

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters](#)

Pension Application of John Black R887

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

The State of Ohio } SS

Highland County } On this 13th day of March AD 1834 personally came before me one of the Associate Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of said County John Black of resident of said County aged 70 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 & served as herein stated and first said John Black states that he was born on the 13th day of March AD 1763 at Lancaster County in the State of Pennsylvania

That there is a record of his age in a receipt book now in his possession which was the property of his father.

That he lived when called into service in Washington County in the State of Maryland – that he moved to Berkley [sic: Berkeley] County Virginia during the war where he lived about 5 years he then moved to Fayette County Pennsylvania where he resided 13 years then moved to Adams County Ohio where he resided about 24 years & thence to Highland County where he now lives,

That for the first two years of his service he volunteered & for the balance of his services he was drafted.

That in addition to the officers under whom he served, he knew the following officers of the American Army viz Generals Washington LaFayette, Putnam, [Charles] Lee, [Peter] Muhlenberg & Colonels Stinson & Bell together with many others whose names he can not recal to mind.

That in the month of March AD 1778 he volunteered for the Maryland militia under Captain John Lee. soon after he volunteered he marched to the mouth of Conegocheague river [sic: Conococheague Creek] in Maryland That he was there employed in boating & guarding provisions from the mouth of said river to Oldtown on the Potomac river for the use of the Western army of the United States. That in his company there were 72 men command by Captain John Lee & Lieutenant George Stockton. That he was engaged in this service for two years – during which time the men of his company took turns at boating & guarding provisions & boats not less than seven months during said two years service. After serving two years boating & guarding provisions from Williamsport to Oldtown on the Potomac he was discharged by his said Captain at Oldtown & return home.

That soon after returning home he moved to Berkley county Virginia where in the month of July AD 1781 he was drafted for the Virginia Militia under Captain Jarrett & in the regiment commanded by Colonel [William] Darke. We marched soon after I was drafted to York Town Virginia where the British army lay We joined the american army before Yorktown & remained there until I served out my term & which was for three months & 15 days longer – when I was discharged by my said Captain before Yorktown & returned home. I was discharged before Cornwallis surrendered [19 Oct 1781].

This applicant says that he received written discharges from his Captains after both terms of his service which he has lost

That George W Barrene Daniel Van Winkle Henry Surber and others residing in his neighborhood will testify as to his character for veracity, That there is no clergyman residing in his neighborhood. He has no documentary evidence nor does he know of any living witnesses by whom he could prove his service That from old age & bodily infirmity he is unable without great danger to appear before a court of record to make his declaration He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension but the present & declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state

[signed] John Black

[The Pension Office denied Black's claim, interpreting his service as a boatman to have been under a civil contract. The pension act of 1832 was "construed to extend... [to] all persons enlisted, drafted, or who volunteered and who were bound to military service, but not those who were occasionally employed with the army upon civil contracts, such as Clerks to Commissaries and to Store Keepers, &c., Teamsters, Boatmen, &c."]

[The penmanship in the following two documents is scarcely decipherable.]

State of Ohio Clermont County Court of Common Pleas in the year 1839 August Term for Clermont County.

On this 3rd day of August in the year 1839 personally appeared in open court before the court aforesaid John Black aged seventy six years on the thirteenth day of March next who being duly sworn on his oat states. That he was born in Lancaster County in the State of Pennsylvania on the thirteenth day of March in the year seventeen hundred and sixty three, and that when he was about fifteen years of age his father removed from Lancaster County to Washington County in the State of Maryland. That in the year Seventeen hundred and Seventy eight after harvest in that year at Washington County in the State of Maryland this declarant entered the Continental Boat Service under the command of John Lee and George Stockton conductors of that business as a substitute for Peter Myers who before that time viz in Spring season of the same year had enlisted in said Service. This declarant saw said Peter Myers and William Black and Samuel Black [pension application R892] two of this declarants brothers enlist in said Service at Williamsport Maryland under John Lee & this declarant saw each of said persons receive sixteen dollars on the same day they enlisted as their bounty for so doing. After Myers had elisted Peter Myers told this declarant that his father in law lived down by Redding [probably Reading] in Pennsylvania and was sick & he requested this declarant to stand in said service in his place until he came back This declarant entered said service at Williamsport Maryland under Captain John Lee and continued in said service for two years next after his said entering upon it. This declarant was engaged with Aaron Bowman Martin[?] Bowman Daniel Bowman Thomas Flack, George Brown, Henry Dismore[?], John Aackter and William & James Richardson & [two or three illegible words] John & Jessie Morgan[?], & others under the command of said Lee in Stockton with eighteen Boats in conveying for the western Army engaged with the Indians from the mouth of Connegocheague Creek to old Town on the on the North Branch of the Potomac and then the provisions were landed at old Town Colonel [Michael] Cresap who lived in Old Town took charge of them & sent them as this declarant believes on pack horses to the Army. The Store house near on the Point of a Hill on the Bank of Cooneagocheague creek, and this declarant had to take his turn and did take his turn in guarding the Store house & when the Boats were there in guarding them from the depredations of the tories – to prevent the tories from burning the Boats and burning or robbing the Store house. At the end of two years in said service this declarant was honorably discharged therefrom at Williams Port Maryland and received a written discharge therefrom signed by John Lee which discharge was burnt with other papers about nineteen years ago in Adams County Ohio by an infant son of this declarant. While this declarant was in said Service he with others had musket and bayonets and tents and muster under the command of their officer and carried their arms &c with them while boating up and down the Potomac.

