

## Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Henry Wells (Wales) S11712

f42DEL

Transcribed by Will Graves

rev'd 6/26/14

[Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and/or grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database. Where the meaning is not compromised by adhering to the spelling, punctuation or grammar, no change has been made. Corrections or additional notes have been inserted within brackets or footnotes. Blanks appearing in the transcripts reflect blanks in the original. A bracketed question mark indicates that the word or words preceding it represent(s) a guess by me. The word 'illegible' or 'indecipherable' appearing in brackets indicates that at the time I made the transcription, I was unable to decipher the word or phrase in question. Only materials pertinent to the military service of the veteran and to contemporary events have been transcribed. Affidavits that provide additional information on these events are included and genealogical information is abstracted, while standard, 'boilerplate' affidavits and attestations related solely to the application, and later nineteenth and twentieth century research requests for information have been omitted. I use speech recognition software to make all my transcriptions. Such software misinterprets my southern accent with unfortunate regularity and my poor proofreading skills fail to catch all misinterpretations. Also, dates or numbers which the software treats as numerals rather than words are not corrected: for example, the software transcribes "the eighth of June one thousand eighty six" as "the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1786." Please call material errors or omissions to my attention.]

State of Pennsylvania, Washington County

On this 29<sup>th</sup> day of January A.D. 1834 personally appeared in Open Court before the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas now sitting in and for the County aforesaid Henry Wells aged Seventy Seven years past, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by act of Congress passed June 7<sup>th</sup> 1832.

That he enlisted in the Army of the United States in the year 1776 (about the 1<sup>st</sup> of September being then about 20 years & 4 ½ months old) under Captain \_\_ Carson and Lieutenant Edward (commonly called Neddy) Polk, and Served in (not recollected) Regiment of the Delaware line, under the following named officers. This Regiment was commanded by Colonel Thomas Hall and Major (James, I think) Perry and other officers whose names I cannot now recollect. At this time there were two or three other Regiments raised in Delaware the whole of which were placed under the Command of Colonel afterwards General Anthony Wayne. Shortly after my enlistment, the Company in which I served was placed under the Command of Captain William McKennan (the father of the present representative<sup>1</sup> in Congress from this district) I am not certain whether Captain McKennan assumed the Command of the Company to which I was attached before or after the Battle of Trenton but, I believe it was previous to that engagement. When I was enlisted I lived in the Capes of Delaware in the State of Delaware in Sussex County near Lewis town [sic, Lewes?]. The Regiment to which I belonged was rendezvous [sic] together with another Regiment, at Newcastle [sic, New Castle] near which (at Christiana Bridge) we laid encamped for several weeks and were joined by another Regiment and the whole detachment put under the Command of Colonel Anthony Wayne. From this place we were marched to join the Army under General Washington, and we formed a Junction with him a "Valey forge" [sic, at Valley Forge] in Pennsylvania not far from Philadelphia near the Schuylkill River. From Valley Forge we were marched across the Delaware into New Jersey, -- to Burlington and other places after Scouting about through Jersey for several weeks we returned to Valley Forge. After laying at Valley Forge for a short time a detachment under General or Colonel Wayne to which I belonged was

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1 McKENNAN, Thomas McKean Thompson, a Representative from Pennsylvania; born in New Castle, New Castle County, Del., March 31, 1794; moved to Washington, Pa.; attended the public schools; was graduated from Washington (now Washington and Jefferson) College, Washington, Pa., in 1810; studied law; was admitted to the bar in 1814 and commenced practice in Washington, Pa.; deputy attorney general in 1815 and 1816; elected as an Anti-Masonic candidate to the Twenty-second and to the three succeeding Congresses (March 4, 1831-March 3, 1839); elected as a Whig to the Twenty-seventh Congress to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Joseph Lawrence and served from May 30, 1842, to March 3, 1843; chairman, Committee on Roads and Canals (Twenty-seventh Congress); president of the Pennsylvania Electoral College in 1848; appointed Secretary of the Interior in the Cabinet of President Fillmore and served from August 15 to September 12, 1850; resigned and became president of the Hempfield Railroad, now the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad; died in Reading, Pa., July 9, 1852; interment in the Washington Cemetery, Washington, Pa. <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=M000501>

