

Pension Application for Jonas Churchill

S.15037

State of New York

Herkimer County

Personally appeared before me the undersigned a Justice of the Peace of the town of Little Falls in & for the County of Herkimer Jonas Churchill, who being duly sworn deposeth & saith, that by reason of old age and the consequent loss of memory, he cannot swear particularly as to the precise length of his service; but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than the periods mentioned below and in the following grades. Deponent was drafted into the State levies of the State of New York in the month of April, but the day of the month deponent cannot state in the year 1779 for nine months. (1) It was stated in his first declaration that he entered the service in the month of June but deponent was mistaken in that statement & never intended to have been so understood & begs leave to correct said mistakes.

It is stated in his former declaration that deponent could not recollect the name of the captain under whom he served during his first time, but on the mature reflection deponent can fully state that John Townsend who was mentioned in his former Statement as being his captain during his second term of service, was [sic] his captain during this first time of nine months. John McBride was Lieutenant deponents company was attached to a regiment commanded by Col. Dubois—the Majors name was Cornelius Benscouten (2) & the Adjutants name was John Ellsworth—The Regiment was collected at Poughkeepsie and marched to overtake & join General Sullivan's & the place appointed for that purpose was called the Cookhouse. The regiment crossed the North River at Esopus & marched for the Delaware to overtake & join Genl Sullivan as above stated—when the regiment arrived at the place appointed—the General had left the day before—The advance guard found a letter in the crotch of a tree, written by Genl Sullivan, directed to the Col. of the Regiment, requesting him to follow if when he arrived at that place to have provisions sufficient to last the troops a day & a half or two days in which time it was supposed he might overtake Genl. Sullivan but if he had not that quantity of provisions, then to return to Luckawack a small fort built on a Creek of that name, but the officers after consultation concluded not to follow Genl Sullivan & returned to Said Fort as directed—It was also understood by Deponent to be the order of General Sullivan, that the Regiment should be divided & small parties sent to different places as their services were required in the surrounding County in the region of the Delaware to guard the inhabitants—The company to which deponent belonged moved around in small parties during the summer till fall, when a greater part of the regiment was collected at Stoney Point, having for that purpose returned to Esopus & the North River & was carried down to Stoney Point in open boats—called Batteau's & remained there doing duty erecting houses & until near new years when they marched up the River to Fishkill & on New Year's day deponent was discharged. During this nine months deponent was on duty & in actual service all the time as above stated—Deponent was once during this time sent with others down towards New York after some deserters & succeeded in taking them & they were tried and punished.

In the fall of the year 1780 deponent believes it was in the month of October he was again drafted at Fishkill where he resided & joined the company at that place. It was stated in his former declaration that John Townsend (3) was Captain of the company at this time, which was a mistake & deponent begs leave to correct the same. Townsend was Captain of the company to which deponent belonged during his first service as above stated—That Captain (whose name deponent cannot recollect) who was appointed to command the company was a stranger to deponent & at the time he was appointed to command the company, deponent understood he was unwell & was expected soon to recover & would then join the company, which was given for this reason into the command of John McBride, (4) who acted as Capt & Lieutenant—and deponent cannot recollect the names of the other officers of the company—The company to which deponent belonged came up the North River in boats to Albany, where they remained about a week, & then marched up the Mohawk River to Fort Plain in the now County of Montgomery & joined the Regiment under Col. Willet (5) of the New York State levies of Militia—The company to which deponent belonged was directed to remain at Fort Plain with Col. Willet while a part of the Regiment was sent up the river to Fort Herkimer & Fort Dayton—Cornelius Benscouten (6) was Major under Col. Willet, the other officers deponent cannot recollect; the troops under Col. Willet were employed as guards to the inhabitants, spies & scouts & they were some part of the time at Fort Plain, Fort Herkimer & Dayton—the two latter about 22 or 23 miles farther up the Mohawk River; While deponent was at Fort Plain as above stated Genl. VanRensselaer (7) came up the Mohawk River from Albany with the Militia to attack the Indians & Tories who were encamped at a short distance from the Fort. At this time a battle was fought between the enemy & Col. Brown who commanded the militia, at Stone Arabia, deponent recollects that Col. Brown (8) was killed in this battle—the news of the battle was brought to the Fort & the men were called to arms, but did not know how large was the enemies force, & waited till morning expecting General VanRensselaer would come to the support of Col. Brown—Deponent recollects that Genl VanRensselaer was much blamed by the People at that time because he did not come on sooner to the support of Col. Brown at Stone Arabia, and the opinion prevailed that had he come to the support of Col. Brown the enemy might have been defeated, that deponent served at Fort Plain & its vicinity as above stated,

till the three months for which he was drafted expired & then he & his company were all dismissed & returned to Albany—deponent recollects that at the request of Col. Willet his company remained three days at Fort Plain after their three months had expired waiting for new levies to take their place--& then were dismissed & returned to Albany as aforesaid, & deponent returned to Fishkill in a boat—deponent further saith that during the aforesaid three months service—the captain before mentioned, came to Fort Plain to take command of the company, but was taken sick immediately & returned home & the command [?] on said McBride who acted during said term as Capt. & Lieutenant.

