

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Oliver Cromwell S34613

NJ

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of New Jersey Burlington County Ss:

On the second day of April in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and eighteen personally appeared before me Thomas Fenimore Esquire one of the Judges of the Court of Common pleas of said County of Burlington, Oliver Cromwell an Inhabitant of the said County to me well known more than thirty years last past who being duly sworn according to law did depose and say that in the year seventeen hundred and seventy seven he enlisted in the Army of the United States on the Continental Establishment in the Company of Captain Laurie in the second Jersey Regiment, commanded by Colonel [Israel] Shreve – that the Deponent was in the Battle of the Short Hills [26 Jun 1777] where Capt Laurie was wounded and taken prisoner – and having died shortly after, the deponent was put under the Command of Captain [Nathaniel] Bowman – that not long before the discharge of the Deponent from service the regiment to which he belonged was reduced to a Battallion when he thinks he was commanded by Captain [Jonathan] Dayton. That the Deponent served as a private in the Army as above stated six years and on the fifth day of June 1783 received a discharge signed by General Washington and Mr Trumbull his Secretary to which is annexed a certificate signed by Abraham Appleton, Lieutenant, declaring that the Deponent is entitled to the Badge of Merit for six years faith full service – which discharge and certificate are hereunto annexed And the Deponent further saith that by reason of his reduced circumstances in life he is in need of the assistance of his Country for support  
Oliver hisXmark Cromwell

BY HIS EXCELLENCY  
GEORGE WASHINGTON, Esq.  
General and Commander in Chief of the Forces of the  
United States of America.

THESE are to CERTIFY that the Bearer hereof Oliver Cromwell Private in the Jersey Battalion, having faithfully served the United States for Six Years and being inlisted for the War only, is hereby DISCHARGED from the American Army.

GIVEN at HEAD-QUARTERS the fifth day June 1783 G Washington

By HIS EXCELLENCY'S  
Command

J Trumbull Jun S'y [Jonathan Trumbull]

REGISTERED in the Books  
of the Battalion

[illegible signature] Adjutant.

THE above Oliver Cromwell Private has [been] honored with the BADGE of MERIT for Six Years faithful Service. Ab'm Appleton Lieut  
[other side]

HEAD-QUARTERS, June 5<sup>th</sup> 1783.

THE within CERTIFICATE shall not avail the Bearer as a Discharge, until the Ratification of the definitive Treaty of Peace; previous to which Time, and until Proclamation thereof, shall be made, He is to be considered as being on Furlough.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

By His Excellency  
GEORGE WASHINGTON, Esq.)  
General and Commander in Chief of the Forces of the  
United States of America.

THESE are to CERTIFY that the Bearer hereof  
*Oliver Cromwell Prout*  
in the *5th Battalion* Regiment, having faithfully  
served the United States *for six* Years  
and being injured for the War only, is  
hereby DISCHARGED from the American Army.

GIVEN at HEAD-QUARTERS the *fifth*  
day *June* 1780

By His Excellency's  
Command,  
*Thomas Mifflin*

REGISTERED in the Books  
of *Regiment, Battalion* Adjutant,

The above *Oliver Cromwell Prout*  
has been honored with the BADGE of *Major* for  
Years of *useful* Service.

*Oliver Cromwell Prout*

District of New-Jersey, ss.

On this twenty seventh day of May 1820, personally appeared, in open Court, before the Judges of the Court of Common pleas, of the County of Burlington, in the state of New-Jersey, being a Court of record, proceeding according to the course of the Common Law—having jurisdiction unlimited in point of amount, and keeping records of its proceedings. Oliver Cromwell aged sixty seven years, resident in the city of Burlington in said County, who, being first duly sworn according to law, doth, on his oath declare that he served in the Revolutionary war as follows:— That he enlisted at the beginning of the war in the company of captain Lowrey – Second New Jersey Regiment. Lowry was wounded and he then was commanded by Captain Bowman – same regiment. That after the regiment was reduced he thinks he was commanded by Captain Dayton that he served six years – that he had a discharge signed by General Washington which was forwarded to the war department when he applied for his pension on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1818 – that his pension certificate is numbered 131

