

Pension Application for Jonathan Pettit

S.46654

Declaration. In order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

State of New York

Madison County SS.

On this 21st day of August A.D. 1832 personally appeared before me one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas in and for the County of Madison, Jonathan Pettit of the town of Cazenovia County of Madison and State aforesaid, 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 7th 1832.

I Jonathan Pettit of the Town, County and State aforesaid do hereby declare that I was born in the Town of Sharon Litchfield County and State of Connecticut on the 25th day of July 1752 as the family record has ever shown. That I am now (July 25th 1832) 80 years old. I left the town of Sharon after having served seven years at the Trade of a Tanner & currier as apprentice to Mr. James Parly of that town and located myself in business at Fish Creek then in the county of Albany in the year 1773 being then 21 years old.

On the twentieth day of October 1775 I received the accompanying commission as Ensign in the third company of Militia of foot (of which company Henry O'Hara (1) was Captain and my brother James Pettit was Lieutenant from the Provincial Congress of New York. My Brother and myself were notified to meet at Col. Van Vechten (2) in Saratoga to receive our Commissions; which we did and they were then delivered to us by Abraham TenEyck (3) Paymaster of the Army and Col. Roseboom (4) from Albany who had in charge most of the commissions for that regiment. At the time they were delivered to us it appeared that the commissions were properly filed but on examination it was found that the commission filed [sic—filled out] with my name had in the body of it the name of my brother as Ensign and the one filed with the name of my brother had in it my name as Lieutenant. (5)

The mistake on being discovered was communicated to the above named agents at the same time & place and by their direction the commission of my brother was corrected and from that of mine. The name of my brother James was erased and my name (Jonathan) was inserted as it appears in the commission which is the same commission I received from the Provincial Congress of New York signed by Nathaniel Woodhull President thereof and Robert Benson Secretary.

The territory comprising the third company of Militia included all that part of the State North of Fish Creek and west of the Hudson River to Saratoga Lake and was at that time the strong hold of Tories.

As an instance of which I had to encounter—among the Tories I state the following. One Jonathan Jones who was a man of wealth, and carrying on a large business at Fish Creek where I resided and had in his employ a large number of men; had frequently solicited myself and others whom he supposed under his influence to flee with him to Canada. He was particularly solicitous with us after the Lexington and Concord battles.

Sometime after the affair at Lexington & before I received my commission once sent a message to me requesting me to call on him that evening. I called accordingly and found about twenty persons collected among whom were two by the name of Jessup of Albany (of Jessup's Patent Memory) three brothers of Jones and others of my acquaintance. The object of the meeting was to induce me to join the royalists in Canada to effect this every argument and entreaty was used and Jones said he was authorized to offer and engage me a commission as soon as I should arrive at the station of the Royalist troops on the northern frontier. I told them my mind was made up to stand or fall with my country and I should reject these offers. I left them about one o'clock in the morning and started for Stillwater (the place of meeting of the nearest Committee of Safety) about ten miles on the road towards Albany determined with their aid to secure the collection of Tories—the Committee were composed of Ezra Palmer & Mr. Mead of Stillwater, Capt. Norton of Saratoga Springs, Col. McRea (Brother of Jessey McRea soon after murdered) [Jane McRea] and others whose names I do not recollect. As I was acquainted with Col. McRea I immediately informed him of the whole circumstance and requested a Military guard to arrest Jones and his associates forthwith. McRea evaded my request but promised to communicate directly with the committee and have the proper measures taken. The guard was not sent. McRea it was generally believed gave notice to the persons implicated. So that they all escaped, as he was thought not to be a friend to his country. These very Tories were afterwards the pilots of Burgoyne's Army.

Immediately after I received my commission. I was ordered by Gen. Philip Schuyler (6) to march with a detachment under my command to Johnstown in Montgomery County to disarm a number of Scotch families who were Royalists and a great annoyance to that frontier. On another occasion and I believe in the spring of 1776 I was ordered by the Committee of Safety of Albany with a small detachment of men to take possession of Fort George and keep it until relieved. The Fort was held by an officer & about 30 men and according to orders I took possession and commanded of it until relieved by a Maj. Stephens from Connecticut. The same I believe who afterwards at the battle of the Cedars subsequent to the reduction of Montreal was taken as a hostage by the British.

