

James Busby (FPA W2995)

On 25May1818 in Fayette County KY, James Busby applied for a hardship pension. He stated that he was age 60 and that he enlisted in Goochland County VA in 1776. On 10Jul1820, in Fayette County, Busby stated that he was age 64 and named service in General Armand's cavalry. In Busby's third deposition, on 02Mar1835 in Bourbon County KY, Busby applied for a service pension. He stated that he would turn 80 next 02May and that he entered service Jun1780 in South Carolina. This places his date of birth at 02May1755. Bourbon County, apparently without knowledge of earlier testimony, did not question Busby about the three year difference in age or the four year difference in military service. On 03Jun1835, Busby testified again in Bourbon County. In this, the fourth account, his DOB is still 02May1755, but first service is back to 1776 in Goochland County. Busby's file contains a discharge signed by Armond Marquis de la Rouerie in Nov1783 at York Town. It does not state entry date or length of service, but states enlistment from Virginia. The pension bureau recorded Busby's service as two years.

William Abney of Rockcastle County gave supporting testimony that he knew James Busby at the York PA discharge.

In one deposition, James Busby stated that his first battle of consequence was at Camden (1780). In another he spoke of all the Pennsylvania and Jersey battles and that George Washington inspected his company. He stated that he and a few of the dragoons were in the Battle of Kings Mountain under Colonel Shelby. None of Isaac Shelby's troops mentioned cavalry at Kings Mountain, a rifleman, bayonet, and hand to hand battle. He stated that he was under Colonel William Washington at Cowpens where he was wounded. He did not state an officer's name for Guilford CH where he was again wounded, not the Siege of Yorktown. Some of the officers James Busby named were historically famous. Others were non-existent in other records and testimony. Bobby Gilmer Moss gave credibility to Busby's testimony, ironed out wrinkles from the inconsistent declarations, and listed Busby as a patriot wounded at the Battle of Cowpens.

Busby did not explain his transition from one officer to another nor from one battleground to another. It is possible that he misspoke some officer names, that the clerk misunderstood or misspelled names, or that Busby was old and confused. It is also possible that Busby was fraudulent. The only consistent fact is that he was discharged at York PA in Nov1783.

James Busby:

Born: 02May about 1755, probably Goochland County, VA

Married: 04Mar1790 Elizabeth Shackelford in Albemarle County VA.

Died: 20Jun1838, Bourbon County, KY

Children (ages 10Jul1820): Cynthia 25, Patsy 23, Gabriela 16, Sophia 14, George Ann 12, Polly 6, James 8, and Sarah Jane 4.