

**Pension Application for Martin Sheley, Shelly, Shealy, Shelly**

R.9458

State of New York

Jefferson County SS.

On this 11 day of September 1832, personally appeared in open Court, before the Judges of the court of Common Pleas, in and for said County, now sitting, Martin Sheley a resident of Alexandria in said County, aged 76 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, and served as herein stated. Was called into service under and Enlistment in the 9 months service, about the first of April 1778, under Capt. James Dixson, (1) Col. Hay, (2) served until the last day of December thereafter, when he received a regular discharge from Capt. Dixson but the same is lost. Enlisted in the Town of Canajoharie, went four times to Albany and joined the Army, from Albany went to a place called Robinsons Farm, where Gen<sup>l</sup> Gates (3) lay with his army, from here went with the army to Peekskill on the North River. Then went to the White Plains towards fall were ordered to the Northward, where we joined Col. Gansevoort (4) at Saratoga, went to Albany was discharged last of December 1778. In 1780 again enlisted for a year under a Capt. DeGraff, (5) Col. Yates, (6) enlisted about the 1 Jan'y at a place called Stillwater in the State of N.York on the North River. This was on the lines, lay upon the frontier with a little scouting during nearly the whole year.

Was discharged on or about the 1 Jan'y 1781. Thinks at Stillwater was in no engagement during this time, but then his service was to guard the lines.

In the year 1779, the Militia was classed off & each man was to serve two weeks in every 8 weeks, during which time I am sent to Fort Edward in the Service, under a Capt. Yates, (7) but when we got to Fort Edward a Capt. in the Regular Service commanded us by the name of Shipman. (8) It was one month. Then was called out, & was marched to Fort Edward again didn't remember who commanded but recollects Capt. Shipman who commanded at the Fort, served two weeks when I went to a place called PalmerTown about 14 miles west of the North River to serve four weeks under Capt. Yates, Maj. Groesbrok, (9) making in all ten weeks service in the year 1779.

In 1781 when Edwards was taken was called into the service at Saratoga went to Saratoga under Capt. Yates, Maj Groesbeck, Col. Yates remained at Saratoga under Capt. Yates, Maj. Groesbeck, Col. Yates remained at Saratoga over two weeks which then heard of the capture of Cornwallis & a day or two afterwards the militia generally were discharged & sent home. I was born in Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, removed to City New York from there to Albany & from there to Schanticoke, then Albany County where he resided when the Revolutionary War commenced. Was born in February 1750 at Philadelphia, Received discharge in writing but has lost them all, has no documentary evidence. Has no knowledge of any testimony he can prove of his service, except the testimony of his brother William Sheley, hereto annexed. Removed from Philadelphia to N.York thence to Albany, thence to Schanticoke thence to Canajoharie thence to Alexandria where he now resides.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a Pension or Annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the Pension Roll of the Agency of any State. (Signed with his mark) Martin Sheley

Sworn to, and subscribed, the day and year aforesaid. N. Rathbun, P. Burchard, Clerk.

War Department

Pension Office  
January 6<sup>th</sup> 1835  
Sir,

In answer to your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst. I have the honor to report that it is stated by Mr. Sheeley that he enlisted in 1778 in Captain Dixons Company, Col. Hays regt. in the “nine months service” and that in 1780 he enlisted in Capt. DeGraff’s Company, Col. Yates regt. for one year &c. To all which it is objected that there is no evidence either that Col. Hay or Capt. Dixon was in the “nine months service”—at any period during the revolutionary war; Udney Hay was breveted a Lieut Col. and appointed Deputy Quarter Master General in 1777. Col. Yates’ to whom regt it is alleged Capt. DeGraffs company belonged was a militia regt. in which there were no enlistment or tours of service of twelve months.

From the description now given of the nature of his employment, which under Capt. DeGraff, it is evident that the claim and service was not military and hence not provided for by the act. The claim is therefore refused.

Omar NY March 24/49  
Arad Joy Esq.

Dr Sir, In reply to your interrogations Mr. Martin Sheley answers.

1<sup>st</sup> Martin Sheely resided during the Revolution in Saratoga or Renssellear Co., NY on the North River.

