

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Thomas Cottrel (Cottrell) S8242

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Virginia }

County of Lewis } SS.

On the 2^d day of July A.D. 1833 personally appeared in open Court, before the Justices of the County Court of Lewis County now sitting, Thomas Cottrel, a resident of Lewis Co and State of Virginia aged 71 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 servise of the United States under the following named officers, and served as herein stated.

In Monongalia County in the State of Virginia, on the 11th of Feby 1779 he volunteered as a private Indian spy under Capn Christopher Carpenter; was stationed at Wests Fort on Hackers Creek (now Lewis Co Va), and from thence ranged the County from whence Indian incursions were generally made, Viz, What is now Lewis, Nicholas, Jackson, Wood, Tyler and Harrison Counties; was engaged in spying through the above counties, and reporting at the different Forts on the frontiers untill the approach of winter, when savage aggression for the season was checked, in consequence of cold weather; was on the first of December in the year 1779 dismissed, having served as a private Indian Spy 9 Months.

Again on the first of March 1780; he volunteered as an Indian spy under the same Captain (Christopher Carpenter) was this year stationed at Lawrence McCains Fort - West fork river in Monongalia (now Lewis) County, was this year engaged in spying through the counties mentioned in the first years service until winter again put a stop to the inroads of the savages, was on the last of November 1780 dismissed by his Capatin C. Carpenter.

Again on the of Feby in year 1781 in the said County of Monongalia he again volunteered as a private Indian Spy under Capt William Smith and was stationed at Bushes Fort on the West Fork river a branch of the Monongaleia [sic: Monongahela River] immediately resumed his business of spying in the adjacent counties until winter as before checked the Savages agression, was on the last of November 1781 dismissed by his Captain [William] Lowther, having served another term of 9 months.

Again in May in the year 1782 in the said county of Monongalia he volunteered as a private Indian Spy under the said Capn Wm Lowther, was again stationed at Bushes Fort, again from thence resumed his business of spying through the Counties aforesaid and reporting to the different Forts in this part of the frontier of county, as in the preceeding years untill the winter again made his services unnecessary He was on the first of December 1782 dismissed having performed 6 months duty as an Indian Spy, making, in all 33 Months service.

The incidents of his services are not many, being from its nature confined to the disultory warfare of the Savages, whose traces it was his duty to discover, and notify the different garrisons on the frontier of any threatened dangers during his services he visited the forts on Tigerts [sic: Tygart] Valley river where he saw Col Benjamin Wilson commanding. He also visited the fort on ten mile [Fort Harbert or Fort Jackson on Tenmile Creek in Harrison County] and Nutters fort on Elk Creek [in present Clarksburg] when Col George Jackson commanded. He has no documentary evidence by which to prove his services. He never received a discharge; it was the practice of the commandants of the Forts merely to desmiss their spies. He knows of no man living by whom to prove his services. He was born on the 22^d of January 1762, on George's Creek in the State of Pennsylvania. does not remember what County as he moved to Augusta Co Va. when an infant, in which County he has lived ever since, but by the formation and division of Counties, he has fallen into Lewis the same Co in which he has from his infancy lived, and in which he now lives.

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 and subscribed this day and year aforesaid. Signed, Thomas hisXmark Cottrell

WE George Butcher and Jesse Carpenter [pension application S9309] residing in Lewis Co. in the State of Va., hereby certify that we are well acquainted with Thomas Cotteral who has subscribed and sworn to the above declaration, that we believe him to be 71 years of age, that he is reputed and believed in the neighborhood where he resides to have been an Indian Spy in the war of the Revolution and that we concur in that opinion.

Sworn and subscribed the day and year aforesaid. signed George Butcher

“ Jesse hisXmark Carpenter

And the said Court further certifies that they propounded the interrogatories prescribed by the War Department to the above named applicant, and the following are his answers thereto, Viz.

1st I was born on Georges Creek in the State of Pennsylvania, (the name of the Co I do not recollect) on the 22^d dy of January AD. 1762.

2^d I have no record of my age. I only know it from the account thereof given me by my parents; which I have kept from my boyhood

3^d I was living when called into service on Hackers Creek in Monongalia County now Lewis. I now live in Lewis County, where I have been living ever since the Revolutionary War.

4th I volunteered.

5th there were no regular Officers serving in the country where I spied. I knew Col George Jackson at Nutter Fort, Col Benjamin Wilson at Wilsons Fort in Tegart valey, Capt C. Carpenter, Mr Lowther, Jan's[?] Tanner &c who commanded the garrisons at the several forts. They were all Militia Officers.

6th I never received a discharge. I was only dismissed at the termination of my different servitudes.

7th I am known to [blank] and [blank] who reside in my neighborhood and can testify to my character for veracity and their belief of my services as an Indian spy.

[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. On the cover of the report Singleton wrote "Fraud."]

Lewis County

Thomas Cotteral, aged [blank] Serv'd. 2 yrs.

Christopher Nutter [pension application W5434] of Harrison County aged 74 years says he has known Thomas Cotteral from his birth & that he was born in the year 1772. they have resided in the same county from the birth of Cotteral to the present time.

Rebecca Nutter wife of Christopher knew Cotteral in the year 1785. he was then a boy about 14 [possibly 16] yrs. old.

Henry Flesher says that Tom Cotterral & himself were boys in the Fort together after the close of the R. War.

John Reger has known Thos Cotteral since the year 1788. he Cotteral was then a boy 15 or 16 yrs. old.

Samuel Bonnett [probably Samuel Bonnet], John Waggoner [S7824], Nicholas Carpenter & William Powers [S18164] all old men and all testify to Cotterrals being an impostur. - Col. Copelan [sic: Benjamin Coplin, S10464] says that Cotteral was his apprentice long after the close of the R. War. Respectfully Reported W. G Singleton Special agent

NOTE: A query regarding John Cottrill (pension application S39597) and James Wamsley (S6323) is in the file, evidently by mistake.