ordered to the “Red Banks” by General Washington. The Red Banks are situated on the Delaware in Jersey a few miles below Philadelphia before we arrived at the Banks the British force stationed there had been attacked and routed by another detachment of the Americans. Just as we arrived in sight of the Banks, two British Ships of the Line were blown up by our victorious Countrymen. (If I recollect right, Colonel Green commanded the Americans in this affair of the Red Banks). From Red Banks we were marched back to Valley Forge where the whole force under General Washington lay until late in December of the year 1776. On Christmas day we understood that the enemy were marching out of Philadelphia to attack our encampment when we received this intelligence we marched out in front of our Camp to a Sand Bank on a Small Creek which (I think) empties into the Schuylkill. Here we halted under arms until the enemy marched up in full view on the other side of Creek. Instead of attacking us as we expected, the British halted and encamped for the night. So soon as it became dark General Washington Ordered large and numerous watch fires to be lighted up and kept burning, throughout the whole night. And a party of soldiers was detached expressly for this purpose. Soon after dark a Council of war was held by the Officers and after midnight the whole Army except those left to keep up the fires was marched quietly out of the Camp up the Delaware towards Trenton on the Jersey side. After a cold fatiguing march we arrived nearly opposite Trenton just at the dawn of day [December 25, 1776]. Here our General halted his Army and raising on his stirrups made us such an animating speech that we forgot the cold, the hunger and the toil under which we were ready to sink and each man seemed only to be anxious for the onset. The Snow & Slush ice covered the firm ice in the River, yet when our brave commander gave the word and turned his horse's head across the stream, no one complained or held back, but all plunged in emulous who should next touch the Jersey shore after our beloved General. Before we crossed the River the Army was divided into three detachments – General Wayne commanded the left wing – General Washington the center – and (I think) General Lee commanded the right, I was in Wayne's detachment. We had nearly surrounded the town before the Hessians were aware of our presence. In this battle a great number were killed, Some even before they were dressed, and 900 or upwards taken prisoners. We remained in Trenton several days, and lived like fighting Cocks, on the spoils of the vanquished. Our good cheer more than repaid the toils of our visit. From Trenton we went back to Philadelphia, but before our arrival our friends the British had decamped leaving the “beauty & booty” of that fair city to their rightful owners. At Philadelphia and in the vicinity the Army took up their winter quarters, and it remained there until the Spring. A part (I think 500) of the prisoners taken at Trenton were sent to little York, in the interior of Pennsylvania, into winter quarters. I was one of the guard who accompanied the prisoners to little York. At which place I remained about two months. While at York Sergeant Thompson was the Officer of the Guard. After remaining at York two months our detachment was relieved by another from the Main Army, and we were marched back to Philadelphia. During the Spring and Summer of 1777 we were encamped in and about Philadelphia. A greater part of this time I was stationed at Valley Forge under General Wayne, a part of the time I was in Philadelphia. About the first of September of this year we heard that the British were coming up the Delaware again. The regular force under General Washington was concentrated at Philadelphia and expresses were sent into the Country to raise the militia. At this time, I still remained in the Same Regiment but I am positive that at this time Captain McKennan commanded my Company. Early in September the Army left Philadelphia and marched in the direction of the Brandywine. On our all way we were joined by numbers of Militia of Pennsylvania, Delaware & Maryland we halted on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September for a short time at Christiana Bridge & on the 11<sup>th</sup> we met the enemy on the Brandywine Creek and on this occasion was fought the memorable battle of Brandywine [September 11, 1777]. The Battle commenced early in the day & lasted till near night, when the Americans were ordered to retreat, their lines having been previously broken by the British Light horse. During the fight, the wind favored the enemy and drove the Smoke directly in our faces which was one great cause of our discomfiture. In this action General Lafayette was wounded in the leg. The principal damage sustained by the Americans was caused by the frequent Charges of the

