

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of James McElwee W9553

Rhoda McElwee

f79SC

Transcribed by Susan K. Zimmerman and R. Neil Vance

[Revised Oct. 7, 2014]

[Original spelling and punctuation retained]

State of Missouri
County of Pike

Sept Term Pike Circuit Court 1832
on this 26th day of September

in the year 1832 personally appeared in open court being the circuit court for the county of Pike aforesaid now sitting James McElwee a resident of said county of Pike in the state of Missouri 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 act of Congress passed on the 7th day of June in the year 1832. That he entered the service of the United States as a volunteer militiaman in the winter of the year 1774-5 under the command of Colⁿ Thomas Neel¹ and under the immediate command of Capt John Moffitt [John Moffett]² who resided in the County of York in the state of South Carolina he the said McElwee then and had resided from his youth in the said County or district of York in said state of South Carolina. The campaign immediately commenced under the direction of the said Colⁿ Neel against the disaffected citizens commonly called Torys.³ that during that campaign the troops commanded by the said Neel succeeded in taking a number of the Torys prisoners having found Colⁿ Fletcher [prob. Thomas Fletchall] who commanded the disaffected citizens called Torys in a cave with a number of his associates⁴ these prisoners were put under guard and sent off he does not recollect to what point he was then dismissed from the service but not discharged. afterward, in the year 1776 he again volunteered into the service of his country in the district of York in said state of South Carolina under the command of Capt W^m [William] Byers⁵ whose company was attached to the command of the said Colonel Neels regiment of Militia a Mr Watson [prob. Samuel Watson⁶] had command as a Major this campaign was directed against the Cherokee Indians during that campaign he was engaged in a bloody battle with the Cherokee Indians which was then called the battle of the black hole. he does not remember to have heard any other name for the battle⁷. This battle was fought in the month of august or September in the year 1776 as he well recollects that corn and beans and pumpkins were to be found in abundance during this bloody battle he had the misfortune to injure one of his ancles by a strain and on the following morning he was sent home with the wounded but not discharged. after which he was verry often engaged in scouting parties against the Torys under the orders of the said Col Neel. who still continued to command the regiment in the said district of York aforesaid. during a long time sometimes under the direction of one sometimes under the directions of another officer but most generally under the

¹ Thomas Neel [1730-1779] was colonel of the New Acquisition (York Co. SC) militia. He was killed at the Battle of Stono or Stono Ferry [June 20, 1779]. He is sometimes confused with his son, Thomas Neel, Jr., also an officer who died March 6, 1781. Another son, Andrew Neel, was also a colonel and was killed at Rocky Mount [Aug. 1, 1780].

² John Moffett [c. 1742 – 1829] was an officer in the militia of the New Acquisition (York Co. SC). He apparently was a colonel after the Fall of Charleston (May 1780) refer to him as Col. Moffett. See, for example, [James P. Collins R2173](#).

³ Called the "Snow Campaign" Nov-Dec 1775

⁴ prob. Dec. 1775. According to Gordon, *South Carolina and American Revolution*, Fletchall was captured hiding in a hollow tree.

⁵ William Byers, c. 1730 – c. 1798 Captain in the York Co SC Militia. [William Byers S3112](#) was his nephew.

⁶ Samuel Watson 1731- 1810 rose to Lt. Colonel in the York Co. Militia. Not the same as [Samuel Watson S17187](#)

⁷ The fight at the Black Hole on the Tennessee R. Sept. 19, 1776. *Arthur Fairies' Journal* attached to the application of [Peter Clinton W9390](#)

