

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension application of Ishmael Titus R10623

Transcribed by Will Graves

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, County of Berkshire

On this 10th day of October A.D. 1832 personally appeared in open Court, before the Honorable William P. Walker, Judge of the Court of Probate, within and for said County of Berkshire, now sitting, Ishmael Titus, a resident of the town of Williamstown in the County of Berkshire and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, aged 89 years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth, on his oath, make the following declaration in order to attain the benefit of the act of Congress, passed June 7, 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers, and served as herein stated. That he entered the service of the United States under General Greene & Colonel Samuel Davies field Officers & Captain John Beverly Company Officer. He cannot state nor does he recollect the day, month or year he entered the service. He entered the service on the Atkin [sic, Yadkin] River in the County of Rowan [sic, Rowan] & State of North Carolina. He was in an engagement at Guilford under Colonel Samuel Isaacs and Captain John Beverly in this engagement Colonel Isaacs was taken and carried to Augustine by the British, and one other engagement at Deep River under Colonel Absalom Cleveland, and one other engagement at King's Mountain under Colonel Cleveland. He fought at Guilford, King's Mountain, at Deep River as stated above. He marched through the State of North Carolina. He was a substitute for Lawrence Ross who was drafted. He was born a slave in the County then called Amelia below Lunenburg in the State of Virginia to Harry Bluford, lived with him till he was about 13 years old and was then sold to John Muir & Dick Muir who lived on Dan River in the State of North Carolina. He lived with them a long while does not recollect how long & was then sold to Lawrence Ross with whom he lived at the time he was a substitute for said Ross. For his being a substitute for Lawrence Ross who was his master he was to have his freedom. He cannot state when he left the service on account of his ignorance being brought up as a slave – he was in the service three years as a substitute to Lawrence Ross who was drafted for that time. He served under Col. Absalom Cleveland & in the Company commanded by Captain John Beverly he knew General Morgan [Daniel Morgan], General Gates [Horatio Gates], General Greene [Nathanael Greene], Colonel Absalom Cleveland & Captain John Beverly.

He has no documentary evidence of his services & knows of no person whose testimony he can procure to testify to his services. He never received a discharge from the service. He has no record of his age. He lived when he was a substitute for said Ross & at the time he entered the service with said Ross on the Atkin [sic, Yadkin] River in the County of Rowan & State of North Carolina and after he was discharged he lived at [illegible name, looks like "Ottiwich"] near New Rochelle from there he moved to Ballston in the State of New York from there he went to Troy in said State of New York from there to Bennington in the State of Vermont & from there he removed to Williamstown in the County of Berkshire & Commonwealth of Massachusetts, where he now resides & has for the last 15 years. He is acquainted with Rev. Ralph McGridley, Thomas F. Coxsey, & Stephen Hartford, Chiny Taft who reside in said Williamstown will testify as to his character for veracity & their belief of his services as a soldier of the Revolution.

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.

S/ Ishmael Titus, X his mark

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

S/ W. P. Walker, J. Probate

I, Ishmael Titus, of Williamstown in the County of Berkshire and Commonwealth of Massachusetts being duly sworn according to law do on my oath make the following additional declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7th, 1832. That I cannot by reason of old age and the consequent loss of memory swear when the battles mentioned in my former declaration took place, but I find from the History of the Revolution that the Battle of King's Mountain was fought in October 1780 and that Colonel Cleveland commanded at that time as mentioned in my former declaration. I also find from History that the Battle at Guilford was fought in March 1781 which I was at as mentioned in my former declaration. I was also at Gates' Defeat [Battle of Camden] did not arrive there till the American Army began to retreat. This battle I find from the History was fought in August 1780. I was one of the number who retreated to Salisbury. I entered the service in the spring of the year more than a year previous to Gates' Defeat which must have been in the year 1779. The statement in my former declaration that I was in service three years as a substitute for Lawrence Ross who was my Master, is wrong. I was a substitute for said Ross for one year only and this year was previous to any Battles during this time some skirmishes took place among the Tories & Indians was stationed during the winter at a place called then Fort Independence. After the year was expired for which I was to have my freedom as stated in my former declaration I enlisted into the Army during the war during the term of my enlistment the Battles mentioned were fought. I was discharged on the Holston River at a Log Court House, he cannot recollect the name of the place this was at the close of the war. I served not less than the periods mentioned below and in the following grades. For one year as a substitute for Lawrence Ross, I served as a soldier. For more than two years I served (having enlisted) as a soldier and for such service I claim a pension.

[There are several lines of text written in a different handwriting and in a mostly illegible script following the above. The name of Col. Samuel Isaacs and General Greene can be discerned.]

S/ Ishmael Titus, X his mark

I, the above named Ishmael Titus, being duly sworn do on my oath make the following affidavit in addition to my former declarations, viz.: When I enlisted, I enlisted under Captain John Cleveland, son of Colonel Absalom Cleveland. I stated in my former declaration that it was in Captain John Beverly's Company. I recollect now that he was the man to whom I made application to be enlisted & not the Captain of the Company. One other fact which I omitted to state before, I now recollect, viz.: After I was dismissed at Holston River after the war was closed, coming home to Yadkin River, I (with ten others) was taken upon the top of the Allegheny Mountains by a party of Tories headed by a man they called Captain Bill Riddle. I recollect it was on Thursday in the afternoon we were carried back to the foot of the Mountain & there kept all night with our hands tied & a guard put over us the next day a guard was over us all day, our [illegible word,

written over, could be “Arms” or “Horses” or something else altogether] being taken from us. On Saturday they brought to us Col. Cleveland as a prisoner & bound him in the same manner. The next morning, I was sent by the Tories to look for the Tories' horses. I found all but one & took them back to the Tories. Then I was sent to search for the other horse on horseback, while looking after this horse, I discovered two companies under the command of Captains Cleveland, they inquired if I knew anything about their Father Colonel Absalom Cleveland. I told him where he was & went with them to the place where the Tories had him. Colonel Cleveland as soon as he saw them said [“Come on my Boys,[”] when they rushed forward & shot at the Tories, they wounded one in the back, the rest fled into the Woods we then all of us came home. Some one or two months after this, I saw all but one of the Tories viz. (nine) hung at Rowan Court house.

Dated at Williamstown, this fifth day of December A.D. 1833.

S/ Ishmael Titus, X his mark