

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of James Stiff W4344                      Molly Stiff      VA  
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 1 Dec 2014.

State of Virginia        }  
County of Bedford    } SS.

On this 12<sup>th</sup> day of February 1833 personally appeared before me Robert Campbell a Justice of the peace for the County aforesaid James Stiff a resident of the parish of Russell in the County and State aforesaid aged nearly 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 the 7<sup>th</sup> 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named Officers and served as herein stated

He thinks it was in the month of February 1776 but the day of the month he cannot recollect, he entered the service from the County of Bedford and State of Virginia into the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Continental Troops from the State of Virginia under the following named officers to wit Henry Terrill [Henry Terrell] was Captain John Goggin [John Goggins] was first Lieutenant Thomas McReynolds second Lieutenant and Robert Watkins was Ensign. That he marched from Bedford County and State of Virginia shortly after this either the latter part of the month of February as aforesaid or the first of March by the way of Richmond to Williamsburg where he remained a short time, thence to Suffolk where he staid awhile, from thence to Portsmouth where he staid also but a short time thence to Norfolk where he remained till the fall of the same year, from this place he was again marched to Williamsburg where he remained but a short time when he was taken sick but in what month or the day he cannot tell but it was in the latter part of the year he obtained a furlough from General [Andrew] Lewis of Bottetourt [sic: Botetourt] who had the command of the Troops while in Virginia. This Genl Lewis died in Bedford County on his return home from the Army. This deponent after obtaining the furlough as aforesaid returned home where he remained till he recovered when he returned to the Army after being absent about 3 months as aforesaid at least it was in the spring of the year after he was first taken sick he is satisfied it was not less than 3 months and he thinks but little if any more that he was absent in his sickness. On returning he joined the Army at Philadelphia the head quarters of which were at Middlebrook in the Jerseys and while there the battle off Brandywine he thinks took place [11 Sep 1777]. He was not in the battle of Brandywine, as he was left on guard in the City of Philadelphia. He went from thence to Valley Forge, from thence to Germantown after this the same day the battle of Germantown took place he thinks it was in the month of August 1777 as well as he remembers [sic: 4 Oct 1777]. He was in the battle from the commencement to the close of it; it commenced at day break and terminated at 12 Oclock. General Stevens [sic: Adam Stephen] he believes was the chief commander in the battle. Cols Josiah Parker had command of the Platoon he was in during the engagement by some means General Parker broke his sword off at the hilt. General Muhlenburg [sic: Peter Muhlenberg] had command of the Brigade. It may be proper here to state that when he marched out to join the Army after being sick that he and all the men with him were inoculated for the small pox at Dumfries in Virginia where he staid perhaps three or four weeks and then joined the Army at Philadelphia as before stated After the battle of Germantown he marched from thence back to Valley Forge or near there as well as he can recollect where he remained in Winter Quarters with the Army till the next February 1778 when after being in the service according to his engagement two years he was discharged the day of the month he cannot remember. He received a written discharge he thinks from Captain [Henry] Fauntleroy but now cannot tell where it is it probably was burnt at the time his house was consumed by fire some four or five years afterwards and when his other papers were destroyed. He remained during all the time aforesaid under said term of enlistment not less than Two years. during this tour he was acquainted with Captain Gross Scruggs from the County of Bedford who belonged to the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Va Continental Troops – also There was a Major [Burgess] Ball in the same Regiment to which he was attached

After this when he had been at home several years but how long he cannot tell certainly but it was awhile before [Gen. Horatio] Gates's defeat [Battle of Camden SC, 16 Aug 1780] the date of the month or year however he cannot recollect, he was drafted as a malitia man from the County of Bedford and State of Virginia and marched from the said County from the Town of New London [now in Campbell County] he thinks on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June of the same year to Hillsborough in North Carolina by the way of Wards Ferry on Staunton River thence by Dan River at White's Ferry. He remained some time at Hillsborough and was then sent to Richmond with others (having in their charge Thirteen waggons) for spirits ammuniton &c for the Army: and returned to Hillsborough a short time after Gates defeat after having served a tour of duty not less that three months (he is inclined to believe it was longer he was dismissed.) He remained at Hillsborough till he was dismissed, the precise time he was dismissed he is utterly unable to tell. He does not remember that he ever received a written discharge for this part of his services but is inclined to think he and the other men merely received a verbal discharge. His whole service in the war was not less than Two years and three months to wit one Tour of Two years in the Continental line proven by the testimony of Jonathan Grooms [pension application S19305] to whose affidavit he refers and is a living witness and the other tour of three months as a malitia man as before stated under the command of Capt. Thomas Leftwich & he thinks John Leftwich was Lieutenant and Robert Clark was also an officer. He has no documentary evidence by which he can prove his services He was born in the County of Cumberland in Va. and moved to Bedford when but a small child. he does not know the date of the month or year that he was born but from various circumstances he thinks he is 76 years of age or nearly so he has no record of his age nor did he ever have. He has resided ever since the Revolution, did before, resided at the time and now resides in the County of Bedford and State of Virginia. He is unable to procure the testimony of a Clergyman to testify as to his character for veracity or the general belief of his services in the neighborhood because he knows no one who can make such a statement or that is acquainted with the general opinion of the neighborhood and there is no Clergyman immediately in his neighborhood. he is known to John P. Gray and William R. Jones and many others in his present neighborhood who can testify as to his character for veracity and their belief of his services as a soldier of the Revolution. 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 of the Agency of any State.

