

## Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of William Hughs (Hughes) W7822 Sarah fn92NC  
Transcribed by Will Graves 6/19/11

[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 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1786." Please call errors or omissions to my attention.]

[fn p. 22]

The State of Alabama Shelby County: County Court of August Term 1832

On this 20th day of August 1832 personally appeared in open Court before Leonard Tarrant Judge of the County Court for the said County of Shelby now sitting, William Hughes a resident of the County and State aforesaid, aged about Eighty 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 June 7th 1832 – That he entered the service of the United States under the following named Officers and served as herein stated – Applicant states that he entered the Service of the United States in the year 1776 as well as he can recollect. That he lived in Wake County North Carolina when he entered the service, that he volunteered and was commanded by Captain Drury Kade [Drury Cade], William Bugg Lieutenant in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Benjamin Few, that he served about three months under Captain Kade who resigned that he was then commanded by Captain Ignatius Few<sup>1</sup> – that he was in the battle of Nassaw [Nassau<sup>1</sup>] in which Captain Few was taken prisoner. That he was then commanded by Captain Williams – during his command he was principally employed in scouting parties on the rivers Satilla and Altamaha in Georgia – against the British Indians and Tories – that during this time he was under the command of Major James Moore of North Carolina by whom he was discharged having served 18 months. That during this service Colonel Few resigned and he was then under Colonel William Baker and then under Major John Baker and lastly by Major John James Moore – That he was discharged by Major Moore at Purins-burg [Purrysburg] on Savannah River. That his discharge with other papers was washed to pieces in his clothes.

S/ William Hughs, X his mark

That in his second tour he volunteered for five months in the North Carolina Militia under Captain Woodson Daniel and James Harad Lieutenant – during which time General Rutherford was our commanding officer – one Collier was our Colonel – That he was in the battle in which General Ash [John Ashe] was defeated at Brier Creek [March 3, 1779] in Georgia below Augusta – during which time their rendezvous was principally on Savannah River in South Carolina. That he was discharged by Captain Blount at Hillsboro North Carolina. That his third tour was

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<sup>1</sup> According to his obituary which appeared in the Savannah Republican 3/8/1810, he died on February 18, 1810 in Columbia County, Georgia in his 60<sup>th</sup> year. "He served in the Revolutionary War as a Captain of Dragoons... Was taken prisoner by the British and confined a long time in a dungeon at St. Augustine, Florida." Quoted from Jeanette Holland Austin, *The Georgians: Genealogies of Pioneer Settlers*, Baltimore, Genealogical Pub. Co. 1984, p. 118.

for two months in the North Carolina volunteers under Captain Matthew McCullers of North Carolina Wake County and fought under old General Butler against Colonel Fanin [David Fanning] and Hector McNeal, both Tories, in which McNeal was killed, on Cane Creek in North Carolina – And returned home without any discharge. That he does not recollect the dates of his discharge. That he did not serve with any Continental troops – neither does he recollect any of the regular officers, except Colonel William Washington whom he knew. Applicant states that he has no documentary evidence in his possession or elsewhere that would establish his claim. That he knows of no person now living that can prove the service of applicant, the last of applicant's Associates in the war is one Major Simon Hadley who was alive about a year since a resident of the Cumberland County North Carolina.

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 and subscribed the day and year aforesaid

S/ William Hughs, X his mark

[James Walker, a clergyman, and O. B. Hovis gave the standard supporting affidavit.]

Answers to 7 questions propounded by the Court to the applicant agreeably to the directions contained in the printed form and instructions issued by the Department of War –

1<sup>st</sup> I was born in Bladen District or County South Carolina in 1752

2nd. I had a record of my age but have lost it.

3rd. I was living in Wake County in North Carolina near Raleigh when I went into the service – I resided in said County till about 1783 when I removed to Richmond County in Georgia. I then removed to Columbia County then to Warren County Georgia – then to Montgomery County Georgia – I then removed to West Tennessee Franklin County where I resided nine years – In 1813 I removed to Alabama – where I now reside.

4th. Anr. I volunteered when I entered the service.

5<sup>th</sup> Anr. There were no regular officers with the troops where applicant served, neither were there any Continental troops along – he thinks he has named all the officers whose names he recollects – except Major Sharp and Adjutant Laughman who were under General Rutherford, whose aid de Camp was James Rutherford. Applicant [Camden] give no better account of his services that already stated, volunteered in North Carolina – served 3 tours, as he has stated and served in North and South Carolina in Georgia and in a scout on St. Mary's River.