2<sup>nd</sup> Thinks that an effort was made soon after the first law took effect—say about 1820, but was refused (he thinks) because he had not been a regular soldier 3 years—and after the Law of 1832, he made the 2<sup>nd</sup> trial.

3<sup>d</sup> Died the 12<sup>th</sup> day of March 1840 at Alexandria Jeff Co., NY.

4<sup>th</sup> Jane Sheely lives at Brownsville Jeff. Co., NY.

John Sheely lives at Alexandria, Jeff. Co. , NY.

James Sheely lives at Theresa, Jeff Co., NY.

Katharine Sheely lives at Springfield Otsego Co., NY.

Martin Sheely lives Orleans, Jeff Co., NY.

Mary Sheely

Fanny Sheely lives at Alexandria, Jeff. Co., NY.

Rachael Sheely lives at Alexandria, Jeff. Co., NY.

Theresa Jeff Co. NY.

5<sup>th</sup> Left no widow.

6<sup>th</sup> Claims for 18n mos. Regular service and also made it his sole business & held himself ready constantly--& was engaged in training & in watching the out posts for 4 or 5 years under the direction of Government officers & was entitled to pay of Private (as he supposed). His Col. was a Van Schaick.

7<sup>th</sup> Don’t know whether any service was admitted in the answers to his application.

Mr. Sheely says that his father made an affidavit of the amt of service he claimed due him & the paper is sitting at Washington or in the hands of Mr. Rathbone or Elis or Col. Jason Clark. If it is necessary to obtain that paper or any other information hence Mr. Sheely will do so on your suggestion. Yours Respectfully. T. R. Startchown

Letter dated March 21, 1938, written in response to a request for information.

Reference is made to your request for information relative to Revolutionary War soldier, Martin Sheley, Sheeley or Shealey.

The data which follow were obtained from papers on file in the pension claim, R.9458, based upon the military service of Martin Sheley.

He was born February 28, 1756, at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The names of his parents were not given. From Philadelphia he moved to New York City, from there to Albany, from there to Schanticoke (evidently meant for Schaghticoke) which was then in Albany County and was living there at the commencement of the Revolution. After the Revolution he lived in Danube, Herkimer County, New York, in Greenbush which was near Albany, New York, and in Alexandria, Jefferson County, New York.

Martin Sheley applied for pension September 11, 1832, while living in Alexandria, New York. He alleged that while living at Canajoharie, Montgomery County, New York, he served as private with the New York troops as follows: from March or April 1778, nine months under Captains James Dixon and Moody and Colonels Hay, Clark (10) and Gansevoort; in 1779, two and one half months under Captains Yates and Shipman; from about the first of January 1780, one year under Captain DeGraff and Colonel Peter Yates; in February 1781, two weeks, names of officers not given; in 1781, two weeks under Captain Yates and Colonel Yates. The claim was not allowed as proof of the alleged service was not furnished in accordance with the requirement of the pension law.

In 1839 Martin Sheley stated that his father kept a record of all his family in German and last resided in Danube, Herkimer County, New York, but that he had been dead as much as thirty years.

Martin Sheley died March 12, 1840, at Alexandria, New York.

In September, 1833, the soldier's son, John Sheley, was living in Orleans, New York, and stated that he was "forty-eighty years old last June". In September of that year the soldier's daughter, Jane Whitman, was living in Alexandria, New York, and stated she was "fifty years old last February" and that she had heard her father say he had a brother killed in the battle of Monmouth, (11) name not given. In 1833, the soldier's brother, William Sheley, was living in Orleans, New York, and stated he was "sixty-five years old last February".

In 1849, the soldier's son, Martin stated that his father left no widow and he gave the following names and residences, relationships not shown, but it is possible they were soldier's children : Jane Sheely living at Brownsville, Jefferson County, New York; John Sheely living at Alexandria, Jefferson County, New York; James Sheely living at Theresa, Jefferson County, New York; Martin Sheely living at Orleans, Jefferson County, New York; Mary Sheely living at Theresa, New York; Fanny Sheely living at Alexandria, New York; Rachael Sheely living at Alexandria, New York.

Letter dated June 14, 1938, written in response to a request for additional information.