direction and command of the said Capt Byers. he does not recollect to have been engaged in any battles with the torys but was frequently at the routing and taking more or less prisoners of the disaffected band of torys during the time of that service. he remembers that at the battle of the black hole aforesaid Gen^l Sumpter was there and had the command of one regiment this service in scouting parties continued for about two years. after which time having never received any discharge from any officer of said state of Carolina he again in the month of February in the year 1779. he again [sic] attached himself as a volunteer to a company commanded by Ensign W^m [William] Love⁸ upon whom the command devolved because the Captain W^m Byers was unable to take the command because of a sore leg. this company was attached to the regiment of militia commanded by the before mentioned Thos Neel he recollects well that the major commanding in said Regiment was by the name of Francis Ross⁹. this campaign was directed to the state of Georgia where the regiment was attached to the command of Gen^l _____ Ash [blanks in the original; Gen. John Ashe] on or about the first day of March in the said year of 1779. at a place called Bryor [Briar or Brier] creek bridge the same evening the regiment commanded by Neel as aforesaid was marched up said creek about twelve miles to another bridge on said creek being then verry near the british army. under the command of Cornwallace. the next day the regiment remarched to the camps of Gen^l Ash. not being able to make an effectual attack on the British army with a single regiment. the next day 3rd March the regiment was again ordered out by Gen^l Ash and was marched a distance of about sixteen miles to a Fort called Hudson. near that place our troops took sundry prisoners on the same evening the troops were marched back to the camp of Gen^l Ash. on reaching the camp sometime in the night it was discovered that Gen^l Ash during the day had been defeated by the British troops¹⁰, and at that time out of the command of Maj^r Ross the number of about twenty nine were taken prisoners and among them this declarant. the ballance of Majr Ross command escaped and dispersed in all directions. after remaining a prisoner in the British camp a day or two was marched as a prisoner to Savannah and put on board the ever memorable and celebrated prison ship called the Munificence then lying in the harbour at Savannah. all this last mentioned services were in the county or district of York in said State of South Carolina and occupied the space of one month. he states that he remained a prisoner on board said ship in said harbour deprived of common necessities of life for the space of more than Eight months when he was exchanged at Savannah and delivered to the Gen^l commanding at Charlestown whose name was [Benjamin] Lincoln in a few days he reached home having been absent more than nine months afterwards in the year 1780 the state of South Carolina was infested with the British army and the Torys. Sumpter [Thomas Sumter] was elected general of the South Carolina Militia immediately after the Battle at Ramsour¹¹. he then in the month of July in said year enrolled himself in a company commanded by Capt John Moffitt whose company was attached to the command of Colⁿ W^m Brattan [William Bratton]¹². the troops were immediately marched down to Catabaw [Catawba] River and was engaged in the battle fought with Capt. Hook [Christian Huck] and defeated them this engagement took place in the month of august 1780¹³. where a number of prisoners were taken by the Whig party. a few days afterwards he was again engaged against the Torys and every man of the company was taken but himself¹⁴. In making his escape at that time he crippled one of his feet and returned home he did not recover from this injury untill after Fergesons defeat¹⁵ and untill near about six months. having been engaged about in the two last mentioned campaigns several months the exact time

⁸ William Love, as ensign, was the third (or fourth ranking officer in a militia company. He may have been captured at Brier Creek.

⁹ Francis (Frank) Ross d. 1779 at an engagement called Oconee or Little Spirit Creek. He rose to major in the York Co. SC militia

¹⁰ Battle of Brier Creek or Ashe's Defeat, March 3, 1779

¹¹ Ramsour's Mill June 20, 1780

¹² William Bratton 1743-1815 rose to colonel of the York Co SC militia

¹³ Huck's Defeat or Williamson's Plantation July 12, 1780

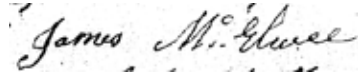
¹⁴ possibly Fishing Creek August 18, 1780

¹⁵ Kings Mountain Oct. 7, 1780

he cannot recollect. he states further that in the year 1781 he was in Washington County in the State of Virginia in the month of February. he enrolled himself in a company of militia commanded by Capt Daisy who was under the command of Colonel William Campbell who was attached to the command of Gen^l Green he there served one tour of duty the time he does not recollect. the troops were dismissed and he returned to South Carolina York district having received no written discharge afterwards in the month of March 1782 he was drafted into Capt Meeks [prob. James Meek]¹⁶ company of militia which was attached to the regt. commanded by Majr James Wallice [Major James Wallace]¹⁷ the troops were marched to Orangeberg and there stationed to guard that village and to keep the Torys from falling on Gen^l Greens rear and baggage & where he remained the space of two months when he was discharged and returned home he states that he cannot say how long he was in the service of his country at the different times. nor has he here set forth all the services he rendered, the time of actual service including the times on board the prison ship was more than two years. he states that he never received at any time from any officer any evidence of services or regular discharge in writing that he remained in said District of York in South Carolina ever since the war of the Revolution untill the month of March 1832 when he removed to this county (Pike County Missouri) where he now lives, that there is no person living in the state of Missouri except Sam^l Watson Sen^r¹⁸ by whom he can prove actual service that is known he states that there is no preacher or minister of the gospel in this country by whom to prove his credibility having but recently settled here. and is therefore compelled to rely on others who have known him by character many years. and in answer to Questions propounded by the said court, he doth solemnly swear that he was born in the state of virginia in the year 1758. Question Have you any Record of your age. Ans My age is recorded in the family Bible and in sundry other Books. Ques Where were you living when called into service Where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live Ans When called into the service I was living in the district of York in South Carolina I have lived in said District ever since the war until the month of March last. I now reside in the County of Pike in the state of Missouri. How were you called into service: were you drafted did you volunteer: or were you a substitute: I sometimes volunteered: at one time I was drafted I never was a substitute my declaration shows the manner of my going into service as well as if again repeated Ques state the names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops when you served. such continental regiments as you can recollect Ans I remember Gen^l Moultrie Col afterwards Gen^l Sumpter Capt E Polk Capt James Duff Lt. Sam^l Watson were he believes regular officers in that region these officers were stationed at Charlestown being the officers of a regiment of a Continental regiment stationed at that place Ques did you ever receive a discharge from the service and if so by whom was it given Answer I never received a written discharge from the service from any person Question State the names of persons to Whom you are known in your present neighbourhood who can testify to your character for veracity and their belief of your services as a soldier of the revolution. Answer Sam^l Watson Sen^r & John Watson

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatsoever to a pension or annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the pensions of the agency of any state or (if any) only on that of the agency of the state of South Carolina.