In the fall of the year Seventeen hundred and eighty one at Martinsburg in the State of Virginia this declarant was drafted into the service of the United under the command of Captain Jarred and Col Dark who commanded the regiment. John Morgan, Henry Dismore, Jessee Morgan were drafted at the same & from the same neighbourhood with this declarant. Previous to his being drafted this declarant had moved with his father on the Virginia side of the Potomac one mile above Watkins ferry. Martinsburgh was the place of rendezvous – about three days after this being so drafted the company marched to Fauquire [?; Fauquier?] Court House & then to Fredricksburg [sic: Fredericksburg] on the Rappahannock. then after marching for some time the company crossed the Pamunkey and Mattaponi Rivers and went on to york

town to besiege Cornwillis [sic: Cornwallis] who was in York Town when the declarant with the company he belonged to arrived there After this declarant had been at York Tow two or three days he with others was taken from the Ranks to ferry the United States troops across the Pamunkey and Mattepanois Rivers. Their principal place of staging when not engaged in this service was at Ruffins ferry on the Pamunkey [near Sweet Hall]. This declarant continued in said Service for the period of three months and eleven days from the time he marched from his home, and was then discharged therefrom by Captain Garrand. He was discharged at Martinsburgh in Virginia and received a written discharge signed by Captain Garrand which was burnt with his before mentioned one at the same time. After the war this declarant lived five years in Berkly County Virginia and then removed to Fayette County Pennsylvania where he lived thirteen years and then he moved to Adams County in the State of Ohio where he lived he believes about ten years and then moved to Brown County Ohio where he lived four years and then removed to Clermont County Ohio where he now resides. all his said service was as a Private. He has no documentary evidence of his said Service and he knows of no person by whom he can prove the same. Robert Lane & [illegible] Whitaker James Ferguson Thomas J Buchanan George Meday[?] know him in his present neighbourhood and can testify to his character for truth and his standing among his neighbours. He hereby relinquishes all claim whatever to any pension except the present & declares that he believes his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state.

[signed] John Black

State of Ohio Clermont County SS. [19 Sep 1839]

Before me the undersigned one of the Justices of the Peace in and for the above named county personally appeared James Ward Senior of said County who being duly sworn according to Law on his oath states that he resides in Clermont County in the State of Ohio and is seventy three years of age & a few days over. that this deponant in the Revolutionary war served with his father on the Banks of the Potomac River about two miles above Stocktons ferry formerly called Watkins ferry in Berkley County in the State of Virginia & while he served there he was acquainted with Mr Black's family whom he believes was the father of John Black who is now an applicant for a pension as he has been informed & believes. this deponent had a brother named John Ward who served in the United States under Captain John Lee and he further believes that John Austen[?] who was a father in law of this deponent was in the same service and under the same Captain. This deponent further frequently came home while he was in said service and this deponent at that time heard from his said brother that he drew rations while engaged in said service. this deponent believes that said boaters went from Stocktons (or Watkin's) ferry opposite the mouth of Cooneagocheague Creek to Old Town in Maryland and he further [one or two illegible words] said teams while engaged in said service carried fire arms and kept guard over their boats &c when at Old Town to keep off the Indians. This deponent further states that he was well acquainted with William Black & Samuel Black & other members of Mr Blacks family further, he heli[?] near of John Black the present applicant for a pension but was not at that time acquainted with said John Black. This deponent verily believes said John Black was engaged in said service while this deponent lived on said River and his father moved away about a mile back from the Potomac River while said boatsmen were in said service and this deponent did not see said John Black. He believes he was in said service when his father [one or two illegible words] on said River & that he continued therein until his father moved away River. This deponent is a Minister of the Gospel in the Protestant Methodist Church & he fully believes from the conversation that he has recently had with said John Black and the circumstances that he has detailed to him that said John Black was in said service and further this deponent saith not

[signed] James Ward

The State of Ohio }
Brown County } S.S.

On this 4th day of May A.D. 1852 before me the undersigned an acting Justice of the Peace in and for said County and State duly authorized by law to administer oaths, personally appeared John Black a resident of Union township in the County of Brown and State of Ohio, aged 89 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 and the Acts amendatory thereto to wit. That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated that he entered the service in the year 1778 (then in his 16th year) in the continental Boat service under Capt. John Lee of the State of Maryland, and continued in said service two years. he was also under Capt George Stockton of Virginia at the same time, that Capt. Lee and Capt. Stockton first tried to hire men to man their boats, but could not. they were then authorized to enlist men which they did and that enlisted in said service under them at the time above stated for the term of two years and served out the whole of his said enlistment and was honorably discharged, that he was living in the County of Fayette in the State of Virginia at the time he enlisted, and that he enlisted to fill the place of Peter Myers. And he further declares that he was drafted in Fayette County State of Virginia for the term of two months at the time Cornwallace attempted to rescue the prisoners at Winchester and sent Tarlton on that business [see endnote]. that he belonged to Captain John Jaret's Company and was employed to stop Cornwallace and Tarlton from rescuing the said prisoners and ravaging the country. and that he was detained in said service for more than a month after his time expired when he was honorably discharged and he further states that he has no documentary evidence, and that he knows of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to his service. 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. He most respectfully refers Hon. Commissioner to evidence now in file in the Pension office composing the matter of his former application, in support of this application which he most respectfully asks Hon. Commissioner to allow him

John hisXmark Black

[This application was accompanied by a supporting letter from Oliver Spencer and Gabriel Black.]

NOTES:

On 20 Feb 1781 prisoners, mainly Hessians captured at Saratoga on 17 Oct 1777, were marched out of the barracks in Albemarle County to the barracks near Winchester. On 4 June of 1781 Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton raided Charlottesville, and it was widely thought that he intended to continue as far as Winchester.

The file contains an undated testimonial to Black's honesty signed by 28 citizens of Highland County.