

[Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters](#)

Pension Application of John Townsend R10660

NJ

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Virginia } Ss.

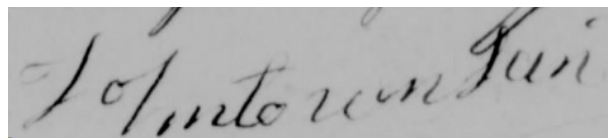
Lewis County } }

On this 19th day of June in the year 1833 personally appeared before me the subscriber a Justice of the peace in and for the said county of Lewis John Townsend a resident of the said county of Lewis in the state of Virginia aged 81 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 7th 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated. That in the first of May in the year 1779 at Elizabeth in the State of New Jersey he substituted as a private for Sylvanus Arnold, in a company commanded by Silas Pheatt [sic: Silas Parrit or Silas Piatt] in the 1st Regiment of the New Jersey Line commanded by Matthias Augdon [sic: Matthias Ogden] Col. Maj'r John Conaway [John Conway] in the Brigade commanded by Gen'l. [William] Maxwell in the Army commanded by Gen'l [John] Sullivan and on the 7th day of the same month (may) marched from Elizabeth to Bounbrook [sic: Bound Brook], from thence to the Delaware river thence up the said river to Muskinekunk's [possibly Musconecong Creek's] junction with the Delaware – thence to East town [sic: Easton PA] in the point between the Delaware and Lehigh rivers Lay here (at East town 3 or 4 weeks – thence [18 Jun 1779] continued their march to Wyoming [near present Wilkes Barre] on the Susquehannah river [sic: Susquehanna River] arrived there he thinks in June 1779. was here halted and provisions being scarce a detachment was dispatched to Middletown for a supply and after receiving the same was marched with Gen'l. Sullivans who Army (which amounted to about 7000 men) to Tioga [near present Athens PA]. lay there about 3 weeks and built a fort [Fort Sullivan] at which they left the heavy artillery, Invalids &c. Then marched to an Indian town called Chemung, about 12 miles from Tioga here met the Indian forces with their white allies a Battle ensued [13 Aug] which lasted about two hours, the Indians then retreated leaving many dead upon the Battle ground. The Indian vilage was destroyed, together with all their property which consisted chiefly of corn crops – after which they counter marched to Tioga. He believes the Battle at Chemung was fought some time in the month of July, (remembers that corn was just shooting) After the Battle at Chemung they countermarched to Tioga there done some more work to the fort. Then marched by Chemung to Newtown 15 miles from Chemung. There was engaged in an other Battle with the Indian forces and their white allies [Battle of Newtown NY, 29 Aug], which was very fierce for a few hours, after which the Enemy retreated in great confusion leaving many of their dead as before. They Burnt the Indian Town and destroyed all their corn &c as at Chemung. this he thinks was about the last of July or first of August. Then continued their march to the Genisee [sic: Genesee] towns & there distroyed all the Indian vilages [near present Cuylerville NY, 15 Sep] their corn &c &c. This was this was he thinks about the last of August. After distroying the Genisee Towns &c Countermarched to Tioga – arrived there towards the last of Sept. They destroyed the fort at Tioga and shiped their military stores on board of Boats [3 Oct]. then marched to Wyoming – rested here a few days. Then continued their march through the Wilderness to East town, here recrossed the Delaware river in fery boats – then continued their march to head quarters – at Pumpkin [sic: Pompton Plains] he thinks remained here some time then moved their quarters to Mendham a little vilage now Morristown where they remained during the Winter. During this winter (he believes about the first of January) the term for which he substituted expired and he enlisted immediately under the same Captain as a private (Pheatt) soon after which he died, and William Augdon [sic: William Ogden] a brother of Col. Augdon assumed the command of their Company. After the campaign to the Indian vilages, Gen'l. Sullivan returned to the North and they marched to New Jersey under Gen'l. Maxwell. Declarent continued the service along the lines of New Jersey during the Spring of 1780 – was frequently sent with small detachments to counteract the designs of small merauding parties of the enemy untill June (he

