

Pension Application for William Banister or Bannister

S.9809

State of New York

Genesee County SS.

On this first day of August 1835 appeared before William Mitchell a Judge of County Courts of Genesee County aforesaid William Banister a resident of the town of Stafford in said County of Genesee and State aforesaid aged seventy seven 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 provision made by the act of Congress passed June 7, 1832.

That is to say—I enlisted under Captain Gray in July 1776 as a fifer for the term of four months. I then lived in the town of Chesterfield in the county of Hampshire and state of Massachusetts. I immediately entered upon service soon after Captain Gray was taken sick and I believe Lieutenant Fowler then took the command of the company.

I do not recollect the name of the Colonel of the regiment. He lived in Montague in the said county of Hampshire, our company was a militia Company. We marched to Ticonderoga and went to fortifying.

The British were coming up the lake, we went out frequently on scouting parties. Some of the army was at Crown Point but the headquarters were at Ticonderoga. The Americans were put to it to get men and offered a bounty of five pounds, on further reflection I think Woodbridge was our Colonel, General Gates was commander in chief of the Northern army at that time. I think Warren was Brigadier General. I had the camp distemper & was dismissed seven days before the expiration of the term of my enlistment. I got home by land the best way I could and was longer getting home than the balance of the four months. Gates was a pretty harsh man—one of the southern colonel's time was out and he would go home and general Gates was so angry about it that he had the [rogue's?] march played after him; as far as Lake George. I think the Colonel's name was Wayne--I received no written discharge. At this time I served at least four months.

I volunteered under Captain Christopher Banister for two months in April 1777 as a musician. The company was a militia company and we went to Ticonderoga again General Sinclair commanded at Ticonderoga. He was from the south. Colonel Wells was the Colonel and he gave me a fife Major's commission, which was afterwards burnt up. I served this term as fife major. The army was still fortifying and the British had got on with their main army and we were afraid to go out much for the British would send out parties and pick off our men.

I served two months and four days this time and continued there until the British came on and drove us out of the fort, we retreated by land & water and we had a smart battle with the British the second day we retreated at [Hubbardstown] Hubbardston and Colonel Francis of the Continental troops was killed. I was dismissed and went home to Chesterfield. I received no written discharge.

I staid [stayed] at home long enough to shift my clothes & eat one meal of victuals and turned about and went back & others with me and we kept forming a company as

fast as we could get men together. Jo Warren commanded us, we were Militia. I volunteered as a musician but I put my fife under my clothes & took a gun & bayonet and served this time sometimes as fifer but generally the fife was not long enough to reach the enemy and so I took a gun and bayonet the most of the time. General Gates commanded the army we were under different Colonels. Colonel Brown and sometimes Colonel Herrick. Our Captain Jo. Warren was a smart active man. He went out as a scout and I and most of the company with him and we were gave sixteen days and took sixty men from the British on that scout and very much property.

The 60 men were men that the British had taken from our men and were going to send them to Montreal. We were on that scout when the battle of Bennington took place. We passed through Bennington two days after the Battle

Our scout had got back & found into the army just about the time of Stillwater battle & our officers gave us black rum to make us fight well. We were stationed at a Fort on the road by the river. Our Regiment did not get into the battle. That battle was fought principally by the Continental troops commanded by Arnold, Larnard, Lincoln & others.

Soon after the battle of Stillwater the British retreated to Saratoga & we followed up & kept a firing all the time and at Saratoga & Bemis Heights Burgoyne & his army were taken. Then we had to make provision to support the two armies, both had been on rather short allowance. The British army was divided up and sent different ways. We went to Albany, Kaatskill [Catskill] & White Plains, soon after this we were discharged no written discharges were given.

I went to Pittsfield & from there home to Chesterfield. I served this time four months and a half.

In 1780 or 1781 I volunteered under Captain Bonney of the Militia and served as first Sergeant. We marched to New London & fortified Fort Trumbull & Fort Groton. I went in the latter part of July or fist of August and served one month and we were discharged. No written discharges were given. Colonel Porter commanded the Regiment. We was form Old Hadley on my return home I passed through Hartford, Windham & other towns.

I moved from Chesterfield in about twenty four years after the war to Phelps in the State of New York where I lived one year. I thin moved to Galin in the same state where I lived ten years or thereabouts then I moved to Wolcott & lived there two or three years, from Wolcott I moved to LeRoy Genesee County State of New York where I lived about two years; from LeRoy I moved to yate in Orleans County in the same state where I lived about six years, and form Yates I moved to Stafford where I now reside and have resided for three months last past.

In was born in 1758 in Brookfield Worcester County Massachusetts. I do not know that any surviving witness can be found by whom I can prove my services in the Revolutionary War or any part thereof other than appears herewith.

I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or an annuity except the present and I declare that my name is not on the pension roll of any agency in any state.

I have no record of my age to my knowledge. Lenard Anson & Willard Eddy are persons to whom I am known in my present neighborhood who can testify as to my character for veracity & their belief of my services. (Signed) Wm. Barrister

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid. William Mitchell. A Judge of Genesee County Courts.