

Pension Application for John Ralston

R.8568

Declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7, 1832.
State of New York
Herkimer County SS.

On this 11th day of February in the Year 1833 personally appeared in open court before the Judges of the court of Common Pleas now sitting John Ralston a resident of the town of Manheim in the County of Herkimer & State of New York aged seventy 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 act of Congress passed June 7, 1832.

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

That he was born in the City of New York in the 27th day of November in the year 1762—as he has always been informed by his parents & verily believes true—

This deponent has no record of his age. Deponent lived in the town of Cambridge in the County of Washington and State of New York wherein he first entered into the service—where he continued to reside for about eleven years, as near as he can recollect after the close of the Revolutionary War, when he removed to the aforesaid town of Manlius where he has resided to the present time & where he still resides.

Deponent resided with his parents in the City of New York at the Commencement of the Revolutionary War—that in the year seventeen hundred & seventy six in in the month of August as deponent believes a battle was fought on Long Island, between the British & American Army & that a day or two previous to the battle deponent with his mother, (his father being dead & several other families left New York in a small vessel & proceeded to Albany)—at which place they heard of the Battle on; Long Island & of the defeat of the American Army—deponent with his mother went immediately to Cambridge in Washington County aforesaid from Albany where he resided during the war excepting the time he was in the service.

In the year Seventy Seven in the month of June as deponent believes. He had to stand a draft & was enrolled in a company of Militia commanded by Capt. John Barnes & Lieutenant Levi Hansdale, the company was attached to a Regiment commanded by Col. Williams whose Christian name deponent cannot recollect, the other officers of the Regiment deponent has forgotten except one McCracken who was a field officer &c, &c, Major or Adjutant but cannot distinctly recollect which. The company & Regiment to which deponent belonged was divided into small parties, called scouting parties & their business was to scout the country to watch the motion of the enemy & to discover if the Indians were approaching & some of these parties were constantly out on this service & when one party returned another was sent immediately out to gard [guard] the frontiers—

Once in the month of July as deponent believes & once the first of August deponent went with a part of his company to Lake George the north west part of the

County of Washington and in the command of Lieutenant Hunsdale to Scout the Country in pursuit of the Indians who had killed some of the inhabitants & taken others prisoners in the town of Agile, this was the last of the aforementioned scouts—deponent was out the first time about a fortnight & the last time, not quite as long. The party had to traverse a rough mountains country & medium great labor & fatigue & when at home they had to be the most of the time under arms, the country was newly settled & the Indians like Wolves were constantly prowling about murdering the the [six] inhabitants & burning their property.

The first of August in this year (1777) The British Army was advancing from Canady to Albany & had got as far as Fort Edward.

The militia of the country was called out to join the Continental Troops at Stillwater—deponent with a part of the regiment to which he belonged under the command of Col. Williams went to Bennington in the State of Vermont & there joined a part of Vermont Militia—who were marching to join General Stark who was sent with a detachment from the American Army to attack a body of British Troops commanded by by [sic] Col. Baum.

This was about the middle of August as near as deponent can recollect.

Soon after the detachment to which deponent belonged joined the Vermont militia & within an hour, the battle commenced between the British & Americans & deponent was engaged in the same, The British were defeated & many of them taken prisoners—after the Battle the Troops proceeded to Join the American Army at Stillwater commanded by General Gates—Genl Arnold was with the Army also—The American Army at this time lay at Stillwater & Saratoga watching the motions of the British & to cut off their retreat to Canada the troops to which deponent belonged were called the flak of the Army—the British & Americans had several skirmishes, but only two severe actions were fought—

The first of which deponent was engaged in--& before the last the detachment to which deponent belonged was ordered to take a different position to prevent the retreat of the British--& was not engaged in the last Battle which was about the first of October as near as deponent can recollect—

Soon after Burgoyne with his force surrendered & then deponent & the other militia of his town returned home as did the detachment to which he belonged.

Deponent was out with a party at this time about three months—as near as he can recollect.

Deponent was out once more this fall, with a company of militia being part of the Regiment to which he belonged--& went to Fort Edward about twelve miles & thinks he was there about three to gard the Fort —the party to which he belonged was relieved by a party of Militia & deponent returned home—

The fort was guarded & garrisoned by the militia of the Country who took turns in defending the next year (1778) & 1779 deponent was engaged most of the time from the spring of each year till late in the fall in scouting the country & keeping garrison at Forts Edward & Ann & at Skenesborough (now Whitehall) where a post was kept. The part of the country where this deponent resided was much exposed to the inroads &

attacks of the Indians & Tories & the country was almost constantly in a State of alarm.