Reference is made to your letter of May 16, 1938, inclosing an abstract of papers on file in the Revolutionary War pension claim of Martin Sheley, R.9458, which was furnished you by the office on March 21, 1938. You wish to have an explanation of the sentence given in said abstract: "The claim was not allowed as proof of the alleged service was not furnished in accordance with the requirement of the pension law". You also wish to know if the data contained in this abstract establish proof of this soldier's service, sufficient to enable you to join the Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The pension law required proof of such factors as length of service, names of officers, kind of service (military or otherwise) etc., and as Martin Sheley did not furnish record evidence of his service not substantiate his allegations by affidavits of two comrades in service, his claim was not allowed.

It may be stated that many of the old soldiers who applied for pension as late as 1832, the year in which Martin Sheley applied, had great difficulty in proving their services in the Revolutionary War. Many of their comrades had died and oftentimes the military rolls were incomplete, so the fact his claim was not allowed does not disprove his having been a soldier.

For the requirements relative to membership in the Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, you should address some official of that society. It is suggested that you furnish that official the abstract sent you by this office on March 21, 1938.

This abstract is returned herewith.

End Notes—R.9458—Martin Sheeley

1. Captain James Dickens' Company of Bateamen in the Quartermaster General's Department. These Bateau companies were civilians working for the military but were not in the Army and were paid a higher wage for their work. These men could not claim these tours of service in their pension applications and if they did they were not counted towards the requirements for the pension under whichever act they applied. One muster roll has been found for Captain Dickson's Company and Martin's name was on it. It was dated at White Plains, NY on July 22, 1778, and Martin is listed as "On Comm'd in the Artillery". FROM: Revolutionary War Rolls 1775-1783, Series M-246, Roll 122, Folder 78, National Archives, Washington D.C.
2. Udney Hay was appointed on July 30, 1776 as Assistant Deputy Quartermaster General with a rank of lieutenant-colonel.
3. Major General Horatio Gates of the Continental Army.
4. Peter Gansevoort was the Colonel of the Third New York Continental Regiment. The regiment was the garrison of Fort Schuyler in the Mohawk Valley until the fall of 1778 when it was relieved by the First New York Continental Regiment under Colonel Goose VanSchaick. One or two companies may have been stationed there for the winter.
5. Captain Simon DeGraff of a company of Bateamen. The only muster rolls found for this company were in 1778. Martin's name was found on a muster roll for 1780 in Captain Joseph Peek's Company of Bateamen same source as end note 2.
6. Christopher C. Yates was a lieutenant colonel and a Deputy Quartermaster General. Yates had served as the lieutenant colonel in Colonel Abraham Wemple's Second Regiment of Albany County Militia until his appointment in 1779 in the Quartermaster General's Department.
7. Captain Jacob Yates in Colonel Peter Yate's Fourteenth Regiment of Albany County Militia. Martin also served in Captain Thomas Brown's Company, and Captain James Hadlock's Company in Colonel Yate's Regiment. Also a pay receipt for Captain Cornelius Wilsey's (Wellse, Wiltsey, etc.) Company of Colonel Yate's Regiment was found for £1. . 0. . 9, and witnessed by Henry Ten Broeck. FROM: Revolutionary War Rolls 1775-1783, Series M-246, Roll 78, folder 180, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
8. Captain John Chipman of Colonel Seth Warner's Additional Continental Regiment.
9. Major John W. Groesback of Colonel Yate's Regiment.
10. Colonel Clark is unknown at this time. Captain Andrew Moody of Colonel John Lamb's Second Regiment of Continental Artillery. When Martin was detached in 1778 to the "Artillery" from Captain Dickson's Company it probably was to Captain Moody's Company.
11. John Sheely enlisted on October 7, 1777 as a private in Captain Andrew Fink's Third Company in Colonel Goose VanSchaick's First New York Continental Regiment. John actually died as a result of heat exhaustion on July 9, 1778 that occurred during the Battle of Monmouth, New Jersey which was fought on June 28, 1778. Several hundred

of the troops from both armies engaged in this battle, suffered heat stroke etc., as a result of the humid 80 degree plus weather during much of this long battle.