believes) an engagement took place in Morris County in New Jersey at a place called the Connecticut farms [7 Jun] in which the enemy suffered a severe loss and was forced from the field. the army of the United States also suffered a considerable loss. Col. Spencers [Oliver Spencer's] Reg't. of Infantry were almost entirely destroyed. Declarent here received a shot from a mucket, which entered his neck under the jaw, near the wind pipe and passed through near the neck bone & came out at the back of the neck. which was very near having proved fatal. After the battle he was sent with other wounded to Woodbridge where he remained two months in an hospital at which time his wound had so far healed that he was again able to perform duty and accordingly took his station in the said Regiment at Pracknuts valey: lay here some time then marched to a place called Kings ferry near Stony Point. Soon after which they marched with great rapidity to West Point, took possession of the place again mounted and unspiked the cannon which had been spiked by the enemy – this he thinks late in the fall of 1780 [sic: see endnote]. he well remembers that the weather was quite cold and freezing – remained at West Point during the Winter of 1780 and in the Spring of 1781 was countermarched to New Jersey. The enemy at this time lay in considerable numbers on the east side of North River, and the forces of New Jersey &c on the west watching their movements – and marching from place to place along the New Jersey lines and shores during the whole summer of the year 1781 – during which time he marched through Elizabeth town, Rahway, Woodbridge, Hackensack, Morristown, & Paramis [sic: Paramus] where they were reviewed by Gen'l. Washington. No particular events took place during this summer ('81) in the winter of '81 he remained principally at Pumpkin In the Summer of '82 remained in New Jersey guarding the lines and shores and harbours – but engaged in no battle – the service was the same this year '82 that it was in '81 watching the movements of the enemy and guarding the frontiers of the State of New Jersey he was once marched to Staten Island where he seen Lord Sterling [sic: William Alexander, Lord Stirling, possibly during Stirling's raid on 15 Jan 1780]. in the winter of 82 went into quarters at Mendham and in April in the year 1783 a cessation of hostilities was proclaimed and the troops disbanded. Declarent was at this time discharged but can not remember who signed his discharge the same having been lost many years ago. In the Campaign against the Indians Declarent seen and became acquainted with Genls. [Israel] Putnam, [George] Clinton, Sullivan, Maxwell, Col. [Daniel] Morgan. In New Jersey he seen Genls. Washington, [Anthony] Wayne, Layfayette [sic: Lafayette], Green [sic: Nathanael Greene], Milburn, Count Pulaski [who was at Minisink Valley between Nov 1778 and Feb 1779] – at West Point he knew Cols. Spencer, [Francis] Barber, [Richard] Cox &c. In New Jersey he knew Col. Sherives [sic: Israel Shreve] commandant of the 2^d New Jersey Regt. Col. Barber the 3^d – and Col. Spencer the 4th. If his memory has not failed him. Declarent was in actual service from the 1st May in the year 1779 untill April 1783 and served 4 years as a private. Was born in Morris County in the State of New Jersey in the year 1752 where he resided when he first entered the Service of the United States. he has no documentary evidence by which to prove his services, and knows of no man living who can testify to the same.

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.



Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

And the said Justice certifies that to the seven several Interogatories required by the War Department to be propounded he answers as follows, to wit, to the

- 1st he answers and says – I was born in Morris County in the State of New Jersey in the year 1752 Augt 12.
- 2^d Has no record of his age but remembers to have seen it recorded in his fathers Bible.
- 3^d I was living in Morris County in the State of new Jersey, emigrated from thence to pennsylvania soon after the close of the war, where I married in the year 1789 in the neighborhood of Pittsburg. Soon after which I emigrated to Harrison County Virginia where I resided untill the Spring of 1832 at

which time I moved to Lewis County Va where I now live

4th The first tour, I was a substitute for Sylvanus Arnold, the 2^d I enlisted.

5th Sullivan, Clinton, Putnam, Lord Sterling, Wayne, Cols. Augdon, Barber, Spencer and Shrieves [were regular officers where he served].

6th I rec'd. a discharge and think it was given by a man named Darley but am not certain. I have lost my discharges.

7th I am known to Alexander Huffman and Joseph Bennett who can testify to my character &c.

We Alex. Huffman and Joseph Bennett residing in the County of Lewis in the State of Virginia hereby certify that we are well acquainted with John Townsend who has subscribed and sworn to the above declaration that we believe him to be 81 years of age that he is reputed and believed in the neighborhood where he resides to have been a soldier of the revolution, and that we concur in that opinion.

Alex. Huffman

Joseph Bennett

Sworn and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

And the said Justice of the peace hereby declares his opinion, after the investigation of the matter, and after putting the interrogatories prescribed by the War Department that the above named applicant was a revolutionary soldier and served as he states and the said Justice of the Peace further certifies that it appears to him that Alex. Huffman & Joseph Bennett who have signed who have signed the preceding certificate are credible persons and that their statement is entitled to credit. And the said Justice of the peace do further certify that there is no clergyman living in the neighborhood where the above named applicant resides. And the said Justice further certifies that the above named applicant resides 50 miles from the Courthouse of Lewis county, and from bodily infirmity is unable to travel to the said Courthouse. And the said Justice further certifies that the forgoing contains the original proceeding of the said Justice in the matter of the application of John Townsend for a pension.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 19th day of June in the year 1833.
[signed] Benaiah Maze

[On 4 Nov 1833 the above application was sent back to Townsend's agent, James Bennett, with a copy of regulations bearing the following note: "If he served as he alleges in the New Jersey line he must prove his service as his name is not found upon the rolls." The following regulation was marked for those claiming service in the Continental Line: "In a case where the name of the applicant is not found on the records of the Department, he must prove his service by two credible witnesses who are required to set forth in their affidavits the time of the claimant's entering the service, and the time and manner of his leaving the same, as well as the regiment, company, and line to which he belonged."]

[The following note is by US District Attorney Washington G. Singleton who investigated hundreds of pension applications from present West Virginia. For details see my appendix to the pension application of David W. Sleeth S6111.]

