

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Presley Gray R4226

VA

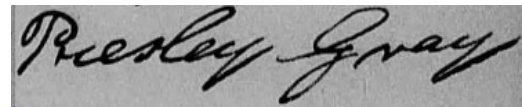
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

[The first letter following appears to be in the handwriting of Presley Gray addressed, "To the Honble R French Member of Congress in Mount Sterling, by my Grandson Ben P Connell." The paper is torn where marked *.]

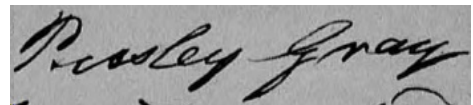
Gallatin County Ky Octor 8th 1836

To the Honble Rich'd French Member of C[*]

Dear Sir I enclose you two Bunches of Pap[*] what I have at this time May Declaration not Ready I will send it by Mail or by Go[*] Harding the Senator from Indiana, & ever[*] other Paper I May hear after think of the de[*] use will be sent on by some safe hand, [*] Proof of my service in the old Revolutio[*] war will be wanting, I have wrote on to [*] of my friends near allexandrey [sic: Alexandria] who I hope wil[*] attend you in Congress & Make themselves known I shall send on Gen'l John Paynes Certiffic[*] who was one of my Mess Mates in that army in 1781 we went from allexandria under Maj[*] Dennis Ramsey, Capt'n Charles Little, Thompson Mayson Lieut, & James Doneal Ensign, I have went a member out of allexandry at that time we served about 4 Monthes, & in St Clears [sic: Arthur St. Clair] army about 3 Months, you will see in the Papers from Nelson County that we served on frequent Tours from there, Joseph Lewes was our Col Col. then

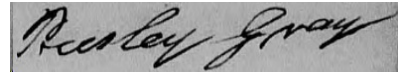


I served about 4 Months in the Revolutionary war in 1781 when in my 17th year, from Fairfax C'ty in Virginia, under Capt. Charles Little from allexandria Thomson Mason Lieut. & James Doneal Ensign Dennis Ramsey Maj'r of the Battallion from allexandria Volunteers under the Influence of Gen'l Washington, No Pay was had for that service the Continental Money was then at its worst, in 1784 I came on to Kentuckey, & fell Immediately into the Indian war I lived on the North Side of Nelson County from that time till the Spring 1796 in the fall 1788 I was commissioned a Capt'n from Virginia, & had a large Company there in Nelson it being yet in the state of Virginia, we had great Privations there with the Indians for many years on the 27th of March 1788 we carried in Col. Cox who was killd by the Indians, & Buryed the bones of others who were killd, some times every horse ware stole that a man had, we hired Rangers to guard a Round us while we made our corn, Barred up our doors in the most extranary manner, & often of Nights would get two or 3 famileys together for saftey, in 1791 I went St Clears Campaign, & there we ware desperately defeated [Battle of the Wabash, 4 Nov 1791], I now hold the Muster Rolls of that Campaign, & other Papers of the Like Nature I Can State with truth I have Lived through three wars, & served in that time from first to Last 33 years I began in my 17th year & served untill I was 50 years old, & in that time with the hardships of the army & the great Cold I caught, I Lost my Constitution in the service of the united States, I served & went forward Longer than I was able & when I no longer could bear up & Live in Camp I Resigned my commission & gave Place, & from that day untill the Present I have never been a day ablee to Live Live in Camp, I am now in my 72 year & can scarceley Leave my own yard, Swell'd Limbs Pains & great weakness attends me, I can neither Ride or walke but Verry Little, I lost a fine son in last army in New orleans in his 21st year he died of Measles



PS I see in Mr Allens Report that it was allaud to double service together, to obtain a pention I hope all my service will obtain a pention with the Pay of a Capten, of these things you will be the Judge, your kind offers to me give me hopes of success in this Matter, I think you will have som strong help Mates in

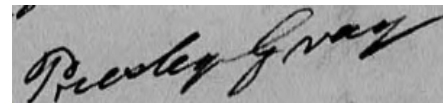
the worke, Hon'l Col. R M Johnson Govnor Hendrix, & I hope anought of others to complet the worke single handed, I fall in verry Much with your Ideas in that case, yours with Due Respect



[The following application for a pension is in the same handwriting as the previous letter.]