From the time I received my commission such was my location, on the then frontiers and surrounded by Tories who seized every opportunity of doing injury they could; I was almost constantly engaged in actual service or in attendance on the Committee of Safety, and from my best recollection and belief, I was engaged in actual service as Ensign under my commission the full space of six months. The Captain (O'Hara) had removed to the south and the Lieut (my brother) had died soon after his being commissioned; which left me in the command of the company and was one reason of my constant employment. I removed to Albany in the month of July or August 1776 soon after I went there, a company of volunteers called exempts (7) was organized as he believed according to an act of Congress; of which company I was chosen Captain, but received no commission; the company consisted of one hundred men, mostly such as had had some civil or military commission, and by the terms of enlistment we were to stand as minute men through the war. Not long after the organization of our company we were ordered by Col. Marinus Willett (8) (late of New York) to march to Canajoharie to protect the then western frontier; which service was rendered by myself and company under the command of Col. Willet, this I believe was in August 1776. In January 1777 I was ordered by Col. Lansing of Albany again to call out my company and march to Saratoga where we rendezvoused with other militia and encamped on the south side of Fish Creek for a number of weeks. When Gen. Burgoyne (9) came down from the north and about the time of the battle of Saratoga, I was ordered to call out my company by Gen. Ten Brock (10) and march to Saratoga, accordingly we started and when part way there re'cd counter-orders to return to Albany, and take charge of the prisoners; which was done.

After the company of volunteer exempts was formed and placed under my command, it was the general military guard of the city of Albany, and this was particularly the case after the attack by the Tories and Indians on the house of Gen. Schuyler (11), on which alarm my company were all called out and after that event it was my duty to see that a military guard was kept in the city generally when not on other duty, until the close of the war. And on account of the manner in which I performed the duty [?] upon me in this respect I received from the Corporation of Albany the freedom of the city in token of their approbation and esteem. The instrument conferring which is herewith transmitted.

Besides the service specified I was called out at numerous other times all of which I cannot now particularize and which made the amount of my actual service after my removal to Albany more than one year.

But during all the time after the reception of my commission, both while living at Fish Creek and after my removal to Albany, I was bound to act at any moment under my commission; and in fact almost my whole time and labor were in one way and another devoted to the service from the time I was appointed ensign until the fall of 1778. At that time my family had suffered so many privations by my absence that I took advantage of a regulation of Congress (I believe) which authorized classing to furnish a substitute and one John Shepard of Albany and myself furnished a substitute for the remainder of the war our substitute was a foreigner whose name I do not now recollect but who was paid by us a bounty of thirty dollars and he regularly joined the army.

My sacrifices of property were very great and amongst others the following my Tannery referred to above at Fish Creek was on the very ground occupied by the two Armies at the time of Burgoyne's surrender my tanner shops, vats, etc., were all destroyed to my injury at least of one thousand dollars. After my removal to Albany I had at one time on hand a large quantity (500 boards) of lumber, piled in a lumber in the city in my absence at Canajoharie with my company under Col. Willet, they were seized by an officer of the U.S. Army and sent down the river to Poughkeepsie I believe to build barracks; they were worth at the time they were taken not less than eight hundred dollars. For all those losses I have never received a cent in remuneration, nor ever asked anything of my country. I have never before applied for a pension and never in any manner been on the Pension list or roll of any state and I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present.

I further state that Elisha Litchfield formerly a member of congress, John Switzer, Isaac Inger & Samuel Morey are persons living near me and can testify to my character for veracity—and their belief of my service as a soldier of the Revolution.

Since the revolutionary war I have constantly resided in this state and since the year 1821, I have lived with my son and am now supported by him. For the last ten years I have been entirely unable to labor and for the last year totally helpless from a paralytic attack.

My associates are mostly dead and proof (except what is found in my commission and the affidavit of one witness accompanying this) I am unable to procure. (Signed with his mark) Jonathan Pettit.

