

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of John Clem R21840 VA
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Tennessee }
County of Jackson } August Term 1832.

On this 16th day of August 1832, personally appeared in open Court before Sampson Williams, Willeroy Pate, William Gray, and William Locke Justices of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for said court, John Clem a resident of the County of Jackson and State of Tennessee, aged seventy nine years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth make, on his oath, the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision of the act of Congress passed June 7, 1832. That early in the Spring in the year 1778, he enlisted, in Shepherdstown State of Virginia, where he then resided with Patrick Qualey Waggon master, for the term of one year, and entered the service of the United States in the Waggon Department. He marched from Shepherdstown under said Qualey in company with John McDaniel, Joseph Graham and Joseph Harper (who had also enlisted to serve in said department,) to General Rutherford, at Bullskin near Harpers ferry, where applicant and party were furnished with waggon horses, marched from thence across Harpers ferry to Hagerstown in State of Maryland, from thence to Carlisle in state of Pennsylvania, from thence to Lancaster for said state, where applicant and company were furnished with waggon gears, from thence applicant with his party under said Qualey marched to the White Horse Tavern [near present Glenloch PA], from thence to Valley forge in said state, where applicant and his party were furnished with waggons, from Valley forge said applicant with the rest of the company under said Qualey marched to Monmouth court house State of New Jersey a day after the Battle at said place [28 Jun 1778], and joined the army and said applicant and the rest of his party under said Qualey were attached to Colonel Campbell's Regiment of artillery under General [Henry] Knox, applicant then with the army marched to White Plains in the State of New York where they remained until time to go into Winter Quarters. He then with the army marched to Bonbrook [sic: Bound Brook NJ] where he with the waggoners left the main army & marched thence to Morristown in State of New Jersey, from thence to Pluckamin [sic: Pluckemin] in said State where they left the Waggons & stores, and took the Horses with them to Wolfenbargers at the Big Spring between Shaverstown & Statestown and went into Winter quarters at said Big Spring in December 1778. But the main army went into winter quarters at Bonbrook as he thinks. He applicant remained at Big Spring until sometime in February 1779, when he obtained a furlow to visit his farther near Hagerstown State of Maryland. He returned to Big Spring about the first of June 1779 and within a few days after he said applicant received a discharge from said Patrick Qualey. After said applicant's return home whilst swiming a branch of the Potomack [sic: Potomac] river he was thrown from his horse in the river and said discharge was destroyed & lost.

The names of some of the regular officers who were with the troops where he served, are, Gen'l. Washington, General Muhlenburg [sic: Peter Muhlenberg], General [Horatio] Gates, and General Knox.

Said applicant was born in the State of Pennsylvania about 20 miles from Philadelphia in the year 1753 in the month of July, has no record of his age. He has no documentary evidence in his possession, and knows of no person whose evidence he can procure who can testify to his service. Patrick Qualey with whom applicant enlisted sometimes wrote his (applicants) name John Clum, and perhaps his name is so written on the muster roll in the War department. Probably applicant belonged to the Quarter Master's department. The name of the Quarter Master who furnished him with provisions was Colonel Musteler who resided in Statestown Pennsylvania.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or an annuity, except the present, and he declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any agency in any State.

[signed] John Clem

[Clem's application was rejected, probably for reasons alluded to in the following letter.]
Hon'ble J. B. Forester

In the case of John Clem I wish you, if you please to trouble the department again with it, with these suggestions – "Waggon department" and such expressions, are made by the writer of the declaration.

Old Mr. Ditty [John Ditty, pension application W265] states that at that time they took waggoners and artificers out of the ranks. Sometimes the officers would ask who was willing to render particular service – drive a waggon for instance, when some one would volunteer to that service

Now no doubt, Clem stated that he drove a waggon, and gave the names of many other waggoners, when the writer spoke of waggon department Officer of Waggon department &c There were waggoners in 1778, and it is very hard that he should lose his rights because the drawer [of the pension application] was a little too learned. The details he makes are strictly correct as old Mr. Ditty tells me, at least when he was with the army. Now to suppose that an old ignorant dutchman [i.e. German] should make up so long a detail, is impossible And I could get just as many men as know old Mr Clem to swear that he has during their whole acquaintance sustained an unimpeachable character for veracity – and that not a single doubt is entertained as to the propriety of his claim. The poor old man is getting too much in his dotage to swear more about it, and as may be seen from the affidavits is a remarkable object of charity.

It would do the department credit as far as old Mr. Clem is known to give him a pension

Respectfully yours/ J. B. McCormick

NOTE: On 13 May 1834 Richard F. Cook, a surveyor, stated that "Clem is very poor, and has not only for many years past been unable to labour to any extent, but has two daughters wholly helpless and an charge on his hands." David Cox, the Sheriff of Jackson County, stated regarding the two daughters that one was "an invalid, and the other an idiot."