

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Jacob Schoolcraft R9268

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

[Punctuation partly corrected]

State of Virginia } SS.

County of Lewis }

On this 25th day of November 1833 personally appeared before me the Subscriber [David W. Sleeth, pension application S6111] One of the Commonwealths Justices of the peace in and for said County of Lewis and state of Virginia Jacob Schoolcraft a resident of said County and State aforesaid, aged 74 years who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his Oath make the following decleration, 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 month of April 1776 he volunteered as a private and Indian Spy in the County (now) of Harrison, then in Augusta County Virginia for a period of six months and was placed under the command of Capt. James Boothe [sic: James Booth], was stationed at Nutters Fort near where Clarksburg now stands in Harrison County, Virginia, was ordered upon the waters of Buffalo Creek, Bingaman Creek, Ten Mile Creek, waters that empty into West fork of the Monongahalia River [sic: Buffalo Creek, Bingamon Creek, and Tenmile Creek, which empty into West Fork River, a tributary of Monongahela River], and from thence upon Fish, and Fishing Creeks, that heads against Buffalo, Bingaman, and Ten Mile Creeks, emptying into the Ohio River, in the Counties now of Harrison, Monongahalia [sic: Monongalia] and Tyler Virginia, the war paths of the indians to that section of Country (now Harrison County Virginia) from Ohio River, ascended Fish, and Fishing Creeks, and descended Bingaman, and Ten Mile Creeks, although the vistations of the Indian enemy were frequent that year, yet affiant never came in any personal conflict during his servitude under Capt. Boothe as a volunteer, and was discharged in Oct. of 1776. In March 1777 affiant was ordered out as a private and indian spy by Capt. Robison [possibly William Robertson], who stationed his men at Power's Fort [Fort Powers], (on Simpsons Creek) now in the County of Harrison, Then in Monongahalia County Virginia State, was placed upon the same waters, and in the Section and Territory of Country ennumerated above, in his servitude under Capt. Boothe, affiant, John Harrow, and Richard McCaughin, in the month of July of that year, were watching the warriors path on Fish Creek now in Tyler County Virginia, when affiant and his Company killed a Buffalo. they repaired a short distance from the road to roast and eat some of the same and to stay during the night. about midnight affiant awoke from sleep, and discovered by the light of the moon that there were several Indians near who had been drawn in quest of them by the report of the gun in the evening. he saw at a glance the improbability of escaping by flight, and preferring Captivity to death, he whispered to Harrow and McCaughin, lest any movements of theirs might lead to their death. in a few minutes the Indians consisting of twelve men sprang on them, and affiant aimed a blow with his Tomahawk at the head of one who lay hold of him, hoping to kill or wound him, but missing his aim he affected to be ignorant of the fact that they were beset by Indians and expressed great Satisfaction and Joy in meeting with them. Harrow and McCaughin did the same but showed evident marks of fear. the Indians tied them all and painted Harrow and McCaughin in black, and affiant red. affiant continued in expressing his satisfaction, as the Indians proceeded toward the Ohio River, which they did the next morning until the indians untied him. Eluding their Negilence he took a gun and succeeded in making his escape. the others Harrow and McCaughin were never heard of afterwards. [See endnote.] affiant returned and commenced his spying excursions again and from the frequent incursions of the savage Indians, into that settlement that year it was thought advisable by Capt. Robison for the safety of the inhabitants to continue his spies until November, which he did making his servitude a continuous one in the year of 1777 nine months. affiant does not recollect by what authority he was brought into service that year other than being ordered out, from a frailty of recollection in that particular but he knows that he served, as above, and knows that the above narrative is correct. he was dismissed in November by his Capt. Robison, and in January 1778 he moved to (now) Lewis