In the month of March after Brown's battle at Stone Arabia, in which he was killed as above stated—this deponent enlisted at the town of Fishkill where he resided & was to rendezvous, at the Village of Fishkill about three miles from his residence on the first day of April at which time deponent went to said village & joined his company which consisted of 15 individuals besides himself—their Captain's name was William Williams—who was the only officer with the company & deponent does not know that there were any others—The Village of Fishkill was a general depot for the Army where large quantities of provisions clothing & Munitions of war were collected & from there distributed to the troops as necessity required, there was a Gentleman there—who had the command & Superintendence of the whole whose name was Hays (9) as deponent believes & was Some times called General but more frequently Col. Who was sometimes assisted by one Major Keyes who was there part the time. The business of deponent & his company was to labor at loading & unloading the provisions &c. above mentioned & taking care of the same in the stone houses—deponent enlisted for one year as a fatigue man as it was [called] & commenced his term of service on the first day of April as above stated and continued & served at Fishkill at the afore mentioned business to the full end & expiration of the year for which he enlisted—deponent further states, during the year he was sent as an express to carry letters several times twice deponent was sent to Albany on this business once deponent went to a place near White Plains & more than a dozen times to Peekskill—and when he was not engaged in this business—deponent was laboring at Fishkill as above stated—during this year deponent was not engaged in any battles but served as above stated. Deponent & his company drew their regular rations & was promised at the time they enlisted that they would be entitled to draw eight dollars per month, but deponent never drew his pay as was promised & whether his brother soldiers did, deponent cannot say, but understood at the time they did not—deponent was discharged on the last day of March or the first day of April & deponent will not swear positively which but thinks the last day of March the year having expired for which he enlisted. This was deponents last service in the Revolutionary War & he never received a written discharge from the service at any time and further this deponent saith not. (Signed) Jonas Churchill.

Sworn & Subscribed this 23d day of November A.D. 1833 before me. John Dygert, Just. Peace

Herkimer County SS. On this 23d day of November A.D. 1833 before me the undersigned a Justice of the Peace in & for the County aforesaid Jonas Churchill whose name is Subscribed to the foregoing affidavit & made oath to the matters therein contained--& I do certify that I am well acquainted with the said Jonas Churchill--& that he sustains a fair character for truth & veracity & his statement is entitled to full credit & belief. John Dygert JP

End Notes—S.15037—Jonas Churchill

1. Jonas is mistaken as to the company and regiment for his 1779 service. In 1779, Jonas enlisted as a private in Captain William Faulkner's Company in Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant Albert Pawling's Regiment of New York State Levies. The other officers of Faulkner's Company were Lieutenant's Levi DeWitt and Thomas Ostrander. FROM: Revolutionary War Rolls 1775-1783, Series M-246, Roll 75, Folder 134, National Archives, Washington, D.C. In 1779 Colonel Lewis DuBois was still the Colonel of the Fifth New York Continental Regiment until he resigned on December 22, 1779. The Fifth New York was stationed in the Schoharie and Mohawk Valleys and went with Brigadier General James Clinton's Army and joined Major General John Sullivan's Army. Together they marched against the Indians in the western part of New York State.
2. Elias VanBenschoten was appointed Major on May 3, 1779, and John Elsworth, Jr., was appointed Adjutant on May 3, 1779 in Pawling's Levies.
3. So far Captain John Townsend is unknown. There were several Captain Townsend's but not with the first name of John.
4. John McFoght (McFaught, etc.) was appointed Lieutenant in Captain Daniel Gano's Company on July 1, 1780 in Colonel Lewis DuBois' Regiment of New York State Levies. Lieutenant McFoght was promoted Captain after Captain Gano left the regiment. John McBride served as Lieutenant in McFoght's Company. Jonas is listed as James.
5. The regiment was commanded by Colonel DuBois not Marinus Willett. He was not in the Mohawk Valley in 1780. Willett at this time was the Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant of the Fifth New York Continental Regiment.
6. Elias VanBenschoten was appointed Major on July 1, 1780 in Colonel DuBois Levies.
7. Brigadier General Robert VanRensselaer of the Second Brigade of Albany County Militia.

8. John Brown was the colonel of a regiment of Massachusetts's Levies in 1780. Colonel Brown was killed on his 36th birthday at the Battle of Stone Arabia on October 19, 1780.
9. Udney Hays was the Assistant Deputy Quartermaster General with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.