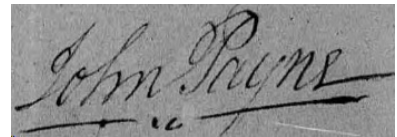
Declaration & Pertition of Presely Gray of Gallatin County Kentuckey, in order to obtain the Bennefit of the act of Congress Pass'd the 7th of June 1832 to be Placed on the Pention Roal as a Capt by special act of Congress & to Recieve a Captains full Pay during life under the Provisions of the said act, he wishes to be Permitted to Lay before your Honors Claims for Sevice Rendered in the united states in time Pass'd, in 1781 he turned out a Volunteer in Fairfax County Virginia, the Place of his Nativity, as a Common Soldier under the Influence of Gen'l Washington, & was Marched from Allexandria under the command of Maj'r Dennis Ramsey Capt Charles Little, Lieut Edward Sanford, & James Doneal Ensign on a tour of six months, & was marched into the Lower Parts of Virginia, we ware honorably Discharged in the City of Richmond by the aforesaid officers, at about the expirations of five months, there being no further call for us

at that time in 1791, I commanded a Company of Men from Nelson County Kentuckey, we ware Rais'd & sent out by the orders of old Col'n John Harden of Washington County who was then the Col of the men to be sent from there I Volunteerd my service under his Influence to head a Company he had made up in Nelson County & ware ordered on by him to Cincinati [sic: Cincinnati], to join Gen'l St Clears army of Regular Troops, we according went on & joined his army & marched into the Indian Country building garrisons as we went, our time of service was about three months as it happened, on the 4th of November our whole army was defeated, the Col william oldham [VAS332] our commander was kill'd on the field, & a great slaughter was there that day, in 1788, I was Commissioned a Capt by the Governor of Virginia, I commanded that company there on them frontiers until after the Treaty of Peace with the Indians [Trety of Greenville, 3 Aug 1795], I went through many hard Privations during that time, I was often ordered out by Govnor Shelby, & Col Lewis to Beardstown, on Tours of duty, to be seen by their orders to me hearwith filed, we Lost many fine men there in them times, we had to Hire men to guard us while we tended our corn, often every Horse a man had ware stolen by the Indians, we often had to Run together of Nights when we ware Informed that the Indians ware about, we Lived in this desparate fix for more than seven years, before the Treaty of Peace with the Indian Tribes, in 1814 I was appointed by Govenor Shelby to take the command of the 13th Regiment of the Kentucky Miltia, destined for New orleens to assist Gen'l [Andrew] Jackson, I was mustered with my Regiment in Louisvill [sic: Louisville] on the 20th of November 1814 see the Muster Roals now in the war department, soon after that I was taken sick in Louivill by Reason of a great cold I caught wading in the waters to save my boat from sinking in a great storm that came up in the Night but sick as I was I went on to the Mouth of the Cumberland River some three Hundred miles, there Gen'l Thomas visited my boat, & advised me to get on shore & get where I could be taken care of, thence I left my Friendly Regiment, & a fine son, I lingered out the time in Pain till the 10th of Janr'y 1815 I then sent on my Resignation to Gen'l Thomas I then was convinced, I never more should be able to Live in Camp again and I thought it was all an honorable man could do when I no longer could Live in Camp to Resign, this I did with Pain & Regret, see my Resignation, & to this day I have been usless to my self & familey, with swelled Limbs weakness Pains & afflictions has been my lot ever since I was then about 50 years old, & from the time I entered in my 17th year I have been a great deal in the united states service in which I took great delight, while ever I was able, & your Hmble Pertitioner will as in duty bound ever Pray
Nov'r 10th 1836



[Capitalization partly corrected.]

The Affidavit of John Payne of Scott County Kentucky born in the State of Virginia in the County of Fairfax in the year of Our Lord 1764, that some time in the latter part of the year 1780 some months prior to this Affiant being sixteen years of Age & in the time of the Revolutionary War there was a Call for Volunteers to march to the South when the Affiant with Presley Gray now of Gallatine County Ky & many others Turned out Capt Charles Little, Lieutenant Thompson Mason, and Ensign James Doneal Commanded the Company Dennis Ramsey of Alexandria was our Majr Owing to some Delay we were not called Immediately to sevice. Early in 1781 we Joined a considerable number of Militia in the City of Williamsburg commanded by Gen'l Weaden [sic: George Weedon] & afterwards by the Maquis D le Fayette [sic: Marquis de Lafayette] – from Williamsburg our Army retreated by a circuitous rout to the City of Richmond having had a number of Encounters with the British sometimes with there rear & at other times with there front finally the British Army appeared on the south side of James River & burnt Manchester Warehouses [April 1781]. soon after the Troops to which we Presley Gray & this Deponant were attached were by the orders of the Govenor of Virginia discharged as having completed the time of sevice Gray was a Mess Mate of this Deponat he at all time dureing our campain discharged his duty as a soldier in the fall of 1782 this affiant came to Kentucky he has resided some distance apart from the resedence of said Gray but has no doubt that he has performed considerable sevice in the wars with the Indians in the early settlement of this Country as Kentucky present an entire Fronteer for many years [22 Nov 1836]