And I do solemnly swear that I was a resident citizen of the United States, on the 18th day of March, 1818; and that I have not, since that time, by gift, sale, or in any manner, disposed of my property, or any part thereof, with intent thereby so to diminish it as to bring myself within the provisions of an act of Congress, entitled “An act to provide for certain persons engaged in the land and naval service of the United States, in the Revolutionary war,” passed on the 18th day of March 1818; and that I have not, nor has any person in trust for me, any property, or securities, contracts, or debts, due to me; nor have I any income other than what is contained in the schedule following, and by me subscribed. two Iron Potts one Tea Kettle – four chairs – 6 Plates – 6 knife & forks – and bed & bedding and wearing apparel. that I am a common Labourer but from age am not able to get a livelihood. I have one daughter Elizabeth who is a cripple & unable to work aged 25 years – a son aged 12 years named Isaac another named Robert aged ten years who are not able to contribute to my support – who reside with me

Oliver hisXmark Cromwell

NOTES:

A summary in the file states that Cromwell died on 24 Jan 1853.

The file also includes a letter dated 26 May 1914 referring to a movement in Burlington NJ “to erect a monument to the memory of one Oliver Cromwell, colored,” as well as a newspaper article transcribed as follows:

**“I am One Hundred Years Old To-Day!**

The attention of many of our citizens has doubtless been arrested by the appearance of an old colored man, who might be seen sitting in front of his residence, in East Union street, upon mild, clear days, respectfully raising his hat to those who might be passing by. His attenuated frame, his silvered head, his feeble movements, combine to prove that he is very aged; and yet, comparatively few are aware that he is among the survivors of the gallant army who fought for the liberties of our country “in the days which tried men’s souls.”

On Monday last we stopped to speak to him, and asked him how old he was. He asked the day of the month, and, upon being told that it was the 24th of May, replied, with trembling lips, “I am very old—I am a hundred years old to-day.”

His name is Oliver Cromwell, and he says that he was born at the Black Horse, (now Columbus,) in this county, in the family of John Hutchin. He enlisted in a company commanded by Captain Lowery, attached to a second New Jersey regiment, under the command of Col. Israel Shreve. He was at the battles of Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine, Monmouth, and Yorktown, at which latter place, he told us, he saw the last man killed. Although his faculties are failing, yet he relates many interesting reminiscences of the Revolution.

He was with the army at the neglect of the Delaware on the memorable crossing of the 25th December, 1776, and relates the story of the battles on the succeeding days with enthusiasm. He gives the details of the march from Trenton to Princeton, and told us, with much humor, that they “knocked the British about lively” at the latter place. He was also at the battle of Springfield, and says that he saw the

house burning in which Mrs. Caldwell was shot, at Connecticut Farms.

His memory in reference to persons engaged in the war is very good, and frequent applications have been made to him by persons seeking evidence for pensioners.

He says that the branch of the army with which he was connected was disbanded at Little Britain, in New York, a short distance from West Point. His discharge was signed by Washington, and stated that he was entitled, by reason of his honorable services, to wear the badges of honor," which he did for many years after peace was declared. His eye brightens at the name of Washington, and in all his conversations he exhibits that deep-seated attachment to his illustrious commander for which all soldiers of the Revolution are celebrated.

His discharge was taken from him, at the time he made application for his pension, by the Pension Agent, Joseph McIlvaine, esq., and by him forwarded to the War Department, where it doubtless remains now. He mourns over it much, and always speaks of its being taken from him with tearful eyes.—Burlington (N.J.) Gazette."

Note that the crossing of the Delaware River and the battle of Trenton (25 and 26 Dec 1776) occurred before the year in which Cromwell stated that he enlisted.