

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of James McEwen R6700

PA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Pennsylvania

Lancaster County Ss.

On this 18th day of November AD 1843 personally appeared before Emanuel Schaeffer, associate Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Lancaster, Mary Stiff, a resident of the City of Lancaster, in the County and State aforesaid, aged fifty-six years, who bein first duly sworn, according to law, doth on her oath, make the following declaration.

That her Father James McEwen in his life time told her, that he came over to America as a Drum Major in the Brittish Army at the commencement [of the] Revolutionary War, but shortly after he felt anxious to leave the Brittish and embrace the cause of the Americans. The Brittish officer hearing he had such a desire, kept a vigilant eye upon him, but he at last effected his escape, and joined the American forces. She forgets now where it was he said he enlisted, she thinks it was in Lancaster; or else at Philadelphia or Wilmington in the State of Delaware, that he enlisted as a Drum Major and served three or four years, being the latter portion of the War – that her Father and mother always said that John, their eldest son, was born in the camp on the 8th day of Sept. 1781, and that they were married, shortly after his desertion from the Brittish, her mother being married against the wishes of the family on account of his deserting the Brittish. That her father was at the battle of Yorktown, when it was surrendered [19 Oct 1781], that her Mother frequently told her that at one of the battles in which her husband engaged under Washington, that she handed Washington a drink of water out of a tin-cup & that he persuaded the women to get out of the way. That her father said he was at the Carolinas under Gates and they were defeated [defeat of Gen. Horatio Gates, Battle of Camden SC, 16 Aug 1780], and then Gen Greene took command of the Division of the army to which he belonged [Nathanael Greene, 3 Dec 1780]. That he told her they walked in sand over their shoe tops &c – many other particulars of the battle and marches he related to her, but which she does not recollect sufficiently to state them under oath. that her Father had some papers concerning his connexion with the army, but they were destroyed shortly before his death; I have seen them myself. That her father was about making application when his sudden death prevented him; he died on the 17th day of July 1834 [corrected below to 14 June 1834]. That her father never received a pension for his services nor did her mother, Barbara McEwen who died on the 7th day of October AD 1835. That the Deponents Husband, Nicholas Stiff is dead having died in August last (1843), and futher saith not &c.

Mary herXmark Stiff

State of Pennsylvania } Ss

Lancaster County }

On this 11th day of December AD 1843 personally appeared before Michael Carpenter [sic: Carpenter] Alderman in and for the City of Lancaster, Jacob Gerber, a resident of the City of Lancaster, aged seventy-three years, who being first duly sworn according to law, says:

That he was intimately acquainted with James McEwen a Drum Major of the Revolutionary War, and the War of 1795 [Gen. Anthony Wayne's campaign against the Indians, which included the Battle of Fallen Timbers on 20 Aug 1794 and ended with the Treaty of Greenville on 3 Aug 1795]. I was quite a young man, when I first became acquainted with him, I saw him leave Lancaster and join the Army as a drum Major in 1778, the first battle he was engaged in was at Monmouth [28 Jun 1778], in New Jersey – he had been at Valey forge under Washington shortly before [sic: Valley Forge, winter 1777-78]. In 1780 he was marched under Gates to Clermont [home of Loyalist Col. Henry Rugeley, also known as Rugeley's Mill, 12 mi N of Camden] in the South, they were attacked by the Brittish under Lord Cornwallis, and were defeated on the road to Camden. Gen. Green afterwards took command of the Army – he was with Green during 1781 & 1782 [see endnote] and was discharged only in 1783. The Old man in his life time

and other soldiers who were with him in the Revolution told me of their services as above stated. McEwen mentioned many circumstances that occurred during the war – the hardships he endured and the long fatiguing marches he was always considered by the people of Lancaster as a revolutionary Drummer, and was a man of high respectability. In 1795 he went as a drum Major in the Gen. Waynes Army under Capt. How. I also went out in the same Regiment, in this Campaign – he told me many of his exploits during the War – how he escaped from the British &c – which he had told me shortly after his return from the Revolutionary War, many years before

I receive a pension from the State of Pennsylvania, for my services in 1795. That Mrs Mary Stiff the applicant is the only child living of the above mentioned James McEwen.

Sworn to & subscribed this 11th day of December, AD 1843 before me

M Carpenter Ald

[signed] Jacob Gerber

State of Pennsylvania }
Lancaster County }

On this 24th day of April AD 1844 personally appeared before Emanuel Schaeffer, Associate Judge of the Court of Common pleas of Lancaster County, Mary Stiff, a resident of said City, and daughter of the late James McEwen who, being first duly sworn according to law, doth on her oath make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the provision of the Act of Congress in regard to the claims of heirs, &c.