Sworn to and Subscribed the day and year aforesaid. Berek Beckwith, Judge of Madison Co. Com. Pleas

End Notes—S.46654—Jonathan Pettit

1. Henry O'Hara, Captain of the Third Company in Colonel John McCrea's Thirteenth Regiment of Albany County Militia (Saratoga District). Benjamin Giles (Guiles) was the First Lieutenant. Captain O'Hara in April of 1776 was appointed Captain in Colonel Cornelius D. Wynkoop's Fourth New York Continental Regiment in 1776. On November 3, 1776 he was appointed Captain in Colonel Moses Hazen's Second Canadian Continental Regiment. He resigned on September 20, 1777. On June 22, 1778, Peter Winne

was appointed Captain of the Third Company. The other officers were First Lieutenant Benjamin Giles, Second Lieutenant Isaac Doty and Ensign John Putnam.

2. Cornelius VanVeghten was the Lieutenant-Colonel of the Thirteenth Regiment of Albany County Militia.
3. Possibly Abraham TenEyck who was the Second Lieutenant in Captain John M. Beekman's Company (Fourth Company) in Colonel Jacob Lansing Jr's First Regiment of Albany County Militia. Abraham Ten Eyck was appointed Second Lieutenant and Paymaster on November 21, 1776 in Colonel Goose VanSchaick's First New York Continental Regiment.
4. Colonel Myndert Roseboom. He had originally been appointed Colonel of the Second New York Continental Regiment with Goose VanSchaick as the Lieutenant-Colonel. On his declining the appointment Lt-Col Van Schaick was appointed the Colonel and Peter Yates was appointed the Lieutenant-Colonel.
5. This kind of mistake happened more than one would think. On several of the various regimental appointments you will see the words "appointed through mistake".
6. Major General Philip Schuyler of the Continental Army.
7. Jonathan was commissioned Captain on March 6, 1779 of the Cambridge District of the Albany County Associated Exempts.
8. Marinus Willett was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant on April 27, 1781, of a regiment of New York State Levies. Jonathan is mistaken as to the year of this tour.
9. General John Burgoyne, commander of the British forces invading New York from Canada in 1777. He surrendered his army on October 17, 1777 to Major General Horatio Gates of the Continental Army.
10. Brigadier General Abraham Ten Broeck of the Albany County Militia Brigade.
11. This attempt on General Schuyler was on August 7, 1781. A guard from the First New York was stationed at the home of the general and by their defense inside the house it gave General Schuyler time to get upstairs and fire a pistol out of a window to raise the alarm. The Loyalist attackers fled with John Cockley of the First New York, and John Tubbs dispatch couriers who were taken prisoners.

Know all Men by these Presents,

THAT I JOHN JACOB BEEKMAN, Esquire, MAYOR
of the CITY of ALBANY, HAVE admitted and received,

and do hereby admit and receive *Jonathan Platt* to be a

Freeman of the said City, to have, hold, partake and enjoy all the Rights, Liberties, Privileges, Franchises and Advantages belonging to a Freeman and Citizen of the said City. IN WITNESS whereof, I have set my Hand, and

caused the Seal of the said City, to be hereto affixed, the *Twenty Ninth*

Day of *November* in the Year of our LORD One Thousand Seven

Hundred and Eighty *four* *J. J. Beekman Mayor*

NA

RG

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In PROVINCIAL CONGRESS for the Colony of New-York, the
1775.

1/2
To *Jonathan Patten* Gent.

Greeting:

BY Virtue of the Authority reposed in us
We do hereby nominate, authorize, constitute and appoint you *Member*
of the *third company of Militia of*

Jonathan Patten *of the County of Albany* *whereby Henry O'Ware Esq. is* *hereby* requiring you, before you
enter into the Exercise of your said Office, to make in Writing, and subscribe in Presence
of the Chairman of the Committee of the City, Town, District, or Precinct wherein you
reside, the Declaration appointed and directed by the Eleventh Section of the Seventh
Resolve contained in the Rules and Orders for regulating the Militia of the Colony
of New-York, recommended by this Congress on the 22d Day of August 1775,
and authorizing you fully to execute all the Powers belonging to your said Office, by
Virtue of the said Rules and Orders, and the said Declaration: And we do hereby
require all Persons under your Command, to pay due Obedience to you, according to the
said Rules and Orders, and such further Rules and Orders as shall be made and recom-
mended for the Militia of this Colony, by the present, or any future Continental Congress,
or Provincial Congress of this Colony.

Attest.

By Order,

John Jay

Wm. Pitt