James hisXmark Stiff

Answers to the Interrogatories prescribed by the War department made by James Stiff preparatory to granting a pension under the Act of Congress of June the 7<sup>th</sup> 1832 appended to his Declaration and subscribed and sworn at the same time & place

Answer to the 1<sup>st</sup> Int. See the body of the Declaration for an answer

Answer to the 2<sup>nd</sup> " See the body of the Declaration for an answer

Answer to the 3<sup>rd</sup> " See the body of the Declaration for an answer

Answer to the 4<sup>th</sup> The first tour of Two years I was called into service as a regular soldier of continental line. The second I was drafted as a malitia man

Answer to the 5<sup>th</sup> See the body of the Declaration for an answer

Answer to the 6<sup>th</sup> See the body of the Declaration for an answer

Answer to the 7<sup>th</sup> See the body of the Declaration for an answer

James hisXmark Stiff

State of Virginia }  
 Bedford County } SS

On this 20<sup>th</sup> day of June 1837 personally appeared before the subscriber a justice of the peace in and for the county and state aforesaid Molly Stiff a resident of Bedford County, and Russell Parish in the state aforesaid, aged about seventy nine years, who being first duly sworn according to law doth on her oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of congress passed July 4<sup>th</sup> 1836. That she is the widow of James Stiff deceased, late of said county and state, who was a private in the War of the revolution and who for his services obtained a pension from the United States of eighty dollars per annum. She is illiterate old and infirm and her memory not

retentive of facts, which transpired so long ago, but from what she has heard from her deceased husband and others and from her own imperfect remembrance she believes his services were as follows. The said James Stiff enlisted in the army of the United States probably in the Spring of 1777, and marched from New London, then the county town of Bedford, the county in which he then resided, to Baltimore and from thence to the army under General Washington, which he joined, and in which he served the term of his enlistment to wit two years and returned home, in Bedford County Virginia. She cannot recollect the day and the month in which he entered the service nor the time of his leaving it, but she well recollects to have heard him say he served two years, and she remembers herself that he did serve two years – of course if he enlisted in the spring of 1777 and served two years he must have left the service in the spring of 1779. She believes now that she heard him say that he was under Captain George Lambert, but of this she is not certain. she has also heard him speak of Gen'ls [John] Green & [George] Weedon and Col. Lewis and thinks it probable he served under those officers, but she cannot say positively that he did. She believes he was in the battles of Brandywine and Germantown. She does not remember the country through which he passed. she recollects that he said a part of the company, among whom was himself, went a part of the way by water.

The said James Stiff returned home after his term of enlistment expired, and in the month of September, probably in the year of 1779 though she cannot positively say, she was married to the said James Stiff by Rev Wm Holt, she thinks, about nine months after his term of service expired. he then remained at home, a year and some few months when he was draughted into the service of the United States as a militia man in Bedford County Virginia where he then resided and marched from New London the place of rendezvous under Capt [William] Terry she believes or perhaps Capt. Terry was only along with them. she does not recollect the day, the year nor month when he was draughted but she believes it was in the month of June. He marched through the southern part of Virginia to Hillsborough probably, and joined the army of Gen'l Gates but who were his field officers she does not recollect. She remembers to have heard him speak of Gen'l [Edward] Stevens and he might have been under him, but she does not recollect. He was not in the battle in which General Gates was defeated, because he was ordered to take charge of waggon loaded with powder in place of a man who was not considered true to his country. He served two months, but she does not recollect the day when he was discharged. She has no documentary evidence in support of her claim, or of the services of the said James Stiff. She declares she was legally married to the said James Stiff in the month of September she believes in the year of 1779. The day of the month she cannot recollect. And that her husband, the aforesaid James Stiff died on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of May 1837 and that she has remained a widow ever since that period, as will more fully appear by reference to the proof hereto annexed. And she further declares that her said husband was a pensioner of the United States, that he obtained his pension, she believes sometime between September 1832 and March 1833 – and received the sum of eighty dollars per annum The certificate she supposes was sent to the agent in Richmond, when the arrearage of pension were paid, after his death. She may be mistaken in her recollection of facts, as her memory is very imperfect.

She further declares, that by reason of bodily infirmity, she cannot attend before the court to make the declaration without great inconvenience. Molly herXmark Stiff

#### NOTES:

In addition to Jonathan Grooms, Thomas Brown (pension application S6750) also certified the service of James Stiff.

On 29 Oct 1839 Martha B. Bowyer, 66, of Botetourt County, stated that about 52 or 53 years before she boarded with James and Molly Stiff when their son Richard Stiff was born, and that Sally Stiff, William Stiff, and John Stiff were their other children at the time. On 16 Nov 1839 John Stiff, son of James and Molly Stiff, referred to a family register then owned by his sister in Kentucky that recorded his own date of birth (18 May 1786) and that of his siblings. He also stated that Rev. James Turner may have made a record of when he and an older brother and sister were baptized in the Presbyterian Church, not long after his parents joined. A Treasury-Department document states that the administrator of Molly

Stiff received her final pension payment up to the dated of her death, 24 May 1841.