

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Jeremiah Odell S8905

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Virginia } S.S.

County of Nicholas }

On this 9th day of October 1832 personally appeared in open court before the justices of the County Court of Nicholas County now in Court sitting, Jeremiah Odell a resident in the said County of Nicholas and state of Virginia aged seventy one years on the first day of November next 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 the 7th 1832

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated. He entered the service under Captain John Denton in as he thinks the month of June or July 1779. He then resided in the County of Shenandoah state of Virginia. He was marched by his said Captain to Raccoon ford of some river [the Rapidan River] in Eastern Virginia but he does not recollect the name of the River, where he received his discharge with permission to return home. This service he performed as a drafted militia man. After he returned home He was again drafted to wit in the spring of 1780 to perform a three months tour of service under the same Capt. John Denton. He was marched to the forks of Shenandoah River with an intention of defending the Country from the attacks of Lord Cornwallis and his army [sic: see endnote] where he received permission again to return home that Lord Cornwallis had entered to his shipping and his services were not then needed. In the month of August or early in September of the same year 1780 he was again drafted for a term of three months service under the same Captain John Denton and was marched to Kendricks bottom on the south fork of Shenandoah River where he again received permission to return home. Cornwallis the object of there pursuit again having taken to his shipping. At the time he was permitted to return home from the Raccon ford in 1779 he received a discharge from a three months term of service - and when he was permitted to return home from Kendricks bottom in 1780 he received another discharge from a three months tour of service. He was continued in readiness as a minute man during pretty much all the time from the time he was first drafted until he was finally discharged from the army - near the close of the war. That as he thinks in the month of July 1781 he was again called into the service under the same Captain John Denton. He still continued to reside in Shenandoah County Virginia; he was marched to Head quaters at a place called Chickahominy in the eastern part of Virginia. After reaching head quaters he was transferred to the Command of Captain ___ Sharp and Capt Denton was permitted to return home. The Regiment in which he served was commanded by Col. ___ Edmonds [Elias Edmonds] and General Stephens [sic: Edward Stevens] was as he believes Commander in chief of the militia at this place. He continued in this service during three months under the aforesaid officers. He remained pretty much stationary in Camp on the Pamunky [sic: Pamunkey] River during this term of service except he was marched to Williamsburg where he remained but a short time, then to Little York in pursuit of Lord Cornwallis and his forces where he received his discharge, and was in some few slight flying skirmishes. He received three written discharges and thought he perhaps them in his possession until he recently had an examination made for them and they could not be found He supposes they are lost or obliterated. He does not know of any documentary evidence which he can procure nor does he certainly know of any living witnesses by whom he can prove his service. But he thinks perhaps with a great deal of trouble and inconvenience to him he might procure some proof. 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

[signed] Jeremiah Odell

[Odell's service was certified by John Smith (pension application W6117) of Pendleton County, and also by Rachel Odell, the applicant's wife, who stated that she had been a neighbor when he and his brother were absent for three months on the final tour.]

Nicholas County to wit

Personally appeared before me the undersigned a justice of the peace in & for said County Jeremiah Odell who being duly sworn deposed and saith that by reason of old age and the consequent loss of memory he cannot swear positively as to the precise period of his service but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than the periods mentioned [illegible word]. That is to say for nine months I served as a private and for such service I claim a pension duly sworn to before me this 24th day of August 1833

R Kelly JP

[The following report is by District Attorney Washington G. Singleton who investigated many pensioners from present West Virginia. For details see the pension application of David W. Sleeth (S6111) and the endnote.]

Jeremiah Odell. Pensioner - receives \$30. p annum.

I the undersigned Jeremiah Odell, having been called on by W. G. Singleton, agent of the Secretary of War for the details of my services as a Soldier in the war of the Revolution and Statement of my age, give the following to Wit — I was born November 1, 1761 - am a native of Powells Fort Shenandoah county and lived there until 1796, when I settled in the country in which I now live - in the year 1778 or 1779 (wont be certain which) I was drafted for a three months tower marched from Shenandoah county under John Denton Capt. Sylvanus Odell Lieut. & David Galleday [David Galladay] Ensign - there was but the one company and consequently no field officers - we went on to the Racoon Ford. we were at several other places, cant recollect them. nor the names of any of the towns through which we passed - at the Racoon Ford we were discharged. before our tour was out orders were received for our discharge. We got home some eight or ten days before the 3 months was out - "there was but the one company of us all the time" which was travelling about from place to place in pursuing the american army, but none reached it -

In the next year 1779 or 1780 I was again drafted for three months marched from same place, with same company & same officer to Kendricks Ford on the Shenandoah River eight or ten miles distant from Powells Fort. remained there until we were discharged - there was but the one company of us - cant tell how long we were in the service nor how long we were at Kendricks Ford - but I dont think it was quite eight weeks from the time we left home, until we got back. we were laying at Kendricks Ford awaiting further orders -

