

Pension Application for Abraham Avery

S.28626

State of New York

County of Chenango SS

On this ninth day of October A.D. 1832 personally appeared in open court before the Court of Common Pleas of said County now sitting:

Present

Jno. Tracy

Nathan Taylor

Levi Bigelow

Hezekiah Reed

Charles York Esquires, Judges

Abraham Avery a resident of the town of Preston, in the County of Chenango said State of New York aged Seventy eight years and upwards, 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 7, 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated.

In the year 1778 about the first of July as near as he can recollect, he enlisted at Stonington Connecticut in the Connecticut Troops for the term of six months in a company commanded by Captain Hale of New London; Lieutenant John Belcher of Stonington, Joseph Hilback of Stonington, Company and Regiment under the command of colonel Webb & Major Jonathan [?]. The regiment rendezvoused at New London there a few weeks after he enlisted & then marched to Cambridge, Mass where he [blurred] attached to Sullivans [blurred] from New London to Cambridge [blurred] through Plainfield, Norwich, Providence, Pelham, Wretham & Roxbury and others which he does not remember.

At Cambridge he remained with his company and Regiment until his six months expired which was on or about the last of December. He was encamped upon winter Hill near Cambridge and they were engaged in keeping garrison. He was discharged verbally at Cambridge by the Colonel and returned home to Stonington.

While here at Cambridge he saw General Washington, General Putnam, and Colonel Parsons afterwards, General Parsons. He recollects hearing Benjamin Franklin making an address or speech at Roxbury, urging the soldiers to enlist again for one month after their time was out, to give time to recruit the army.

Among the men who were in the same company with him during their tour he remembers Christopher dean, Joseph Page, John dean & Henry Hilliard of Stonington who served with him and were discharged at the same time with him.

This deponent was a Corporal in the said Company during the whole term.

He has no documentary evidence of this term of service except the accompanying affidavits of Christopher Dean, & Nathaniel Avery—and he knows of no other persons living whose testimony he can procure except these.

On or about the first day of January 1776 at Stonington, Connecticut, he enlisted into the Continental service of the United States for one year, into a company commanded by Captain James Eldridge, Lieutenants Babcock of Stonington and Daniel Colliers of the same place. The regiment was under the command of Samuel Holden Parsons, the Colonel, the other officers he does not recollect. The officer who enlisted him was Lieutenant Collins, who promised him that if he would enlist into the Artificers at Cambridge, he would discharge him from the Company.

After he had enlisted he marched with his company to Roxbury, passing on the same route that he did before. Here he was struck from the roll of the company, agreeable to his engagement with Lieut Collins, and he went immediately to Cambridge and enlisted into the Artificers, under Captain Bacon, afterwards Major Bacon who had charge of the Artificers employed in the gun & Blacksmithing business. His term of enlistment into the artificers was until the year for which he had enlisted under Captain Eldredge had expired. He remained at Cambridge employed as an armorer, mending guns &c. until the British evacuated Boston when they (the artificers) marched at New London and there took shipping to New York.

In marching from Cambridge to New London they passed thro Roxbury Providence and on the direct route to New London. He there arrived at New York he was employed at the Kings Yards at the Armor business until after the Battle on Long Island when they retreated from New York over Kingside where he remained a short time and from there along on the White Plains. He was not in the action at White Plains, but he saw the engagement – from there they went to Peekskill where they remained until the first of January or about that time when his time of one year had expired and he was verbally discharged by his officers at Peekskill & came home. He further mentions that after their arrival at New York from Cambridge the Artificers were formed into a Regiment by themselves under Col. Brewer.

The Captain of the Company of Artificers to which this deponent belonged was named John Hillard of Stonington at New York, the Lieutenant and Ensign of the company were called off to join the Northern Army at Ticonderoga and this deponent, being the orderly sergeant of the company was required to act as Lieutenant in that place.

At New York he knew General Washington, General Putnam, General Parsons and others.

He knew Joseph Latham of Stonington who was appointed 2nd Sergeant of the Regiment of artificers on to reorganization in New York. He also knew Joseph Brewster & Thurston Hilliard of Stonington, and one Mr. Poss & Tredwell of Massachusetts, who served with and were discharged with him. Captain Sergeants also had the command of one company of Artificers. One Eale, was Captain of another.

He has no documentary evidence of this service except the accompanying affidavit of his Brother Nathaniel Avery, who was at New York at the time he was, and who was in Col. Parsons and afterwards Col. Tylers Regiment was a Sergeant and was in the Long Island Battle.—he knows of no person living whose testimony he can procure to his service except the said Nathaniel Avery.