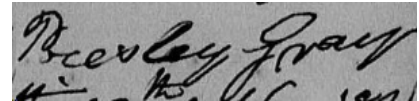


[Written on a paper addressed to Capt. Presley Gray, Corn Creek P. Office, Gallatin County:]

Genl Thomas was our Gen'l. in Command in Jakson's army in 1814 from Kentuckey, & went to orleans, and also was a Captain from Nelson County with a Company in Gen'l St Clears army & was defeated with us on the 4th of November 1791

Gen'l. Thomas lives near Tarrahut
[sic: Terre Haute] Indiana

wrote & signed by
Presley Gray
this 29th of Nov'r 1836
to explain who Genl



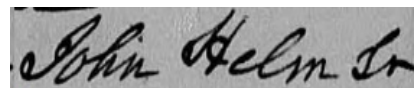
Thomas was in this case to us P. G.

Bn. Helms family has Just rec'd a letter from Doct. Grays wife Springfield Illinois, the family was well Mrs. Grays health much improved

Elizabethtown [Elizabethton] Ky 24th Novm. 1836

Capt. Presley Gray

My old friend and Brother sufferer in arms, I have Just received yours of 15th inst. and am glad to find that a kind providence has preserved our life up to this date. I have no doubt, from my own experience that you feel yourself much worn out by time & Hardships. I am about three years a head of you if I live untill the 29th of this month I shall be 75 years old and am labouring under much infirmaty, all this I ought to be resigned to if it be the Mercy of God that I am ripning for a better World which I pray God may be the lot of us both, my wife is in her 64th year by a fall from a horse she was so Crippled as to be unable to walk with 2 Crutches without help. May the God of Mercy take care of you the remnant of your days is the prayer of your Old Friend John Helm Sr.



I Hereby Certify that Capt. Presley Gray & myself served on the Campaign under Gen'l A. S'ct Clair in the fall of 1791 against the Indians &c that on the 4th of November 1791 the Army was defeated by the

indians &c that the said Gray went out a Captain and commanded a Company from Nelson County K'y
I went from Nelson County also and was appointed Paymaster to the K'y troops a considerable part of
the time I performed the duty of both Paymaster & Quartermaster

Give under my hand this 24th day of November 1836 [signed] John Helm Sr
S'd. Helm was wounded

THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

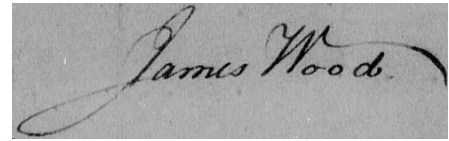
To Presley Gray Gentleman Greeting:

KNOW You that from the special trust and confidence which is reposed in your fidelity, courage, activity
and good conduct, our Lieutenant GOVERNOR, the Governor being absent upon the recommendat'n. of
the Court of Nelson doth appoint you the said, Presly Gray a Cap't. in the first Redgement of the militia
of the said county of Nelson to take rank as such from the Eleventh day of December. IN testimony
whereof these our letters are made patent. WITNESS The Honorable James Wood Esquire; our said
Lieutenant Governor, at Richmond, this 11th day of December 1788.

(REGISTERED.) }

[T] Meriwether }

James Wood

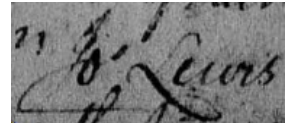


I do hereby certify that Presly Gray have taken the Oaths prescribed by Law. Isaac Morrison CNC.

Nelson County Dis't. Court 1788

Ordered, that the militia comprehended in the follow bounds be a distinct company to wit all on the south
side of Simpsons Creek up to the mouth of Plum run and all the waters of said run, and up it to the head,
thence down Kimleys run [Kimbly Run] to the mouth taking in all on the north side of Kimlys, all the
east part of Cox Creek to the mouth of Kimbly run thence Northwardly to fall river [Salt River?]
[illegible word], and that Prestly Gray be appointed Captain, Jonathan MCarty Lieutenant, and James
Connell be ensign of said Company. Copy Teste/ Isaac Morrison

Sir you must hold yourself in readiness to take command of the men who are to rendezvous at
Bardstown on the 6th July your Tour will be to the Mouth of Salt River for Sixty Days yrs
Capt. P. Gray [Joseph Lewis]/ 25th June 1791

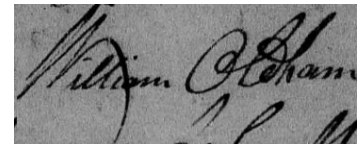


publick orders on the march by the Col Comd't William oldham

Sir You'l proceed on with the party under your command on the road towards the Miama [sic:
Miami River] Until you meet the Pack Horses which y'l. take in charge and conduct safe to this
plaice - &c

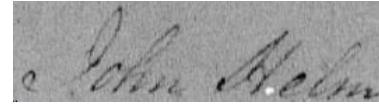
Capt. Gray } William Oldham

Oct'r. 6th 1791 } L.C. M.