That her Father was a Revolutionary Soldier, and served as a Drummer or Drum Major during the whole of the War. was regularly discharged early in 1783. That her father told her, he was in the battle of Monmouth, N. Jersey, and at the Camp of Washington at Valley Forge. He was marched South under Gates, and afterwards was transferred to Gen. Greene. That her brother, (who is now dead) was born in the Camp during the War, (as the entry in her fathers bible, made in his own hand-writing, will show (which is exhibited to the Court). That She does not know of any person, now living, who was out with her Father in the Revolutionary War, but that he was always reputed by the old Soldiers, to be a Soldier who had served long and faithfully, during the revolution. That she is unable to say positively in whose company he served but believes he served in several Companies. That her Father died poor on the 14th day of June AD 1834, without a will and no administration was had on his estate. That her mother, Barbara McEwen, died on the 27th day of September AD 1836, also very poor, without a will, and no Letters of Administration were granted by the Register, as no application for an appointment was made (The Records in the Registers office will show the fact.)

Mary herXmark Stiff

State of Pennsylvania }
Lancaster County Ss }

On this 24th day of April AD 1844 personally appeared before me the subscriber, associate Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Lancaster County Sarah Stauffer, a resident of Strasburg Township, in said County and daughter of the late James McEwen and Barbara his wife, who being first duly sworn according to law doth on her oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress for the relief of the heirs of Revolutionary Soldiers:

That her Father James McEwen came in to this Country as a drummer in a Scotch Company, for the purpose of opposing the rebellion at the commencement of the war; but shortly after his arrival he deserted with great difficulty and danger, to the Americans, and forthwith enlisted as a Drummer or rather Drum Major as no one could equal him in drumming. The British Officers in Lancaster threatened to have him hung if he would ever return to England, but he said he never intended to go back; he immediately enlisted in the Pennsylvania Line, and did not return until peace was declared. He told me in his life time that he was in three or 4 battles, and the last place he was in was at the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown in Virginia. At this time he was under Washington he had just returned from the South where they had a great deal of fighting and marching, and further that all my brother and sister are dead except Mrs Mary Stiff, who is the only daughter and heir living, except me; That her father died on the 14th day

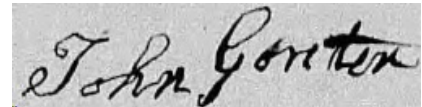
of June AD 1854, without a will, and no administration was had on the Estate – and that her Mother Barbara McEwen died on 27th day of September 1836, without a will, and no letters of Administration were taken out of the Office, and further deponent saith not. [signed] Sarah Stauffer

State of Pennsylvania Ss.
Lancaster City

Personally appeared before me the subscriber an alderman in and for said City, John Gonter [pension application W11059], a resident of said City, who being first duly sworn according to law says:

That he was a Soldier of the Revolutionary War, and served as a Trooper in Armand's Legion, and that he receives a pension from the United States – that he was acquainted with James McEwen, who was a great drummer, and that he went out in the war shortly after its commencement, that he drummed for several companies of Lancaster County, in the Pennsylvania Line. he was out the whole of the war. After Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown our Legion brought the prisoners to York and Lancaster and we were then discharged from duty. Some-time afterwards McEwen came back to Lancaster – he said he was in South Carolina & Virginia and at Yorktown when Cornwallis surrendered. We always received him as a Revolutionary Soldier in our parties, on the 4th of July.

Sworn to & subscribed this 25 day of April 1844



Lancaster Sept 10th 1844

Dear Sir [James L. Edwards, Pension Commissioner],

As you appear to have forgotten the claim of James McEwen decd. I must urge upon you to examine it. In your last letter of July 31st 44, you object merely to the records being silent in regard to the length of his services. The testimony I forwarded to you, fully shows the probable length of the time he was on duty; being between four & five years; enlisting early in the war and discharged in 1783. Mrs Stiff & Stauffer and Mr Stauffer called on me to day and they say he was enlisted in the Pennsylvania Line. Mr. Stauffer recollects of Old McEwen telling him that he obtained Land, but that in a caper he sold it for a trifle. The fact of his receiving Land Warrant No. 9.973 for 100 acres on the 28th Jany 1795 shews plainly that his name is on record, and the testimony upon which the Warrant was granted independent of the conclusive testimony sent by us, must be sufficient to allow the claim. There can be no doubt, but that James McEwen served from three to five years, as I believe none were enlisted in the Penna. Line except 3 or 5 years, besides other testimony of the Daughters show that he entered the army some time after the war broke out, and served out until the termination of the War: and old John Gontner swears, he saw him enter the Army, shortly after the commencement, and that he did not return until its close – after Cornwallis Surrendered – These are irresistible facts, but above all, his name is on record – and Bounty Land granted to him. It is rather vexatious that this claim, established so clearly, should be withheld so long. Under the circumstances of the case we have done all the Department requires. All we ask is the pay that is now due to the heirs in right of their Father – who died in 1834, or in their mother who died in 1836

Very Respectfully/ Yours &c./ J B Kaufman

State of Pennsylvania Ss.

Lancaster County [14 Oct 1844]

Before me the subscriber an associate Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Lancaster County personally appeared Mary Stiff of the city of Lancaster – who is the only daughter and heir (save Sarah Stauffer) of James McEwen deceased a soldier of the Revolutionary War who being first duly sworn according to law makes the following declaration.