James M^cElwee



Sworn to and subscribed this day and year aforesaid in open

Court before me Levi Pettibone Clerk

We Sam^l Watson Sen^r and John Watson residing in the county of Pike and state of Missouri Do hereby certify that we are well acquainted with James M^c Elwee who has subscribed and sworn to the above and

¹⁶ prob. James Meek 1758-1819 captain in the York Co SC militia.

¹⁷ prob. [James Wallace S19145](#)

¹⁸ [Samuel Watson S17187](#); not to be confused with Col. Samuel Watson mentioned earlier in the application

foregoing Declaration. that we have known him the said James M^CElwee for more than fifty years having each of us lived in the district of York in the state of South Carolina in the same Neighbourhood with him. that we believe he is seventy four years of age. that he was then ~~and still is~~ reported and believed in the neighborhood where he resided in Carolina and in the neighbourhood where he now resides to have been a soldier of the Revolution and that we concur in that opinion:-- and I the said Samuel Watson Sen^r do further certify that the said James McElwee was a soldier in the same company to which I was attached, in the year 1776 towit the company commanded by Capt W^m Byers who was under the command of Majr Watson [Samuel Watson] who was commanded by Col Neel [Thomas Neel] as is set forth in this the said M^CElwee's Declaration. that I was with him at the battle of the black Hole as described by him in his Declaration that I well know of his having rendered important services on that occasion. I further certify that I distinctly remember the injury he received in his ancle by a strain and that it was on that account that he was sent home with the wounded.

And I the said Sam^l Watson Sen^r do further certify that I was attached to and belonged to the same company with him the said M^CElwee at the Hooks defeat towit the company commanded by Captain Moffit [John Moffett] this company was attached to the command of Col William Bratton and was in the engagement with Hook some time in the month of August 1780¹⁹ [Huck's Defeat was July 12, 1780]. and I the said Samuel Watson Sen^r do further certify from my knowledge and acquaintance with the said James M^CElwee in the days of the Revolutionary war from the difficulties that actually existed in that region and from what was then and still is the character of the said James that he rendered the services set forth in his said Declaration tho I have no personal knowledge of his having rendered any other services than those I have stated above. I am aged seventy eight years and tho my body is fast decaying I have a perfect recollection of the facts above stated. This much I know and always understood that he the said James was always willing to do his duty and I believe did do and perform his equal share of the services in that day.

Sam^l Watson Sen^r
his
John (X) Watson
mark

Subscribed and Sworn to in open Court this September
26th A.D. 1832 before me Levi Pettibone Clerk Circuit Court--

[James McElwee received a pension of \$76.66 for 23 months as a private in the militia on May 28, 1833 commencing March 4, 1831]

[p 55]

[On April 27, 1848 Rhoda McElwee of Cuivre Twp Pike County, Mo aged 71 applied for a pension under 1848 law stating that she was the widow of James McElwee a Revolutionary pensioner and that she remained a widow.]

[p. 14. Nov. 10, 1853 Dan McElwee age 47 the son of James and Rhoda McElwee applied in Pike Co., MO for pension due his mother as widow of the revolutionary pensioner James McElwee. His parents were married in Abbeville District SC in 1791, James McElwee died in Pike Co, Missouri , January 13, 1834 and Rhoda McElwee died in Pike County Missouri August 22, 1848. Surviving Children of Rhoda McElwee were Dan McElwee, James McElwee, Ann McElwee, Ross McElwee, Mary McElwee, Elizabeth Mc Elwee, and Abner McElwee and Rhoda McElwee.]

[p.17 The following family information in the file is undated but may be associated with the application of Dan McElwee on Nov. 10, 1853

¹⁹ Huck's Defeat was actually July 12, 1780.

James Mc Elwee b. Aug. 19, 1753

Ann McElwee b. April 1, 1795

James McElwee b. Sept. 17, 1802

Dan Mc Elwee b. May 2, 1806

Rhoda McElwee b. June 8, 1808

Ross McElwee b. May 20, 1809

Mary McElwee b. July 9, 1812

Abner McElwee b. Jan. 6, 1814

Elizabeth McElwee b. Oct. 1, 1817]

[p.39 In 1854 James Jordan testified that he recalled the marriage of James McElwee and Rhoda Black took place in 1793, when she was 16 or 17, and that it was at least 16 months before the birth of their first child. He stated that his brother James Jordan²⁰ served in the revolution with James McElwee.]

[p. 23 On May 11, 1854, a widows pension granted to (the surviving children of) Rhoda McElwee commencing March 4, 1843 at 76 dollars and 66 cents per annum.]

²⁰ [James Jordan S32346](#)