Anrs. 6th. I was twice discharge from the service but lost my papers as stated – but the last time was dismissed without a discharge.

Anr. 7th. The court will call Green McLeroy, Isaac Ertill [?], Sam. W. Reardis [?], Danl. E. Walroid [?] and Sam Nabors and O. B. Hovis.

[fn p. 5: On August 18 1834 in Shelby County Alabama, Sarah Hughes, the widow of William Hughes exhibited in court the pension certificate of her husband under which he was to receive \$80 per annum for his service in the revolution during his natural life; the certificate of pension bears the number 13773; that her husband died April 24, 1833; and that she seeks to recover the pension due him as of the date of his death.]

[fn p. 18: On November 4, 1839, in Shelby County Alabama, Sarah Hughes, about 73 years of age, filed for a widow's pension under the 1836 act stating that she is the widow of William Hughes, a private in the North Carolina militia and a pensioner for his service in the revolution; that she married him about 3 years after the close of the Revolution the particular date not

recollected; that she has no record of said marriage; that they were married by Charles Crawford in Columbia County Georgia by advertisement; that she and her husband had 11 children; that her husband died April 24, 1833 in Shelby County Alabama and she has remained his widow ever since.]

[fn p. 29: On November 13, 1854 in Shelby County Alabama, William Hughes, 62, made a claim under the 1838, 1843, 1844 in 1848 acts in his capacity as the administrator of the estate of Mrs. Sarah Hughes, deceased, widow of William Hughes; that her name prior to her marriage was Sarah Eades; that her husband died in Shelby County Alabama April 25 1833; that she remained his widow until her death in Union Parish state of Louisiana August 23, 1853; that she died leaving 6 children who still survived her of whom declarant is one.]

[fn p. 48: On December 2, 1854 in Shelby County Alabama, Abraham Farr gave an affidavit in which the names of the children of the veteran and his wife who survived the death of the widow are given as follows:

Syltha Harper, about 66 years old (a resident of Shelby County Alabama)  
William Hughes, about 62 years old; (a resident of Shelby County Alabama)  
Abner A. Hughes, 58 year old (a resident of Chambers County Alabama)  
Henrietta Powell, about 54 years of age and a resident of Shelby County Alabama;  
Jeptha Hughes, about 52 years of age, a resident of Union Parish, Louisiana;  
Mary E. Chapman, about 45 years of age a resident of Union Parish Louisiana

[fn p. 27: names given of some of the children who survived the death of their mother, Sarah Hughes: William H. Hughes; Henrietta Powell, Mary E. Chapman, Abner A. Hughes

[fn p. 13: family record:

Benjamin Harper was born September 29 A.D. 1787  
Sytha Harper was born March 22 A.D. 1788  
William Harper their first born was born April 15 A.D. 1811  
Sarah E Harper was born September 2 A.D. 1812  
Lewrana C. Harper was born September 22 A.D. 1814  
Rebecca J Harper was born April 9th 1815  
Aleatha C. Harper was born June 12 A.D. 1817  
Elizabeth Ann Harper was born February 2, A.D. 1818  
James H Harper November 30, A.D. 1821  
Mary Ann Harper was born August 14 1825 [could be 1823]  
Martha Harper was born January 4 1826  
Henryrette Harper was born November the 26 A.D. 1828  
Benjamin Harper was married to Sytha Hughes July 10, 1810]

[fn p. 54: On March 16, 1856 in Shelby County Alabama, James H Evans and Martha J Evans his wife gave testimony among other things that Martha J Evans is the granddaughter of the veteran and his wife.]

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<sup>i</sup> Patricia Forster has shared the following regarding the engagement mentioned by the veteran:

The battle that the pensioner refers to as "Nassaw" (Nassau) is better known as the Battle of Thomas Creek. However, pensioners' applications usually refer to it as the Battle of Nassau

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Swamp. This battle took place in the Second Florida Expedition on May 17, 1777. The reason for the name of Nassau Swamp is that Col. John Baker's militia cavalry was camped on Thomas Creek with their backs on the edge of Nassau Swamp when ambushed by Thomas "Burnt Foot" Brown's Loyalists out of East Florida.

