

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of John Schoolcraft S7468

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

[Punctuation partly corrected.]

State of Virginia }

County of Lewis } SS.

On this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July A.D. 1833 personally appeared in open Court before the Justices of the County Court of Lewis County now sitting, John Schoolcraft a resident of Freemans Creek in Lewis County and State of Virginia aged 76 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 7<sup>th</sup> 1832. That he entered the Service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated.

In the month of February near the last of that month in the year 1777 in the County of Ohio he volunteered under Capt Bilderbock as and Indian Spy and from Holliday Fort [at present Hollidays Cove in Hancock County WV] he traversed the counties bordering on the Ohio River from Wheeling Fort to Fort Pitt [at present Pittsburgh PA] watching the approach of the Savage Enemy and notifying the Garrisons at Bowling's, Holliday's, Wheeling Fort, &c of the threatened danger of the Indians. But notwithstanding all the vigilance of the Indian Spies, the frontier settlements in the Counties of Yohagany [sic: Yohogania, now mostly in PA], Ohio, & Monongalia suffered severely by the desultory warfare of the Savages. About the 1<sup>st</sup> of September of this year a body of about 400 Indian Warriors lay in ambush near Fort Wheeling shewing a few of their Warriors only to the Garrison, a few more under Capts [Samuel] Mason & Ogal [sic: Joseph Ogle] marched out from the Fort to attack them and soon found themselves enclosed by a savage body of Indians & nearly every man perished except Capt. Mason and Capt. Ogal, the former of whom was badly wounded. The Indians led on by Simon Girty immediately after this appeared before the Fort threatening its destruction. Intelligence of this invasion soon reached Holliday & Bolling Forts and declarant under command of Capt Bilderbock and Col. [Andrew] Swearingen with a few hundred volunteers embarked in a large canoe and proceeded in the night down the Ohio. About day break discovered the little village of Wheeling on fire. After proper precautionary measures disembarked and finding the enemy had abandoned the siege proceeded to the ground where Masons & Ogals Companies were slain, found them cruelly mangled, buried them and soon after returned to Holliday Fort & resumed his business of spying through the counties aforesaid which he continued until the first of december 1777. [See endnote.] was then dismissed having served 9 months as an Indian Spy, under the immediate command of Capt Beldenbock, subject to the orders of Col. Andrew Swearingen. during this years service he became acquainted with Col. Swearingen, [David] Shepherd, & [Ebenezer] Zane who command at Fort Pitt & Col David Williamson who commanded fort Redstone in Washington Co. Pa. [at present Brownsville].

In the Spring he believes about the last of February or 1<sup>st</sup> of March in the year 1778 he again volunteered as an Indian Spy at the said Holliday Fort under command of the said Bildenbock, was engaged during the Spring and Summer and fall of this year in spying in the said County which now compose the Counties of Ohio, Brooke, & Washington. He also made several excursions on the Northwestern side of the Ohio. An expedition under Gen'l [Lachlan] McIntosh into the Indian Towns on the Muskingdon [sic: Muskingum River] and prevented them from carrying on their savage warfare as in the year 77. Gen'l. McIntosh this year built and garrisoned Fort McIntosh at the mouth of Big Beaver Creek [at present Beaver PA], and fort Lawrens on the Tuscerawa River [sic: Fort Laurens on Tuscarawas River in present Ohio]. the latter visited in the beginning of Winter in this year '78 found it garrisoned with a few hundred men commanded by Col. [John] Gibson. Towards the last of December of this year '78 the danger from the incursions of the Indians ceasing, declarant was again dismissed having served 9 months as an Indian Spy as a private.

In the month of April in the year 1779 he again entered the service of the United States as an Indian Spy by order of Col Zane under command of Capt Mason and from the Fort at



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

Lewis County

John Schoolcraft aged 76 Serv'd 2 yrs.

Christopher Nutter [pension application W5434] aged 74 says of John Schoolcraft that he knew him 1782, that he was then a small boy about eight years old going to school in Clarksburg and was an apprentice to John Wolf.

John Reger of Lewis County aged 66 yrs. says that in the year 1791 he first saw & knew Schoolcraft. in that year he Reger was going to Clarksburg, on his way stoped & staid all night at John Wolf's, where Schoolcraft lived & was an apprentice to said Wolf. Schoolcraft was then about 18 or 19 yrs. old. frequently saw Schoolcraft at the same house and has known him ever since.

Williams Powers [S18164] aged 70 has known Schoolcraft ever since the year 1783. in that year he Schoolcraft was but an apprentice to John Wolf. that he was then a lad

John Mitchel [S5761], David Wolf [R11767], Samuel Bonnett, John Waggoner [S7824], John Neely [W5408] & Nicholas Carpenter have all known John Schoolcraft from a boy and all concur in saying that he is too young by many years to have been in the War of the Revo.

Respectfully Reported W. G. Singleton Special Agent July 1834

NOTE:

The Indian attack of Fort Wheeling was described by A. S. Withers in *Chronicles of Border Warfare* published in 1831 (pp. 161-164).

In the 1830 federal census of Lewis County John "Schoocraft" is recorded as between 50 and 60 years old.

On 27 Apr 1860 Nancy Schoolcraft, about 76, applied for the pension that would have been paid to John Schoolcraft had it not been stopped, as well as a pension in her own right and bounty land. Her applications do not appear to have been acted upon. She stated that they were married in Harrison County in July 1804, and he died in Lewis County on 6 Mar 1850. In the file is a copy of the record of marriage of John Schoolcraft and Nancy Brown on 18 July 1805.