John Townsan/ Lewis County

in august last, I employed Mr. Byrne to examine some five or six cases – in which the Individuals had removed to Kenhawa [sic: Kanawha County] – among the cases thus examined by Mr. Byrne, is this of Mr. Townsend. not being able to ascertain whether his Declaration has been transmitted to the Pension officer – I have thought it best to send Mr. Bynes original note – W. G Singleton/ Jany 13 1835

August the 20th 1834.

I Peyton B Byrne met with John Townsend this day & proceeded to take down a memorandum of his Services in the Revolutionary war which is in the following words to wit.

Mr Townsend says he was Born August the twelfth, seventeen hundred & sixty two, in morris County State of New Jersey, in three mile of the County Seet [Morristown]. lived there till he joined the army he joined the army at the age of about seventeen. hired as a Substitute in the place of one Arnold under

Capt peeat in the first Regement of the Jersey line. Says his lieutenants was named George Snowdon & george mires [probably George Myers]. Says his Ensigns was named Silas parrot & Isaac Dehart. was Rendezvou'd in Elizabeth town. East Jersey, the seventh of May, seventeen hundred & seventy nine the Armeey seven thousand strong, march'd under Command of general Sullivan westward the first day the army arrived at Bound Brook. a Small Creek there Remained two or three days thence westward till they arrived at the Delaware River. thence up said River to East town, there Remained two or three weeks, from thence on to wyomy. there Remained four or five weeks. From thence up the Susquhannah River to Tioga there Remained about one month. from thence march'd out in Detachd parties to Shemong Town, there fell upon the indians in the night time & Destroy'd the whole Town. & laid waste their cornfields then Returnd to head quaters, at Tioga. then the whole army march on to new Town and Dispers'd Col. Butler [probably Walter Butler] & his Rangers, (1 British & Iindians) had a Sever Battle for about two hours, from thence the army marched on to the Genessee town upon half allowance [of rations]. when they arrived at genessee the town was vacated. They laid waste their cornfields. from thence Returnd Back to join Washingtons Armeey at head quaters in the State of new Jersey; Returned safe. Some time late in the fall the same year there put up for winter quaters at pumpton plains. So Ended the Campaign of seventy nine.

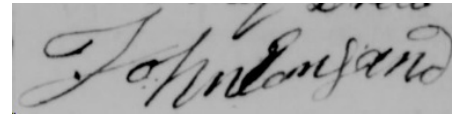
The Ensuing Campaign was In the sate of new Jersey, &c. Mr Townsend says some time During the winter after the Campaign of seventy nine, he Enlisted During the war, in the same Company, under Capt. ogden, Capt Peeat having died &c.

Sometime During the Summer of the Campaign of '80 the army was cal'd out to an Engagement (with the British) under General Maxwell at the Connecticut farms, there Mr Townsend Rec'd. a wound by the Enemy. Then the army Repaird to Tappan where major Andre was captured & Brought in and tried in Tappan Church house was condemnd & hung [Maj John Andre, captured with plans of West Point provided by Benedict Arnold, 23 Sep 1780; hanged 2 Oct] . Mr Townsend was one of the guard that guarded him to the gallows.

The army then march'd on to West poin and took possession of the fort [sic]. & there took up winter quaters. &c &c. Still continued in the Service from the Campaign of seventy nine till after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis [at Yorktown, 19 Oct 1781] &c &c.

Mr Townsend says James Bennet & Robbert Lowther [see endnote] Engaged to get his pension they was to have seventy Dollars provided they got him a pension. says he has never Rec'd any thing yet. Mr Townsend was swore Before Esqr mays.

I do hereby certify that the above Declaration is a true statement of my services Rend in the Revolutionary war. that it is in strict accordance with what I told them when they Drew my Declaration.
Cert/ Peyton B Byrne



Jacob Springstone & Absalom Stump say they Believe Mr Townsend to be a man of credibility one whose word may be Relied on [signed] Jacob Springston [signed] Absalom Stump

Kanawha C.H. Va. July 27, 1741

Dear Sir: I beg leav to trouble you to inform me if there is not a pensioner on the rolls under the Act of the 7th June, 1832 by the name of John Townsend who was at the date of his declaration, a resident of Lewis County, Virginia.

I make this enquiry in consequence of an application from a man of that name now, and for the last three years a resident of this county, "to have his pension papers prepared anew." I understand he is very infirm – for I have never seen him – that he lives about 30 miles from this place – and that some six or seven years ago he drew a pension at the rate of \$80 pr. annum, and that he was defrauded out of the whole of it, by those who prepared his papers – and that he does not know what has become of his certificate [see endnote].

A very few words from your department will enable me to give him a definitive answer.
Very respectfully yr./ James M. Laidley

NOTES:

West Point was never in British possession. Townsend may have meant the fort at Stony Point, which the British captured from Americans on 3 June 1779, and which the Americans recaptured on 16 July of the same year. His description of the weather and the time does not match that event, however.

James Bennett and Robert Lowther were participants in what Singleton called the Lewis Speculating Gentry, which was responsible for a number of fraudulent claims. See my appendix to the pension application of David W. Sleeth S6111.

The file does not contain a pension certificate or any other indication that Townsend was ever pensioned.