In the next succeeding summer I was drafted for the third time for a three months tower - marched from same place with same company and under the same officers except the Ensign whose name was William Byrd - we went through Fredericksburg. Joined the main army at Chickahomeny at the Head of Pomunky river General Stephens commanded the army. "Midling Smart army" cant tell how many, cant tell what Regt. I was attached to nor who was my Colonel. there might have been more colonels than one, but I only recollect Col. Edmonds. we crossed at Andersons Ferry and encamped for 3 or 4 weeks, then went to Richmond and from there to York town. Staid there until our time expired - I remained there for ten days after my time was out and was discharged to see Cornwallis Surrender. - Genl. Muhlenburg [sic: Peter Muhlenberg] was the main commanded of the American army at the Battle of York. I was acquainted with no other General than Genl. Muhlenburg. I cant say exactly how long I was at York town. "it may be some little better than two weeks". nor can I tell how long the Siege lasted. I was there whilst it was going on [28 Sep -19 Oct] but came away before Cornwallis surrendered. Waited as before stated, ten days to see him surrender, but my term being out my Brother & Lieut having a quance with the Major (I cant tell his name) we went to the General got our discharge and all (my company) cleared out. We got home the day that Cornwallis surrendered - was ten days going home, and was upwards of two weeks at York town after the Siege commenced - "they had like to have finished me there with a cannon ball the wind of which I felt sensibly" - the forgoing comprises all my services. Sam'l. Price [Clerk of Nicholas County Court] wrote my Declaration. I told him the same in substance I now tell - by contract he was to have the first years draw. In Witness of all which I hereto subscribe my name - Jan'y 14, 1835. James [sic] Odell
Witness William Bell. A Copy W. G. Singleton.

Memo - Mr. Odell is a very Ignorant man, but much more wicked & rascally than Ignorant. his own statement is clusive against him - his manner of giving it was such as to leave no doubt in

my mind of his being an imposture. I learn that he has drawn only \$30 - which he is unable to refund - and that his character is not good -

W. G Singleton Jan 15. 1835

Lewisburg Feby. 17th 1839

Dr Sir; On the 10th day of September 1833 Jeremiah Odell of Nicholas County Va. was placed on the Pension Roll, recd. a Pension certificate entitling him to \$30 pr. an. during his natural life from the 4th March 1831 for services renderd during the revolutionary War. He proved his services by one or two Witnesses and drew the pay for two years & six months up to Sept'r. 4th 1833, since which time he has drawn nothing. For what reason his pension was discontinued, he is unable to say. He is a very old man and has not the means of supporting himself or his wife who is also very old. He has made known to me his unfortunate situation and desired me to write you on the subject and ask you that he be allowed the bal. due him - or that his pension claim be reinstated.

I therefor ask that his claim be examined and if entitled he be allowed the small sum granted him according to the act Congress 7th June 1832. I trust therefore you will have his claim investigated and make him the allowance if consistent with justice. As to his character I refer you to the Hon. A. Beirne now in Congress. Yours respectfully John W. Kelly

NOTE:

Cornwallis did not enter Virginia until the spring of 1781, and once there his army did not board ships until after the surrender on 19 Oct. If Odell was correct about the year of the first two tours, they may have been in response to some of the frequent false alarms in Virginia.

A letter dated 23 Jan 1840 from the Pension Office to Congressman John Carr states only that Odell was dropped from the pension list as the result of Singleton's report. A document in the file states that Odell was dropped because he had not served the minimum of six months required under the act of 1832. Singleton wrote "fraudulent" on his report, probably because he misread Odell's account of his last tour as saying it had lasted only a little over two weeks. Together with the previous two tours that would have brought the total service claimed in Odell's statement to Singleton to about six months, the minimum required for a pension under the 1832 act, but less than the nine months originally claimed. A careful reading of Odell's statement to Singleton, however, shows that Odell actually told Singleton he served a total of about eight months.

On 25 Feb 1860 the following children of Jeremiah and Rachel Odell assigned power of attorney to obtain any money due to them: Jacob Odell, Christine Nutter, Marian Hughes, Jeremiah Odell, and John W. Odell. A supporting affidavit stated that another child was Elijah Odell, deceased, and that Christine Nutter was the wife of David Nutter. In addition there is a copy of the record of the marriage of Jeremiah Odell to Rachel Walters on 6 Aug 1782 in Shenandoah County. As further evidence the file includes an original family record transcribed as follows:

BIRTHS

George Washington Odle an Orphan boy was born the 25 day of March 1820
Record of the Births of the children of Jeremiah Odell jun'r & Elizabeth his wife
Mary Ann Odell was born 28th April 1838
Perry Heiston Odell was born 11th December 1839.
Eliza Catherine Odell was born 13th Nov'r. 1841.
Jacob Ellis Odell was born 13th April 1844.
Margaret Racheal Odell was born 5th May 1846.
Sarah Frances Odell was born 5 June 1848.
Edward Baily Odell was born 16 March 1850.
Jeremiah Newton Odell was born 5 March 1852

DEATHS

Isaac Odle departed this life on the 7th day of Nov. 1767 aged 2 years
Ruth Odle departed this life on the 19th day of July 1807 aged 7 years
Jeremiah Odell departed this life December 1st 1842.
Rachel Odell wife of Jeremiah Odell departed this life March 5, 1846.