The background is long and involved and you will find the full and complete story in a book entitled, "Lachlan McIntosh and the Politics of Revolutionary Georgia" by Harvey H. Jackson, University of Georgia Press paperback edition (2003). The real beginning of the Second Florida Expedition was with South Carolina requiring an oath of abjuration of the king in February of 1777, whereby potential Loyalists had to abjure the king and recognize South Carolina or leave the state on terms that essentially boiled down to "pain of death." North Carolina and Georgia soon required similar oaths. The exodus of Loyalist families from those states into East Florida burdened Gov. Patrick Tonyn of E. Florida with provisioning the military as well as feeding refugees of men, women and children, most of whom were nonproductive in the war effort. This prompted the onslaught of raids increasing exponentially, mostly into Georgia, but as far ranging as South Carolina and even North Carolina, for provisions. Cattle rustling, plunder and rapine were carried out by Brown, Daniel McGirt, William Cunningham and Aquilla Hall to mention just a few. Action had to be taken on the offensive.

Events unfolded with the rise of Button Gwinnett in Georgia politics. Gwinnett and his cohort, Lyman Hall (both signers of the Declaration of Independence) came to prominence as radicals in the Revolutionary War political scene of Georgia. Although many patriots sought self-aggrandizement and political power from the opportunities presented by the upheaval of the Revolution, most did so on merit. Gwinnett sought political (and military) power through the character assassination of his opponents and other dirty tricks. Actually, from the facts presented about the death of Gov. Bulloch, who died mysteriously within the hour of his winning the election, I believe that Gwinnett was behind the governor's unfortunate, but "timely," demise. Button Gwinnett was appointed President and Commander-in-Chief of Georgia as a result of Bulloch's death to serve until such time as elections could be held. Georgia was still under the control of its Council of Safety.

Now that you have a thumbnail sketch of the type of person we're talking about, it should come as no surprise that when Lachlan McIntosh was commissioned Brigadier General by the Continental Congress, a position to which Gwinnett aspired, Gwinnett did everything possible to destroy McIntosh's reputation, his livelihood, the livelihood of George and William McIntosh (Lachlan's brothers) and he had George thrown into jail on trumped up charges.

In spite of all of this, when Lachlan McIntosh came under attack, he played his cards close to the vest. He did not take immediate retaliation against Gwinnett, but tried to work within the system. George McIntosh was finally released on bail by the Council of Safety, much to Gwinnett's chagrin, and with his brother's help made his way to Philadelphia where he could plead his case directly to Congress. Henry Laurens was a good friend of McIntosh and, I am sure with his influence, George obtained dismissal of all charges.

Meanwhile, Gwinnett sought to secure his position, with an eye on the governorship, by planning and executing a second expedition into East Florida and thereby saving Georgia. In doing so, he wanted to bring the military under civilian control and usurp the role of Gen. McIntosh. But Gwinnett did not have the wherewithal in logistics or strategic planning and fell into making the same mistakes that Gen. Charles Lee had made in the First Florida Expedition. At this point in time, Gen. Robert Howe was in command and after his first meeting with Gwinnett, tried to avoid dealing with the man altogether, but there was no escaping it and he did have to confer with Gwinnett. I can only imagine Howe's raised eyebrows at the inane proposals put forth by Gwinnett and his accusing Gen. McIntosh of disloyalty by consanguinity because he was related to George and William McIntosh. The charges were false, but many Patriots had Loyalist relatives and it was of no consequence. Gen. Howe did not want to commit his Continental troops to

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Gwinnett's outlandish schemes, but he was under pressure from Congress to commit forces to the expedition effort. What he did was to commit Continental troops to serve under McIntosh and whatever militia forces that could be mustered to serve under Gwinnett. He left Thomas Sumter, who was commissioned as a Lt. Col in the Continental Army at the time, with troops from South Carolina (both regulars and militia) in Georgia. But after a while he even pulled out the forces under Sumter.

The animosity between Gwinnett and McIntosh grew (mostly from the Gwinnett/Hall faction) and preparations for the expedition went very slowly. While they were holding separate councils of war and had running disputes, they were using up precious provisions on a military that was just sitting idle in Sunbury, waiting for orders. (See pension app. of [Warner Metcalf W4281](#)) McIntosh did try to get the expedition under way, but Gwinnett forestalled it by withholding the militia. When McIntosh told him that he would go without the militia, Gwinnett went running scared to the Council of Safety in Savannah because he thought that McIntosh just might succeed without him. Gen. McIntosh followed because he knew Gwinnett would lie. It appeared to the Georgia Council of Safety that the expedition was being mishandled and Gwinnett was called before the Council in hearings to explain why the expedition had not commenced. With both men, Gwinnett and McIntosh, being under question, the Council of Safety decided to take the middle course and chose Col. Samuel Elbert to lead the expedition.

