of Alabama aged seventy two years the 10<sup>th</sup> day of September last past who first being 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 7<sup>th</sup> 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated His first service was under Capt. William Hutchison for the purpose of opperating against the Tories collected at Ramsowers Mill - this was as well as recollected in the year 1779 [sic] at which place an engagement took place and the Tories were defeated [Battle of Ramsour's Mill, 20 Jun 1780]. This was in Lincon [sic: Lincoln] County in the State of North Carolina. The Whigs were commanded by General [Griffith] Rutherford. this service was performed as a volunteer and private soldier in this service he was engaged not less than three months — some short time after his return to Mecklengburg [sic: Mecklenburg] County in the State of North Carolina and early in the year 1780 he was drafted in to the militia service and entered a company commanded by Richard Springstead [sic: Capt. Richard Springs] and was marched to Rugelies Mill [sic: Rugeley's Mill SC] some fourteen or fifteen miles from Camden where the Company joined the troops commanded by Gen'l. [Horatio] Gates and marched toward Camden and met the British Army commanded by Lord Rowdan [sic: Commanded by Gen. Cornwallis, with Gen. Francis Rawdon] and on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of August 1780 the American Army was defeated — in some short time after the battle he was detached from Gen'l. Gates main army and was engaged in scouting parties against the British and Tories until some time in December 1780 he joined General Greenes [Nathanael Greene's] Army which retreated before the British and crossed Dan river [14 Feb 1781] — he was taken with the small pox and being unfit for duty returned to his residence in Mecklengburg. In this service he was engaged not less than twelve months as a private. About the month of March 1781 he again joined the service of his Country as a mounted rifleman as a volunteer for and during the term of Ten months. he was an Orderly Sargent in the company commanded by Capt. Samuel Martin in the Reg't. commanded by Col. William Polk and attached to the command of Gen'l. Sumpter [sic: Thomas Sumter] - he was in the battle of Strawberry plains near Monks corner in South Carolina - also in the battle of the White church not more than thirty or forty miles from Charleston [see note below] - he was then detached with about three hundred other horsemen to harrass the British line then advancing toward ninety six at which place Gen'l. Green had beseaged Col. Cruger of the British Army during which time he was frequently engaged in skirmishing with the enemy. At the end of ten months he was honourably discharged during all of which time he was an Orderly Sargent. Owing to the great length of time which has elapsed he is unable to state what has become of his discharge nor has he any documentary testimony by which he can establish these facts — He further states he was born in York County (now Adams) in the State of Pennsylvania. When about fourteen years of age he moved with his Father to Mecklengburg County in the State of North Carolina — some time after the conclusion of the war he moved to Hancock County in the State of Georgia and resided there about fifteen years as Pastor of a Presbyterian Church from thence removed to Lexington in the State of Kentucky and was there engaged in the same occupation for over fourteen years from thence removed to Alabama and now resides in Tuscaloosa County in said State. He further states that owing to the great length of time which has elapsed and the loss of memory incident to old age he is unable to give dates and localities to many of the scenes through which he passed and the names of officers who commanded. He states positively that he served in the capacity of Orderly Sargent ten months and that he served as a common soldier not less than fifteen months during the Revolutionary war and in defence of liberty and his Country. He does not know of any person liveing who can testify to the

services which he has rendered. He does not know of any person liveing by whome he can now prove the services which he has rendered.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or anuity except the present and declares his name is not on the pension Roll of the agency of any State. Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid [signed] Robert Cunningham

NOTES:

The "battle of Strawberry plains" near Moncks Corner SC may refer to the Battle of Quinby Bridge and Shubrick's Plantation, 17 Jul 1781. The "battle of the White church" may refer to the skirmish at Biggin Church on 16 Jul. These engagements occurred after the British under Rawdon had relieved Lt. Col. John Harris Cruger at the Siege of Ninety-Six, 22 May - 19 Jun.

On 9 Feb 1844 Emily M. Cunningham applied for the final pension payment of her husband up to the date of his death on 11 Jul 1839. On 7 Oct 1853, Emily M. Cunningham, 69, applied for a pension stating that she married Robert M. Cunningham on 23 Mar 1807, and he died 10 Jul 1839. With her application is a copy of the marriage record of Robert M. Cunningham to Emely Bird. In an application for bounty land dated 26 Nov 1855 her age is said to be 74, and her maiden name is spelled Emily M. Byrd.