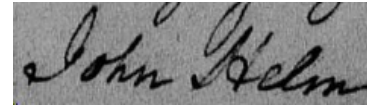


due Capt. P. Gray & subs, Forty Compleat rations on the march from Miammie Garrison to this place.
Camp 68 miles From Fort Washington 18th of October 1791 for Wm Duer [illegible abbreviation]
W F [illegible]

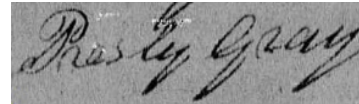
Received from Capt. Presley Gray Two Tents two Kettles & Cant [canteen?]
Camp 31st of October 1791 John Helm Q. M. M.



The Contractor is indebted to Capt. Presley Grays Comp'y of Militia five Hundred & ten rations of Soap
Whiskey Candles and Vinegar from the 20th of October untill the 7th of November 1791
Presley Gray Capt./ John Helm Q M



Pay the within Due Bill to Jas. Smiley [James Smiley]
Apl. 23 1792



Sir Georgetown Sep. 28th 1793

I have just now rec'd dispatches from Major Gen [Anthony] Wayne Containing a Requisition of
me for such number of Militia of this State to be drafted and marched forward to him as will make up the
deficiency of the mounted Volunteers that were called for heretofore by him You will therefore
Immediately proceed to draft from the Regiment of Militia under your command One hundred men and to
march them to this place on the Tenth day of next month. Notwithstanding the men may be drafted I am
Authorised by General Wayne to say that all such of them as come forward properly mounted and
equiped shall be considered as mounted Volunteers and paid accordingly on Condition that they join the
Legion and the Kentucky Volunteers at the head of a line at Fort Jefferson on or before the 15th day of
October next. You are sensible that the honor and Interest of the State so much depends on the success of
the present expedition that I need say little to urge you to make every possible exertion in your power to
send forward your Quoto of men into the Field with great respect I am/ you most Obed

Colo J Lewis

A Copy

Isaac Shelby

Cap Prestley Gray by Express Simpsons Creek

Sir Agreeable to the within orders you must without delay Draft from your Company Ten men
without they will turn Out Voluntarily to meet at Mr. William Kincheloes on Chaplins fork on Monday
next being the Seventh of the Month at 12 oClock in readiness for to march to join the grand army at
head Quarters I need not say more than is Contained within Only should be glad the men would go
voluntarily

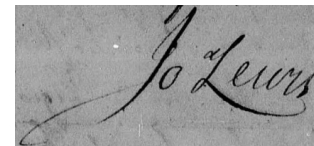
I am yr. most Obed

Tuesday 1st Oct'r. 1793

[Joseph Lewis]

(Ten Men)

Cap. Prestley Gray



22nd this month at Bardstown attend on Court Martial & have yr. Delinquents warned J. Lewis

To Capt. Presley Gray

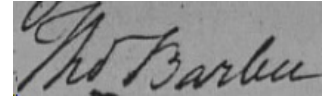
LEXINGTON, JUNE 19 1794.

SIR,

AGREEABLE to instructions of the Board appointed by the secretary of War for appointing the Field
and other Officers to command a corps of mounted Volunteers requested from Kentucky; You are
nominated a Captain

You will therefore proceed without delay to recruit men to serve the term of four months, unless sooner
discharged, to compleat the company consisting of four Sergeants, four Corporals and seventy-five

privates, and on your producing Two Sergeants Two Corporals and Thirty four Privates able bodied men, mounted on good horses, with a good Rifle and thirty days provision, at Georgetown on the 14th day of July next, you will receive your appointment, and Forty Dollars pay in advance,—your pay to commence from the time of entering into the recruiting service. And each noncommissioned officer and private will receive Fifteen Dollars pay as aforesaid, on their passing Muster as aforesaid, You will from time to time notify Colo. John Caldwell of your progress in recruiting. Therefore Relying on your Activity and Exertions to promote the service/ I am Sir/ Your Mo. Ob'dt
[Thomas Barbee] B. Gen'l.