British Cavalry under cover of the Smoke. We were lead from the field into a Swamp, where the efforts of the horse were rendered ineffectual, from the nature of the ground. In the action I received a flesh wound in the right haunch, the scar occasioned by which is plainly visible at this day. On this occasion General Washington commanded in person, and General Lafayette was Second in command. The British were commanded by General Cornwallis. The Americans lost about 300 killed and 600 wounded & the British loss was estimated at about 500. After the Battle we were ordered to rendezvous at the "Red House" [close] by on the line between Delaware & Maryland and at about 9 miles from the Scene of Action. After the battle the militia generally went home. The Regiment in which I served laid encamped at the "Red House" and "Christiana Bridge" alternately until early in the Spring of 1778, during which time nothing happened worthy of particular notice. In the Spring of '78 we took our line of march for the Carolinas and were joined on the way by troops from Maryland and Virginia. In this expedition Colonel Thomas Hall Commanded the detachment from Delaware & the Maryland and Virginia troops were commanded by their own officers Severally until General Green [sic, Nathanael Greene] fell in with us, and assumed the Command of the entire force. We met with General Greene in the southern part of Virginia. Under General Greene we were marched into North Carolina. No affair of much importance occurred in North Carolina. We were principally engaged in Scouting parties around Georgetown, which was occupied at this time by Colonel Tarleton & his Cavalry. Our principal business was watching Col. Tarleton [Banastre Tarleton] and his allies the Carolina Tories. It was but a few days before Christmas 1778 when we arrived in the neighborhood of Georgetown I think Colonel Tarleton remained in Georgetown 'til the spring of 1779, and we remained in and about the town for the purpose of keeping the Tories in check until I think the spring of 1780, without anything of importance occurring during all that time. In the spring of 1780 (Colonel Hall still commanding my Regiment and Captain McKennan my Company ) we were marched into South Carolina. During this summer we were ordered to march down further South & form a Junction with General Gates who at this time commanded the Southern division of the Army, but we did not arrive in time to participate in the battle of Camden [August 15-16, 1780], we arrived two or three days after the defeat of the Americans, just when the enemy was in the act of evacuating the place. From Camden the enemy marched into, and took possession of Charleston. I always understood that the American loss in this engagement was exceedingly severe. The Regiment to which I belonged encamped in the vicinity of the field of Camden where we lay for several weeks, and many time we were drawn out for drill on the Battle ground. I understood that the object our officers had in view in keeping us encamped at Camden was to keep the Tories in Subjection, and to annoy the British foraging parties who occasionally came out of Charleston. During this time we had frequent skirmishes, with small parties of British who came out of the City, but no affair of great public importance occurred during this time. During the time we lay here a certain Sergeant Jasper belonging to our detachment went frequently into Charleston to see his two brothers, each of whom had commissions in the British Service. When he made those visits it was his uniform custom to gain all the information he could with regard to the contemplated movements of the enemy, and communicate it to General Marion [Francis Marion] his commander. At one time when he was in the British Camp his brothers promised him a commission in the King's Service if he would abandon the hopeless cause of the Americans. He told them he would accept the proposal, but that he must first go out in the country and then he would return; at the same time he had no idea of taking up arms against America, but was only playing the Spy. When he Communicated this matter to General Marion he positively forbade him, to be thus exposing himself to an arrest and execution as a Spy. And this I believe put an end to his communications with the enemy's camp. Jasper was a very brave man and frequently distinguished himself as the commander of small scouting parties. On one occasion, in one of his wild freaks, he and another galloped down the Streets of Charleston in broad daylight, at the time the whole British Army lay encamped in that City, and escaped uninjured. I can tell of other little affairs that happened in those times but I think the narration unnecessary. We left the encampment at Camden in the winter. I think about the first of January 1781

