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Hall history

Revolutionary soldier moved to Hall County

By MRS. SYBIL McRAY
Special to The Times

John Collins Sr., Revolutionary soldier of South Carolina, according to his declaration for a war pension, moved to Hall County from Franklin County in 1813. He is listed in the 1820 Federal Census of Hall County and the publication, "First Hundred Years of Cobb County, Ga.," names John Collins, Revolutionary veteran, a resident of Cobb County.

The pension roll for Revolutionary soldiers residing in Hall County names John Collins, Sen. Pvt S.C. Mil. He was pensioned May 23, 1834, and was age 73 years. The declaration for the pension was made in Hall County courthouse.

"JOHN COLLINS Sr., on Jan. 27, 1832, in Hall County Georgia, made his declaration to obtain a Revolutionary Soldier's pension under the Act of 1832, and stated that he was a resident of Hall County and was 73 years of age on the 9th of December, previously."

The record of service in the Revolutionary War is quite lengthy and most interesting since John Collins evidences a remarkable memory as to dates and places. His description of his military service is very detailed and reveals much historical data as to the years of fighting for Independence.

Indians

"The deponent stated that he entered the service and served as follows: On or about 1st of Apr., 1776, the Cherokee Indians broke out in the frontiers of South Carolina and committed many depredations, and the militia was called out; that he volunteered on May 10, 1776, as a private or militiaman under Capt. John McAfee for six months or during the campaign, and was attached to Col. Neal's Regiment; they marched to a fort on the Seneca River, which he thought was called Fort Independence, and was there six or eight weeks during which time they had frequent skirmishes with the Indians; from there marched to what

was then called the Middle Settlement of the Cherokee Nation where we had a severed engagement with the Indians and defeated them with a loss on our side of 27 killed and 73 wounded. Gen. Andrew Williamson had command of the American army at this place; Cols. Neal, Thomas and Middleton and Sumter (afterwards Gen. Sumter) were with the army."

Skirmishes

"After this engagement they marched through the Nation several weeks in skirmishing, then returned to the white settlement and were discharged, Oct. 26, 1776.

Deponent stated that he then went to his father's (unnamed) who lived in what was then called Camden District, S.C., where he remained until October, 1778, when he left his father's contrary to his father's wishes, and went to where one Thomas Harrison lived, Harrison being a drafted militiaman, and hired himself to him as a substitute for a two months' tour and was placed under command of Capt. Robert McAfee, Col. Neal's Regiment.

"They marched to Phillips' Fort on Little River in Wilkes County, Ga., and remained there 'some weeks'; they then left a part of their detachment there and he went with the other part to a place called Powell's Fort now called Powelton near the high shoals of the Ogeechee River in Ga., where they remained until relieved by other troops. Was then discharged."

Re-enlists

John Collins then immediately re-enlisted in service as a substitute for a man whose name he could not recall, serving out about a two months term. He started home and on the way met a battalion of drafted horsemen under Major Francis Ross and enlisted as a substitute for Moses Kemp in the battalion of Capt. Thomas Barron.

"They marched to where Gen. Ashe 'lay' on Brier Creek in Georgia, and a few days later his command was attacked by the British and was 'shamefully defeated'. After this defeat, the South Carolina militia including himself rambled in small squads up the country to where Gen.

Williamson 'lay' with a few men, near Augusta. Remained there until March 17, 1779, when he was discharged after having served two months and ten days in 1778 and two months and 17 days in 1779."

Four companies were then raised for the express purpose of defending Charleston against the British and John Collins enrolled in one of the companies. He was appointed Sergeant-Major to the regiment and served in that rank until all the men were taken prisoners in the fall of Charleston. Collins was appointed officer on "Dec. 1st and the regiment was taken as prisoners about May 12th following," Deponent continued.

"Several days after the surrender he was paroled to Lincoln Co., N.C., and after being home about two months he was taken by a 'parcel of Tories' and was charged with violating his parole, was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged, but effected as escape.

Home Burns in Hall

Deponent stated that he lost all his discharges and certificates of character, etc., when his home was burned on Xmas Day, 1825 (in Hall County) losing all his effects. He stated he was born in Frederick County Md., Dec. 9, 1760. When first called into service he was living in Camden District, now York District, S.C. He remained in S.C. about four years after the war, then moved to Elbert County, Ga., lived there nine years, removed to Franklin County, Ga., lived there 18 years or until 1813 when he moved about 20 miles away to the place in Hall County where he was living at the time (1834).

The application was approved and John Collins was granted a pension of \$8.33 per year from March 4th, 1831, which he drew until his death. On Jan. 31, 1853, in Cobb County, Ga. Mrs. Phoebe Collins made declaration to obtain a widow's pension. She stated that she was the widow of John Collins, Sr., was 82 years of age, that she and her husband were married Nov. 30, 1786, in Burke County, Ga., and her maiden name was Sailors. She stated that her husband died in Cobb County near the village of Acworth, March 8, 1852 at the age of 91 years.

Inquiries flood writer about Hall ancestors

By MRS. SYBIL McRAY
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Almost every day a letter is received requesting information on Hall County ancestors. I have had inquiries from California to Florida and from many northern states. Many of these ancestor "hunters" are seeking information on relatives who lived in Hall County in the 1820's and 1860's. The questions are varied:

"Do you know who my great-grandparents were?"

"Do you know where my ancestor is buried?"

"Do you know the maiden

have been located and now the records are on microfilm at the State Archives in Atlanta. The minutes have been rebound with each page laminated.

Some of the Morgan Clan were members of Hopewell Church. David Morgan owned land in 1806 on Broad River, Franklin County. Elizabeth Morgan is named as a daughter in the will of James Riley (Rylee), a Revolutionary War Veteran and Baptist Minister, a resident of Hall county.

"My dear Mrs. McRay: Please send me Marriage Book