County Virginia on Hackers Creek, where he went into Fort, known by the name of Wests Fort [fort West near present Jane Lew]. in April 1778 affiant volunteered as a private and Indian Spy under Capt. [William] Lowther who had charge of that Fort, for a period of six months to spy on the waters of Hackers Creek, Kincheloe Creek, Freemans Creek, Stone Coal [Stonecoal] Creek, Polk Creek, Leading Creek, Hughes River &c waters now in the Counties of Lewis, Harrison, and Wood in Virginia State. Affiant had returned to Fort in June of that year with intelligence of Indian Sign on Hughes River approaching the settlement. the next day thereafter three woman stepped into an adjoining field to gather some greens. Four Indians were laying watching them, one gun was fired, the ball passed through the Bonnet of Mrs. West, the woman took to flight, the Indians pursued them for the purpose of making prisoners of them. they were discovered by some of Capt. Lowthers Spies who suprised them. three took to flight the other who carried a staff in his hand with a sphere [sic: spear] in one end thrust it through the body of Mrs. Freeman and succeeded in taking her scalp, although several guns were discharged at him while doing the same. affiant was one who pursued them to Leeding Creek, at which place they lost their trails and they succeeded in effecting their escape. [See endnote.] Many bloody deeds were committed upon the settlement that season but affiant being in no personal conflicts deems it not necessary to particularize any further, but suffices it to say that his servitude was a continuous one until October of that year and was discharged by Capt Lowther. in the Spring of 1779 affiant undertook to raise a Crop in the neighborhood of Wests Fort on Hackers Creek, now in Lewis County, but in July of that year the Indians had poured in so numerously upon the settlement and had committed so many outrages, that affiant volunteered as a private and Indian Spy for a period of Four months under Capt Lowther, was again stationed at Wests Fort as before, spied through the same Section of Country and waters as before last ennumerated, during which servitude of Four months he aided in retaking some horses that the Indians had stolen. nothing else of particular occurrence happening he was discharged in November of that year. Then in May 1780 affiant again Volenteered as a private and Indian Spy in what is now Lewis County Virginia on Hackers Creek in said County under Capt. Lowther for a period of Six months, was again stationed at Wests Fort (as before) entered upon his spying excursions on the same waters in the Counties of Lewis, Harrison and Wood, Virginia State, as ennumerated in his former services under Capt. Lowther. in June of that year a party of Indians six in number approached hackers Creek Settlement now in Lewis County, killed his Brother Joshua and two of his Children, and took two more prisoners, stole some horses and commenced a rapid retreat. Capt. Lowther who was a man remarkable for his vigilance, collected such of his spies as were convenient and prevailed on some of the persons set apart to attend and raise grain, to pursue the Savages. Affiant was one that accompanied. after trailing 30 miles they came upon the enemy in the night. they was ordered by Capt. Lowther to withdraw carefully a short distance, which they done. he then divided his Company consisting of thirteen men, directing some on one side and some on another, and surrounded the enemy, gave special orders for no man to fire until he gave the word at which time all was to shoot, taking good care to not kill the prisoners as they had a good fire that gave fine light. at the word they all shot and killed four Indians dead upon the ground, killed one of the prisoners (namely Thomas) wound one Indian and the others escaped, leaving guns and everything behind, amoung which was the scalps of those whom they had killed. they retook horses &c. affiant continued his services vigilently until November of that year when he was discharged by his Capt. Lowther. Then in the year of 1781 affiant did not perform any spying service, only took occasional scouts, and raised a Crop of Corn &c. on Hackers Creek now in Lewis County Virginia. in March 1782 Affiant Volenteered again as a private and Indian Spy under Capt. Lowther again for a period of six months. was again stationed at Wests Fort in Lewis County Virginia as before. entered vigilently upon his duties upon the same waters and in the same (last) named Counties as before ennumerated. the indians made an Incursion into the settlement in June of that year. also in July and in August of that year, each time killed a few of the Inhabitants, burnt some houses and stold some horses. Was pursued each time by Capt. Lowther and company amoung whom affiant was one. the party of Indians that visited in July were overtaken and their fight was a precipitate one. the horses were retaken and they escaped. affiant served as a private and Indian Spy untill August at which time he was discharged in the latter part of that month by his Captain Lowther. he knew the

following officers while in the service that he recollects of at present, Capts Boothe, [Benjamin] Wilson, Lowther, [Michael] Carpenter, [George] Jackson, and [Samuel] Pringle. he does not recollect the names of any Cols at that time, neither does he recollect of having been attached to any regiments, and was never at that period among any of the regular troops, as the nature of his services did not direct him to where any was stationed. He has no documentary evidence and knows of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to his services.

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. Jacob hisXmark Schoolcraft
The said Justice then proceeded to propound to declarant the seven several Interrogatories prescribed by the War Department to which he answered as follows.

As to the first Affiant saith, that he was born in Hardy County [formed from Hampshire in 1786] Virginia in the year 1759.

2nd affiant saith that he has not [a record of his age].

3rd Affiant saith he was living in Augusta County Virginia. has lived since in Monongahalia County Virginia in Harrison County Virginia, and lives now in Lewis Co. Va.

4th Affiant saith, that he Volenteered in each and every Tour except one, as stated in his decleration, and on the Tour he was ordered out by Capt. Robison.

5th Affiant saith, from the nature of his services, he knew no regular officers, as none were in that section where he served neither does he recollect any regiments during the period, and the circumstances of his services were as above narrated

6th Affiant saith, that he rec'd. discharges in every servitude except one, when he was ordered out by Capt. Robison having was dismissed; he has lost or mislaid the same, so that he cannot find them and never knew they would be of any service to him

7th Affiant saith that, he is known to Paul Collins and George A. Flesher, whom he has lived by for 20 years who can testify to his character for varacity and their belief of his services as a soldier of the Revolution
Jacob hisXmark Schoolcraft

[The following report is by District Attorney Washington G. Singleton who investigated many pensioners and applicants from Lewis, Harrison, and other counties of present West Virginia. For details see pension application S6111 of David W. Sleeth.]

Jacob Schoolcraft. applicant from Lewis County.

Christopher Nutter [pension application W5434] of Harrison Cty. has known Jacob Schoolcraft well for forty years. he was then a small boy about 10 yrs. old. is now about fifty yrs. old [see note below]. he never could have been in the Revo. War and it is questionable to his mind whether he was born before the war closed.

A True Copy W. G Singleton

NOTE:

The encounter with the Indians supposedly involving Schoolcraft, John Harrow, and Richard McCaughin is clearly derived from an episode involving Leonard Petro and William White, as related on pp. 168-169 in A. S. Withers's *Chronicles of Border Warfare*, published in 1831. An account of the murder of Mrs. Freeman is on p. 180 of that book, but it mentions John Schoolcraft and not Jacob Schoolcraft.

In the 1820 federal census of Lewis County Jacob Schoolcraft is listed as being over 45 years old.