

Pension Application for Thomas Donnelly or Donally

S.23201

State of New York

Cayuga County SS.

On this seventeenth day of January A.D. 1833 personally appeared before me the first Judge of the Court of common Pleas in and for the said County Thomas Donnelly for Auburn in said County aged sixty eight years who being fist 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 7th 1832.

That he was born in the City of New York A.D. 1764 where he continued to reside until the commencement of the Revolutionary War when his father removed to NewBurgh in the said Sate where he the said Thomas Donnelly continued to reside until the year 1786.

He further says that about the year 1781, on the opening of the campaign [campaign] in said year he applied for an appointment in a company of Express riders which was attached to the head quarters of the Commander in Chief, Gen. Washington, that he received said appointment signed by Col Timothy Pickering, then Quartermaster General and entered said corps whose station was always with the main army, and under the immediate command and direction of the commander-in-chief. That said corps of Express riders, had for their separate use a continental baggage waggon, and a markee in which they encamped

Captain Robert Dunn was appointed to keep a journal of the travels of distination [destination] of each express rider and that when the service of one or more was required the commander in chief or in his absence the officer acting in his place, would send a sergeant or waiter or some other person to said Dunn & acquaint him of the fact.

And thereupon the said Dunn who knew whose turn it was to go on an express, gave directions for the person, whose turn it then was to do out. To proceed to head quarters, that said express rider then proceeded immediately to head quarters where he received his instructions and left camp to convey his dispatches wherever required.

That as soon as said express rider as executed his commission he returned immediately to camp resumed his station and awaited further orders.

He further says that he received as such express rider forty dollars per month, a horse upon which he rode, accoutrements for said horse, and also drew forage for his horse and rations for himself whilst in camp.

That the employment of said corps of express riders was conveying letters and dispatches form the commander in chief to different detachments of the American Army and to the Governors of the different states.

He further says that when the main army under the command of General Washington marched to the siege of York town. The other members of said company marched with said army whilst he the said Donnelly was sent to the head quarters of the Eastern Army under the command of General Heath and continued with him and under his direction until said army returned from the siege of Yorktown.

That he then joined his corps & under Capt Robert Dunn and continued with the main army until he was discharged in the month of April 1782 having served a term of one year and for such service he claims a pension.

That from Newburgh he removed back to New York where he continued to reside until A.D. 1798, then he continued to reside until A.D. 1798—then removed to Albany where he lived until A.D. 1816. Then he removed to the county of Onondaga in said State where he resided until the present winter when he came to Auburn aforesaid where he is now residing.

That whilst with the said Eastern Army he was stationed most of the time near Peekskill in the State of New York.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except except [sic] the present and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any state or territory. (Signed) Ths Donnelly

Sworn and subscribed the day & year aforesaid. [aforesaid] J.L. Richardson, first Judge of Cayuga

Letter in file dated April 11, 1934, written in response to an inquiry.

Reference is made to your request for information in regard to Thomas Donnelly who served in the Revolutionary War.

The data which follow were obtained from papers on file in the pension claim, S.23201, based upon the military service of Thomas Donnelly.

He was born May 29, 1764, in New York City and lived there until the commencement of the Revolution when he moved with his father (name not given) to Newburgh, New York.

He enlisted about the first of April 1781, and served one year in Captain Robert Dunn's corps of express riders under Colonel Timothy Pickering who was quartermaster general of the Continental Army. Thomas Donnelly was attached to General Washington's headquarters.

He stated that he lived in Newburgh, New York, until 1786 when he moved back to New York City and lived there until 1798 when he moved to Albany. He lived in Albany until 1816 when he moved to Onondaga County, New York, and lived there until about 1822 when he moved to Auburn, Cayuga County, New York.

He was allowed pension in his application executed January 17, 1833, while living in Cayuga County, New York.

Thomas Donnelly died February 4, 1835. (In handwriting "Did not say soldier died in Onondaga Co. as he said moved from that Co. In 1833. WC")

This soldier married in New York City September 26, 1786, Ruth Pettinger who was born March 20, 1768.

She died July 7, 1838.

Thomas and Ruth Donnelly had the following children:

Peter, Jr. born August 16, 1787 "at New York", married Ann Fisher at Albany.

Hester born August 30, 1788, at Tarrytown, New York, married Ulysses F. Doubleday October 10, 1814.

Thomas Jr. born December 1, 1789, at Tarrytown, married Ruth Wright, March 31, 1810, at New Marlborough.

Maria born February 20, 1792, at Tarrytown married Samuel Knower, March 20, 1810, at Albany.

Jane born May 16, 1793, at Tarrytown.

Cornelia born July 8, 1794, at Tarrytown.

James born November 11, 1796, at New York.

John Stafford born December 23, 1797, at New York.

Nancy Stillwell born November 6, 1799, at Albany, married George Martin Stevens, December 6, 1817, at Albany.

James Magrah born September 9, 1802, at Albany.

The following family data is also shown:

Hester Knower born December 20, 1810, at Albany.

Elizabeth Knower born January 14, 1812, at Albany.

Thomas Donnelly Knower born July 29, 1813, at Albany.

John Pettinger Donnelly born August 28, 1813, at Albany.

Andrew Donnelly Knower born April 25, 1815.

Cornelia Donnelly born August 20, 1815, at Albany.

Eliza Knower, daughter of Maria and Sam Knower, was married to Ed "Buckwheat or hout".

Sarah Knower was married to Abram C. Groot, July 31, 1836.

Ruth Maria Donnelly Doubleday was married to Dudeley Brice Griswold Everts, January 22, 1835.

Thomas Knower married Laura "Buckwheat or Hout", September 20, 1836, or 1831.

James Macraw Donnelly married Emily ____ (illegible).

In 1846 it was stated that the widow, Ruth Donnelly, was survived by the following children only:

James Donnelly of Burdett, New York.

Thomas Donnelly of Canastota, New York.

Hester Doubleday of Auburn, New York.

The soldier's son, Thomas, had a son, James M. Donnelly, who was living in Hector, Tompkins County, New York, in 1851.

In 1833 one Honorable U.F. Doubleday, member of the United States House of Representatives, stated that he had been intimately acquainted with the soldier, Thomas Donnelly, for about eighteen years, but it is not sated that he is identical with Ulysses F. Doubleday who married the soldier's daughter, Hester.