The militia was the only force at that time to guard the frontiers & were almost constantly moving from one part of the country to the other. The service required of the militia during the two years last mentioned in which deponent took part was to laborous & attended with too much danger—that deponent resolved to join the regular army & in the latter part of December in the year 1779—deponent heard there was a recruiting party at Saratoga & went there & enlisted into a company of Artillery commanded by Lieutenant Alexander McArthur for during the war.

This Artillery was called the “New York Artillery—The Regiment to which this company was attached was commanded by Col. Lamb & was sometimes called Lamb’s Artillery. Deponent had a parole to go home on New Years day 1780 and they stayed a day or two & there joined his company at Saratoga & marched with them to West Point on the North River at that being commanded by Genl Arnold he believes. Deponent was stationed at West Point & did Garrison duty by standing guard taking care of the cannon getting wood &c till some time the May following—Col. Lamb, commanded the Artillery at the fort & was there most of the time, but was sometimes absent to other parts of the country when other companies of Artillery & troops were stationed. The Regiment to The Regiment to which deponent’s company was attached belonged to what was then called the New York line of the Army.

In May the company to which deponent belonged was ordered to go to Fort Ann near Lake George—the company was commanded by Alexander McArthur who had then received a captain’s commission. He went with the Company as far as Fishkill & then left there & they proceeded to Albany & from there to Fort Ann under the command of Non-Commissioned officers. Sometimes called sergeants and sometimes Bombardiers—deponent & the company to which he belonged remained at Fort Ann, Fort Edward & sometimes at Skeenseborough till late in the fall & during that time went from one place to the other as their services were required for the defense of the country & the frontiers & returned to West Point late in the fall – during the winter & year of 1781 & till the spring of the year 1782 deponent did garrison duty as West Point, was sometimes out of the fort a day or two, but was most constantly engaged in the Fort.

In the spring of the year, the company to which deponent belonged was ordered to go to Fort Ann & to guard the frontiers. The company was commanded by two non commissioned officers sometimes called Sergeants & at other times bombardiers, deponent continued to do duty at Fort Ann, Fort Edward & Skenesborough & on the frontiers in the country about the fort till late in the fall when he was with a part of his company going Skeensborough to Fort Ann & deponent thinks it was the last of December or the first of January the weather was very cold, & deponent & other of the soldiers had not clothing [clothing] sufficient to protect them from the inclemencies of the weather, deponent froze his feet very bad during their march & was unable to do duty during the remainder of the winter.

Soon after deponent froze his feet, being very lame, he had a parol to go home to Cambridge till he should be fit for duty. He remained at home till early in the spring 1783—but was still lame—when he heard that peace was declared & deponent had back pay due him. He heard there was to be a new emission of money to pay the Army & deponent got a person to carry him to Skeensborough where he had relatives residing & stayed there with a view to get his pay as before mentioned & to join the army when his health would permit—deponent continued at Skeensborough till some time in the summer, don't know but it might be as late as the first of fall cannot now distinctly remember (he had continued lame & unable to join his company when he received a discharge in writing—dated at West Point & signed as he thinks by Col. Lamb & he then or soon after returned home to Cambridge & he verily believes he served during the war as much as four years & a half.

Deponent was born in the City of New York In the year 1762 and there is no clergyman residing in his neighborhood who can certify to his character or services. There is not any record of Deponents age, that he knows of.

Deponent resided in the town of Cambridge at the time he first entered into the service in the County of Washington & State of New York where he continued to reside about eleven years after the War & then removed to the town of Manheim in the County of Herkimer aforesaid when he has resided ever since.

Deponent was drafted when he first entered into the service, & in the month of December in the year 1779 deponent enlisted into the New York line of the Army.

The only regular officers that deponent can recollect Col. Williams, Major or Adjutant McCracken of the militia. Genl Gates, Col. Baum, [Brown?] Col. Lamb, Genl Stark, Gen. Washington, Gen. Arnold.

Deponent received a discharge from the Army & thinks it was signed by Col. Lamb but will not be positive.

There are no persons living in this part of the country who know of & can swear to the services of deponent but deponent is well known to [blank] residing in his present neighborhood & who can testify to his character for veracity & their belief of his services as soldier of the Revolution.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present & declares that his name is onto on the pension roll of the agency of any state.
(Signed) John Ralston

Sworn to & subscribed the day & year aforesaid in open court. Julius C. Nelson, Clerk