and marched towards the Cowpens. An express had come for General Marion about the time of our leaving Camden and he and most of his Cavalry left of us. We pursued our march under our old officers until within about 1 ½ days before we arrived at the “Cowpens” when we fell in with the brave Colonel Morgan [Daniel Morgan] and his party, and he assumed the command of the detachment, and Colonel Washington [William Washington] was Second in Command. Our whole force at this time numbered something less than 900 men a great proportion of whom were militia, & less than 100 horse. By this time our Delaware Regiments were reduced at least one half. Some died on the field-- some fell by disease – and some died from hard treatment &c while prisoners. Two of my cousins fell into the hands of the enemy at Camden, one died from the severity of their treatment – the other lived to be exchanged, but he returned with a shattered constitution. A few days after our Junction with Colonel Morgan (having halted for a day or two) we fell in with a much Superior force of the enemy, at the Cowpens, under Colonel Tarleton. He outnumbered us in infantry and had three or four times as many Cavalry Yet notwithstanding our great disparity of force we came off victorious, having killed and wounded between four and 500 men and taken 500 prisoners. The result of this victory [January 17, 1781] is mainly owing to the skill and bravery of Colonels Morgan & Washington for who could refuse to follow, & fight for such leaders. The total loss of the Americans in this engagement, in killed & wounded was considerably under 100 men I think not more than 50. The Battle commenced about 10 or 11:00 O'clock A.M. and continued till late in the evening. At the outset we were much alarmed by the Superiority of the Enemy in numbers, but the powerful & trumpet like voice of our Commander drove fear from every bosom, and gave new energies to every arm. During the day, at every turn we seemed to gain new advantages. Washington & Morgan knew how to turn every circumstance to good account – they were an host [?]<sup>2</sup> within themselves. After the Battle was over it was reported in the Camp that some stray fingers were found on the field which were said to belong to Colonel Tarleton. The Battle was fought about the middle of January 1781. Col. Tarleton was hard run by a small detachment of American horse and barely escaped being taken prisoner. It was generally agreed in the Camp that Tarleton could easily have been shot by those in pursuit of him, but their object was to take him alive. In this fight, I was struck across the left shoulder by one of Tarleton's troopers, with his sword with such violence, that the collar [sic, collar] of my coat, my vest and my shirt, were each cut through, and the flesh & skin slightly scratched and bruised so much so that there was a considerable knock or welt on my shoulder for a number of days – the wound did not unfit me for duty. The prisoners taken in the engagement were sent into the interior of the Country (the name of the place I do not now recollect) and a part of the troops were sent to guard them, the balance of us went into winter quarters, and remained near the Cowpens, until the Spring, when the detachment sent off with the prisoners returned. During this time nothing particular occurred, the British were driven out of the neighborhood, and the Tories were so much under, that they were afraid to make a show of opposition.

About the first of April we left the Cowpens and were marched up into North Carolina, into the neighborhood of Georgetown where we encamped and remained until about the first of September, when myself and a number of others belonging to my Regiment were discharged, the term of our enlistment (viz., five years) having expired. Soon after our discharge myself & 8 others started home for Delaware. We had not got a mile from the Camp when we held a council whether we would return to our Comrades or pushed on for our homes and it was determined by a majority that we should try and get home. We had not a dollar in the world save Continental money of \$100 of which would not buy one of us our breakfast. We with a great deal of difficulty reached Georgetown in Maryland (now District of Columbia). From Georgetown we made our way to Baltimore, where we lay one night in the Barracks. On the next day some of us went over into Queen Ann's County, where we hired out to

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earn sufficient money to carry of us home. The others went home so soon as they could get off, but I having procured a good birth, and Winter sitting in, I remained to Spring, when I returned home having been absent nearly six years. Others of my Comrades in arms who had enlisted for Seven years, and during the War did not get home until after the Surrender of Cornwallis at York town & after articles of peace were definitely concluded. I forgot to mention in its proper place that Major Dullinor of Kent County Delaware have a command for some time in the Regiment to which I was attached – (The Declarant makes the following answers to the questions ordered to be propounded by the War Department)

1<sup>st</sup> I was born on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of May 1756, in Sussex County in the State of Delaware.

2<sup>nd</sup> I have a record of my age in my father's Bible, which is now in my possession and which I now produced in open Court

3<sup>rd</sup> When called into The service, I lived in Sussex County Delaware, at which place I lived till the year 1797 or 98, when I removed to Washington County Pennsylvania to the place where I now live and have lived ever since.

4<sup>th</sup> When I entered the Service I enlisted for five years the whole of which time I remained in the Service of my Country.