And this deponent further states that he made application in 1819 or 1820 for a pension, under the pension Law of March 18, 1818 and was placed upon the Pension Roll—His certificate which is herewith forwarded is dated, March 27, 1820. He drew one payment of about \$35.00 and was struck from the roll on account of property and has not since been restored.

This deponent deems it proper to state that when he made his application for a pension under the law of March 18, 1818, Judge Noyes, one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of the County of Chenango, made out his papers for him and stated to him that it was unnecessary for him to state any more than that he enlisted into Capt Eldredges company and did duty for one year; and he accordingly made out the papers in that way—This will account for his not giving the account at that time of his being transferred from Captain Eldredges Company into the artificers as he has stated into this declaration.

Maine Service.

In 1778 in the month of December as he thinks but cannot recollect the precise time, he went from Stonington, Connecticut to Boston and enlisted at that place, as an armorer or Gun Smith on board of the Brig “Eagle” a privateering Brig; for the cruise—Elijah Luce (of Providence he thinks) was the Captain of the Privateer—Cobb was a Lieutenant—there was a crew of not far from 40 hands—He sailed in the Eagle from Boston in three or four weeks after he volunteered for Surinam cruising along by the way—Surinam was the first port they entered –

They were at Surinam about a week, but did not land—from there they sailed to the West Indies and cruising off Anguilla they captured a small British Sloop carrying 8 Carriage guns & 18 swivels, the sloop struck without a fight. And on the same day (being not far from the first of May 1779) they were themselves captured by a British Tender to a 50 gun ship commanded by Admiral Young. The “Eagle” struck after a fight of about one hour and a half, none of the hands were killed, but the Captain was wounded—They were taken into the English Harbor at Antiqua and put on board the Admiral ship having been kept in the hold of the tender 3 days ironed.

There was there a 50 gun ship called the “Renown” Captain Bottom, whose hands had deserted to the number of 35 – and this deponent with 10 others were put on board to assist in working the vessel. They sailed from there to the British Channel to convoy a [Seyan?] fleet of three hundred & odd sail—from the Channel they sailed back to America and took on the voyage on American Brig boarded with live stock &c.

They came into New York Hook where they petitioned Admiral Howe to be placed on board a Prison ship agreeable to the orders of admiral Young and they (the American Prisoners on board the “Renown”) were put on board a prisoner ship which lay up the North River—They were in the Prison ship about ten days when they were put on shore on parole on the New Jersey shore. This was about the last of August—and he had been four months on board a british [British] vessel & in a prison ship.

From the place he was landed or put on a shore at, he went home to Stonington entirely destitute of money, without hat or clothing to cover his nakedness.

Among the men on the “Renown” who were put on board with this deponent at Antigua were Elijah Plummer or Preston Connecticut, one Green of Providence Isaac Olney of do [ditto] James Coddington of do & Thomas Bellows of Groton, Conn.

He has no documentary Evidence of his service in this cruise—except what is contained in his brothers affidavit accompanying this declaration and he knows of no person living who can testify to his services.

In answer to the interrogatories required by the War department to be put to applicants for Pensions he states thus:

1st He was born in Stonington New London Co. Connecticut on the 20th day of May in the year 1754.

2nd He has no record of his age except what is contained on the Town Clerks Records of Stonington where his age is recorded.

3rd He lived at Stonington Connecticut, each time he enlisted—except when he went Privateering when he volunteered at Boston. Since the Revolutionary War he has resided in Guilford Vermont, in Colraine Massachusetts; in Rome, Oneida Co., N.Y., from there he removed about 21 years since to Preston Chenango County N.Y., where he has ever since resided and where he now resides.

4th He volunteered each time that he entered the service, military or marine.

5th This question is answered as fully in his declaration in all respects as he is able to do it.

6th Never received a written discharge from the service—was always verbally discharged by his officers.

He gives the names of the Rev. Jedidiah Randall, Col. John Randall, Jarvis K. Pike, Clerk of Chenango, James Birdsall Cashier of the Bank of Chenango, of Norwich, Smith Johnson, D. William Mason of Preston as men living in his present neighborhood to whom he is known & who can testify as to his character for veracity and their belief of his services as s soldier of the Revolution.

He 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, except that of the agency of the State of New York, from which he does not desire any benefit, being deprived of the pension on account of property. (Signed) Abraham Avery.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid. J. H. Pike, Clk.