Because Gwinnett had made himself so controversial (even for his party of radicals) in the process of attempting to destroy McIntosh and his brothers, when the election took place his party decided to run John Adam Treutlen for governor, who won easily. One is left with the impression that had Gwinnett just cooled his heels he might have achieved his goal of being elected governor, but his frenetic desperation exposed a man with little talent and even less scruples.

As the expedition got under way, Elbert did what most military strategists say is a dangerous thing to do in that he split his forces. Of course, if the outcome is successful, splitting the forces is not considered a mistake (i.e., Nathaniel Greene), but this was not to be the case for Elbert. The expedition left Sunbury on May 1, 1777. Col. Elbert put the militia cavalry under Col. John Baker, who was to go overland to meet up with him at Sawpit Bluff. Col. Elbert was to go via the inland waterway to meet Baker. On May 12, 1777, Baker reached Sawpit Bluff as planned. When Elbert's flotilla was delayed by winds and did not arrive on time, Baker decided to move his position and camped on Thomas Creek, a tributary of the Nassau River, on the edge of Nassau Swamp. Unbeknownst to Baker, the King's Rangers, under Thomas Brown, had been following him for some time. At about 10 o'clock on the morning of May 17th, 1777, Brown ambushed Baker's encampment. While some returned fire, most of the inexperienced militiamen threw down their guns and about half of them ran into the swamp! One man stole Baker's horse in order to get away. Many were taken prisoner (I am assuming that Captain Ignatius Few was among them), and a sufficient amount of men were killed to call it a massacre. Of those who escaped into the swamp, only 16 survived to make their way to the coast where they were picked up by Elbert's flotilla that proceeded to Amelia Island. There, the British had Elbert bottled up where he could not make any decisive move. With provisions running out, he called off the expedition.

Where there is a lot of confusion is that most researchers suppose that the inquiry by the Council of Safety into the expedition came *after* the outcome of the expedition was known. That was not the case. The inquiry actually started before and was ongoing during the expedition. The famous incident that grew out of these hearings is when Gwinnett was absolved of wrongdoing and an outraged McIntosh stood up and loudly proclaimed, "Button Gwinnett is a scoundrel and a lying rascal." (I agree) Soon after, Gwinnett had the temerity to send McIntosh (an experienced military man) a letter challenging him to a duel. McIntosh considered long and hard, because if he killed Gwinnett he could be charged with murder; however, if he just wounded him there would be no charges and his honor would be preserved. Gwinnett must have considered the same set of circumstances because it seems that each man only intended to wound the other. But, from the location of the

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wounds on both men (upper inner thigh), it appears that they each tried to emasculate the other. The date of the duel is May 16th, 1777, one day before the Battle of Nassau Swamp (and before the eventual failure of the expedition was known). "Mortification came on" and Gwinnett died three days later. I guess that means "infected" and that he did not die of shame...or in a fit of good taste.

McIntosh was initially regarded with sympathy. Even Gwinnett's wife came to visit him and held him blameless (she was probably relieved to be a widow) but McIntosh's enemies turned public opinion against him and George Washington had him yanked out of Georgia before he could be charged. On the question of McIntosh's loyalty, Washington said that he could find no fault in the man, and he assigned him to serve in the northeast part of the war. When Lachlan McIntosh returned to his plantation after the war, it was in a ruined state and he never recovered financially. He had a brief flurry of political success, but his old enemies soon drove him out of politics. It appears to me that if anyone had a chance of succeeding in the Second Florida Expedition it would have been Gen. Lachlan McIntosh. He seemed to be intelligent, level headed and had success in several battles, including the Battle of the Rice Boats. Col. Samuel Elbert, by his own admission, and reluctance to replace McIntosh, knew he was not the man for the job. The Battle of Nassau Swamp was the largest engagement of any of the three Florida Expeditions. After the Second Florida Expedition (debacle) Sumter went to Philadelphia to testify before Congress and emerged with a full Colonel's commission. After the failure of the Third expedition he resigned his commission and went home in a huff. Button Gwinnett's signature is one of the rarest in the world and is sought after by collectors everywhere.