5<sup>th</sup> (This query is answered as large in my declaration).

6<sup>th</sup> I did receive a discharge from the Service. It was signed & given to me by Colonel Washington, with his own hand. This discharge by gave to Colonel Thomas Hall – the Colonel of my Regiment and a great number of others of his men also handed their discharges to him, that he might keep them, and produce them if ever any dispute arose on the subject or in other words if ever we were charged with desertion, our Colonel could show to the Contrary.

7<sup>th</sup> The following named persons in my neighborhood, are well acquainted with me and can testify to my character for veracity, and their belief of my Services as a Soldier of the Revolution Viz. Lewis Hewitt, Isaac Leet, Wm V. Leet, William Wylie, James Orr, Esq., John Wilson, Esq. and others.

I have no doubt that the Honorable Thos. M. T. McKennan at present a member of Congress can give some traditionary evidence of my Services, he must have heard his father, who was my Captain for about four years, during this Service Speak of me as one of his Soldiers.

I know of no person living who has a personal Knowledge of my Services, but I have heard that there is a man living in Greene County in this State, by name Daniel Jones, who served with me in the Revolution. I know there was a man of that name belonging to the Delaware Line, but I have not seen him for 44 or 45 years and of course I cannot tell whether he now recollects of my Services or not. But I will try to procure his affidavit. I know of no clergyman who I can procure to be sworn to & subscribed the certificate prosecuted by the War Department. My father was generally called Wales & it is possible that my name is so spelled on the rolls of the Department but I have always been called Wells. I have no documentary evidence to him in prove my service & can procure known unless I can find no Daniel Jones, before referred to and he can recollect my Services.

I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and I declare that my name is not on the pension roll of any Agency in any State.

Sworn and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

S/ Thomas Officer, Pro.

S/ Henry Wells, H his mark

[p 27]

Wilmington Del., April 7<sup>th</sup> 1834

Hon. J. M. T. McKennan

My dear Sir,

I had the pleasure on Saturday last of receiving your friendly Communication of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Instant requesting any information in my power respecting Henry Wells or Wales an old Revolutionary Soldier now engaged in the prosecution of his claim upon the justice of his country - I

have now before me a muster roll of the Company formed of the late Delaware Regiment after the battle of Camden in August 1780, South Carolina and have the satisfaction of informing you, that the name of Henry Willes [sic] stand[s] No. 2 on the list of Privates is the identical man alluded to. - The following is a copy of the title - Muster Roll of the late Delaware Regiment now the first Company in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of Colonel O. H. Williams' Regiment of Infantry for the month of October 1780. After giving the names of the noncommissioned officers, and music, Henry Willes stand 2<sup>nd</sup> on the list and I am under the impression that he never had a final settlement with the Government on account of his Claim for land &c, it appears to me at this day, that he was left from some consideration behind, when the Regiment returned to Delaware, but I have no certain knowledge of the fact. The Muster Roll thus concluded "I do swear that the within Muster Roll is a true State of the late Delaware Regiment (the Field, Commissioned, and staff Officers excepted) as it is formed in one Company under my command without fraud to the United States or any Individual according to the best of my knowledge.

Signed Peter Jaquett"

I have always felt a deep interest in your family ever since they left Delaware and I am pleased and gratified that you have opened the door of Communication and on my part it shall be kept up, I [paper damaged and word or words missing] had it in constant contemplation ever since you have had a Seat in Congress to break the way myself. I should have been very much gratified with a personal interview, and be better acquainted with the son of [an] early friend. I have at all times made (when opportunity offered) the necessary inquiry. I however [indecipherable word] ere long to place undercover to you, one for your Mother, my old and much respected friend, never to be forgotten while I live: my best and kind respects to her and all that remains of my lost friends & family.

Dear Sir, accept of my best assurances

S/ C. P. Gennett

[p 34: On March 25, 1837 in Brooke County Virginia, the veteran applied for the transfer of his pension benefit to the Virginia agency stating that he has moved to Virginia to reside in the family of his son (not named).]

[Veteran was pensioned at the rate of \$80 per annum commencing March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1831, for service as a private in the Delaware line.]