NB. Each private will receive a Dollar pr day whilst in service, perhaps a deduction will be made for provision whilst the men are found by the Public
[In different handwriting, evidently Gray's:]
This call never went into effect, but cost me at least 2 Months Trouble & expence & Not a cent gained, I hope it may now be considered

IN THE NAME, AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY.
JAMES GARRARD,

GOVERNOR of the said Commonwealth, to Prestley Gray Esq. Greeting:

KNOW YOU, that reposing special trust and confidence in our courage, activity and good conduct, and in consequence of your having been nominated agreeably to the constitution, you are hereby commissioned CAPTAIN, in the 22^d regiment of the Militia of the said State, to take rank as such according to the date of this commission, and to continue in office during good behaviour and our residence within the bounds of your company.

IN TESTIMONY whereof, I have caused these letters to be made patent and the seal of the Commonwealth to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand at FRANKFORT, on the 10th day of July in the year of our Lord, one thousand and eight hundred. [signed] James Garrard

BY THE GOVERNOR,/ Harry Toulmin Secretary.

[On the other side:]

This day Came before me Presley Gray & took the severl oaths provided by Law to this State Given under my hand this 13th Day of august 1800 Jno Grimes JP

IN THE NAME, AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY.
JAMES GARRARD, GOVERNOR of the said Commonwealth, to Presley Gray Esq. Greeting: KNOW YOU, that reposing special trust and confidence in our courage, activity and good conduct, and in consequence of your having been nominated agreeably to the constitution, you are hereby appointed withthe advice and consent of the Senate MAJOR of the First BATTALION of the 51st REGIMENT of the Militia of this Commonwealth, to take rank as such according to the date of this Commission, and to continue in office during good behaviour and our residence within the bounds of the said Battalion.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have caused these letters to be made patent, and the Seal of the State to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand at FRANKFORT, on this 22^d day of Dec'r. in the year of our Lord, one thousand, eight hundred. [signed] James Garrard

BY THE GOVERNOR,/ Harry Toulmin Secretary.

[On the other side:]

This Day Came prestly Gray before me Hohn Grimes one of the Justices of the peace for the County of Gallatin and took the oath prescribed by Law agreeable to the within Commission. Given under my hand this 11th Day of February 1801 [signed] Jno Grimes

IN THE NAME, AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY.

JAMES GARRARD,

GOVERNOR OF THE SAID COMMONWEALTH, TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS,
GREETING:

KNOW YE, That reposing especial trust and confidence in the integrity, diligence and ability of Prestley Gray Esq'r.

I have nominated and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate do appoint him Lieutenant Colonel Commandant of the 51st regiment lying in the county of Gallatin, with full power and authority to execute and fulfill the duties of the said office, according to law; and TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same, with all the rights and emoluments thereunto legally appertaining, during good behaviour.

IN TESTIMONY whereof, I have caused these letters to be made patent and the seal of the Commonwealth to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand at FRANKFORT, on the 13th day of Dec'r. in the year of our Lord, one thousand, eight hundred & two [signed] James Garrard BY THE GOVERNOR,
Harry Toulmin Secretary.

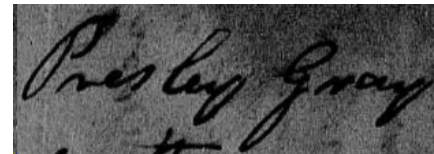
[On the other side:]

I do hereby Certify that Colo Presley Gray of the 51st Regiment has Taken the oaths of office this 20th day of December 1802 Given under my hand the day & year above riten Brook Bennett
Justice of the Peace for
Gallatin County

Janr 10th 1815

Sir you will Recieve this as my Resignation in the 13th Regiment of detach'd Melitia from Kentuckey now in the service of the united states.

Maj'r Genl John Thomas Presley Gray Lieut Col Com't
of 13th R. D. M. of Kentuckey



NOTES:

The file includes many statements certifying Presley Gray's integrity and reputation as an officer. There is also a document dated 20 Dec 1799 and signed by Gov. James Garrard, appointing Presely Gray a Justice of the Quarter Sessions Court of Gallatin County, and another document dated 18 Dec 1806 and signed by Gov. Christopher Greenup, appointing Presley Gray an Assistant Judge for the Gallatin Circuit. Also in the file are some records not related to military service. There is also an apparently misfiled letter regarding Granville Smith (pension application R17957).

Gray's claim under the pension act of 1832 was denied, because he did not serve at least six months during the Revolutionary War. Gray subsequently petitioned Congress for a pension, which was denied in 1842.