That her Father James McEwen came to this Country in a Scotch Company as a Drummer shortly after war was declared; but deserted from the British and enlisted in the Pennsylvania Line in 1777. He was marched first to Morristown, and then to the Brandywine where there was a battle fought [11 Sep

1777] – shortly after he was in the Battle of Germantown [4 Oct 1777] – and then the whole army went to the Camp at Valley forge. He then marched with Washingtons troops to Monmouth where he helped to fight a great Battle – he was so worn out with heat and dust that he was very sick for a few days – he remained with the Army awhile longer and then went to the South under Gen. Gates where he was sometime after placed under Gen. Nathaniel Greene – he remained in the South until he was marched to Yorktown in Virginia where he was when Cornwallis Surrendered. Sometime after he came home and was then discharged – he often told her & others the above facts and also that he was in another battle but cannot now recollect the name – he returned with the prisoners to the Lancaster Barracks; that her Mother was in the army with her father and that her Brother, John McEwen, was born in the Camp in 1782. That her Father was known to all the old Soldiers and citizens as a Revolutionary Soldier. many years ago he received Bounty Land from the U States Government and declined asking for a pension, because he had sufficient to live upon, but afterwards he fell behind hard, and was about making application for a pension, when he was suddenly taken sick and died, which prevented him – that her father occasionally became intoxicated, and on one such an occasion he threw his Commission - discharge and other papers in the stove. And Further that her father died on the 14th day of June 1834 without a will and no Administration was had upon his estate That her Mother Barbara McEwen died on the 27th of Sept. 1836, without a will and no Administration was had on her estate. Mary herXmark Stiff

Surveyor General’s Office./ Harrisburg, January 27th 1845.

Dist’t	No	Acres	Name of Patentee	Return for Pat’g.
No 7	1355	200	James McKewn priv	

In testimony that the above is a Copy of an entry in a Book marked, “Donation Land” containing the names of the Officers and Soldiers of the Pennsylvania Line in the Revolutionary Army

I have hereto set my hand and the seal of said Office at Harrisburg the 27th day of January 1845
For Jacob Sallade S.G/ Tho. J. Rehur

State of Pennsylvania }
Lancaster City } On this eighth day of May 1845 personally appeared before me the subscriber an Alderman in and for said City George Leonard [W8250] a Revolutionary Pension of the U. States, who being sworn according to law says, that he has a personal knowledge of the services of James McEwen decaasd, and are as follows:

That James McEwen was a drummer in a Scotch Company, but deserted at the Commencement of the war and came to Lancaster and got married, he then enlisted in the Pennsylvania Line, and was in service during the whole of the war. He was at the Battle of Monmouth and with Washington at Camp Vally Forge. The last time I saw James McEwen was at Morristown in New Jersey General [Moses] Hazen had command of the Regimt to which McEwen belonged. His Company left for the South and he was under Gates & Green in the south expedition. [see endnote] He afterward at the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown in 1781 and then returned to Lancaster with the Prisoners when I saw him again – he acted in the capacity of a Drummer. His wife was with him in the Service and one of the children were born in the Camp – General Hazen commanded the Congress Regiment who were called the white coats, with blue facings. I have frequently seen him playing the drum, he played very well – one Blunder was the drum major at the time. And further deponent saith not. George hisXmark Leonard

NOTES:

Continental soldiers at the Battle of Camden were primarily from Maryland and Delaware, not from Pennsylvania. McEwen may have been at the Battle of Camden under a second enlistment.

Gen. Greene was not at the siege of Yorktown in the fall of 1781, so McEwen could not have served under Greene in 1781 and 1782 and yet have been at Yorktown.

Pennsylvania troops were sometimes attached to the commanded of Gen. Moses Hazen in the North, but Hazen did not march to the South.

On 28 May 1855 Sarah Stauffer, 65, resident of the southeast corner of Broad and Wood streets in Philadelphia, assigned a new power of attorney to pursue her claim. She stated that her sister, Mary Stiff, had died since the two of them applied for a pension. The document was executed before Alderman Nathaniel L. Stauffer of the same address who stated that he had known Sarah Stauffer for more than 25 years.

A document in the file quotes from the family record as follows: "John McEwen was Born the 8th Day of September 1782."

On 10 Sep 1856 Rudolph Christ of Lancaster stated that he had "frequently been told by Garber [Jacob Gerber] that Rudolph Christ, late of Lancaster County, ascertained that Peter Mowry late of Lancaster, now deceased, served with said James McCuen [sic] in the Revolutionary War."

The reason given for rejecting the claim of McEwen's heirs is as follows: "Not identical with James McKown, a war's-man [enlisted for the duration of the war] and recipient of bounty land, and who received the highest reward of the service. If the claimant were identical with him his proof of service would abound. The claim is asserted many years after the death of the alleged soldier." I could not identify this James McKown. Possibly it is a reference to the James McKewn on record above as having received bounty land.