

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Stephen Archer W11133

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

Pennsylvania } Ss;

Greene County }

Before me David Gray Esquire one of the Associate Judges of the Court of Common Pleas for the County of Greene in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, this day came Stephen Archer of said County, who being duly sworn according to law, on his solemn oath did say that to the best of his recollection it was in the year seventy six, the fall before the Battle of Brandywine [11 Sep 1777], he this deponent was enlisted as a marine under Captain Robert Mullin on board the Frigate Delaware, commanded by Captain Charles Alexander in the service of the United States. The ship being unready to sail said deponent and great part of the company volunteered and served a winter campaign on land, was in the battle of Trenton [26 Dec 1776], and Princeton [3 Jan 1777] and many other skirmishes in New Jersey. In the Spring the Ship being ready, the crew returned to Philadelphia and went on board but at the Capes was blockaded by the British and was employed as a Guard ship till Philadelphia was taken [26 Sep 1777], when sailing up to attack that place the ship was captured by the enemy [27 Sep 1777], and this deponent with one hundred and eighteen more were put in close confinement in the new Jail where their sufferings were so great that he and seventeen or eighteen others alone escaped death. Deponent never afterwards saw any officer of the ship. In May following obtaining liberty of going into the Town deponent escaped, joined the army at Valley Forge where he remained twenty one months but received no pay. Deponent then went volunteer in the guard with prisoners to Albemarle barracks near Staunton [sic: Charlottesville VA]; after which he went under General Matthews [probably Col. Sampson Mathews] in the Company of Captain James Trimble of Augusta County in Virginia – fought against [Gen. Benedict] Arnold at Portsmouth on the border of N. Carolina. After this the deponent enlisted for eighteen months under Captain Smith in the Regiment commanded by Col. [William] Bowyer, joined the Army at Staunton marched to York and was in the Army under General Washington at the Siege of York and taking of Cornwallis [19 Oct 1781] and went with the prisoners to Winchester where he with the Company were paid and discharged. After this the deponent came to the back parts of Pennsylvania where he was enlisted in the Company of Captain John Boyd in Bedford, Pennsylvania and served in said Boyds company of Rangers during the war which was about thirteen months after his last enlistment when he was honourably discharged by Lieutenant Richard Johnson the Captain being taken at Frankstown by the Indians. The said Deponent further saith that he served much more than nine months in the army and navel service of the United States during the revolutionary war, as is before more fully stated, that througe age and infirmity he is in reduced circumstances and needs the assistance of his country for his support – and further that his discharges and papers are all lost except his discharge from the Company of Rangers at the close of the war, which was left in the Surveyor Generals office of Pennsylvania when he obtained the Patent for his donation land. Deponents house and papers were burnt eleven or twelve years ago.

[signed 25 May 1818] Stephen Archer

I do Certify that Stephen Archer has served as a soldier in Capt. John Boyd's Company of the Pennsylvania Rangers from the twentieth day of May 1782 to the thirteenth day of June 1783 both days included and is hereby honourably discharged agreeable to the order of Council dated the 6th June last. Given under my hand at Bedford the 1st July 1783 — (Signed) Rich'd. Johnston Lt

P.R.

A true copy of the original discharge

And'w. Ellicott Sec'y. L'd. Office

[Punctuation partly corrected]

Virginia. At a County court, held in and for the County of Monongalia, at the courthouse of the said County on Monday the 28th of August in the year 1820, and 45th year of the Commonwealth, personally appeared in open court, {being a court of record, which proceed according to the course of the common law, with a jurisdiction unlimited in point of amount, and keeping a record of its proceedings} Stephen Archer, aged about 75 years, resident 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 in the city of Philadelphia in the year 1775 or 1776, as a marine under Capt. Robert Mullin, on board the United States, Frigate the *Delaware*, commanded by Capt Charles Alexander, and the ship not being ready to sail the greatest part of us volunteered ourselves into the Land service for a winter campaign; was in the battle of Trenton and Princeton and frequent skirmishing thro' the Jerseys; in the spring we went back and went on board the ship, and sailed to the Capes, but was blockaded in by the British, and continued as a guard ship until Philadelphia was taken, we sailed up and attackted the town, and our ship taken all of us that were not killed made prisoners and put into the new jail, where out of 109 only 18 or 19 men escaped starving; that he nerr saw any officer of the ship afterwards, that the enemy gave him bounds from which he escaped and reached camp at Valley Forge; that he was in a volunteer guard with prisoners to Albemarle, that he was two campaigns under Gen'l. Mathews after the traitor Arnold to Portsmouth. that he afterwards enlisted under Capt. Smith, was at the taking of Cornwallis, and came with the prisoners to Winchester, where he was paid and discharged, that he came to the back part of Pennsylvania and enlisted in Capt. John Boyd's company of Wood-rangers and served fourteen or fifteen months, and was honorably discharged as will appear by a copy of his discharge, which he left at the War Department, that he went himself to the War Department, and obtained a certificate of the Secretary of War, dated 30th day of June 1818 and numbered 1288 on the back of said certificate.

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 person 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 following schedule, which together with this declaration I have subscribed towit – One cow & calf, six tin cups, two buckets, six knives and forks, two kettles, one pot, two chairs, two hoes, one axe and one mattock – a little bedding & wearing apparel; that he believes he owes as much to his neighbours as they owe to him. (Signed) Stephen Archer

That he has no occupation, that he taught a little school for a great many years, but for some years back his nerves are not studied enough, that he lives on the land of Mr. Alex. Clegg, and on his bounty he lives, that he now owes Mr. Clegg about 70 dollars for provisions furnished himself and family, that he has no means of support in the world that his wife Elizabeth, about fifty five years of age lives with him, that his daughter Elizabeth is now about 35 years of age, that his daughter has not since her birth been able to help herself to a drink of water, nor put on her cloaths, and is subject to fits, that his daughter Mary about 20 years of age lives with him and is a great assistance to him and his family in his old age, that he supposes the Secretary of War will recollect his application personally.

NOTES: On 27 Feb 1855 Martha Rice, 55, applied for a pension stating that she married Stephen Archer on 12 June 1822, and he died 12 May 1824. She then married John Rice, who died on or about 1 Sep 1848. With her application she submitted a page from Archer's original family record transcribed below, which gives her maiden name as Martha Sign. On an application for bounty land dated 6 Apr 1855 her age is given as 54, the date of her marriage to Rice as 24 Apr 1835, and the date of Rice's death as Sep 1847 or 1848. Moses Sine of Monongalia County deposed that he had often conversed with Stephen Archer about

the Revolutionary War, "a subject upon which he liked to talk," and had been present when Stephen Archer was buried with the honors of war. There is also reference to a William Sine of Monongalia County, an acting justice of the peace.

Stephen Archer and Martha Sign was Married the 12th day of June in the year of our Lord 1823

Daughter of William Sign and Marget his wife of Virginia

She was born on the 21th day of August in the year 1800 in York County, pennsylvania