

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Van Swearingen W5415 Elenor Newhouse PA VA
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Ohio Franklin County Ss

ON this the Third day of August in the year of our Lord one Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty seven personally appeared before me [blank space] Associate Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of said Franklin County Ohio Mrs Elenor Newhouse a resident of Columbus in the County of Franklin aforesaid aged Eighty Four 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 7th 1838 Entitled "An act granting half pay and pensions to certain widows" and an act of August 23^d 1842 extending the provisions of said act to a widow who marries after the death of her husband, she being a widow at the time she makes application for a pension.

That she is the widow of Van Swearingen who on the 14th of September 1776 was commissioned by the Continental Congress as a Captain in the Regiment raised in Westmoreland Pennsylvania and Commanded by Col McCoy as will appear by reference to the journal of Congress for that day. That by the weekly return of the Second Pennsylvania Brigade, General [Anthony] Wayne's Division, of the Tenth of April AD 1778 at Harrisburg it will be seen that he was absent from that Brigade in command with the Rifle Corps of Colonel [Daniel] Morgan from the ninth day of June AD 1777 up to that period. That he was a Captain with said Col. Morgan in his Rifle Corps at the battle of Stillwater [7 Oct 1777] or between Stillwater and Saratoga in September AD 1777 where he was taken prisoner – that a short time afterwards he was exchanged by the British army for one Captain Frazer and resumed his command and did serve as a Captain in the army of the Revolution for two full years at least as will be seen on reference to said Morgans Rolls for the said year AD 1778 – and that he resigned before the close of the war That her said husbands papers were taken by his brother and are not to be had by her.

She further declares that she was married to the said Van Swearingen in the month of May in the year seventeen Hundred and Eighty two in Washington County, Pennsylvania, and that her husband the aforesaid Van Swearingen died in the year seventeen Hundred and ninety Three. That she was not married to him prior to his leaving the service, but the marriage took place previous to the first of January seventeen Hundred and ninety Four viz: at the time above stated. That she was afterwards in the year seventeen Hundred and ninety nine married to John Newhouse who died in the year Eighteen Hundred and Thirty and that since that time she has been a widow. she further swears that she is now a widow as will more fully appear by reference to the proof hereto annexed, and that she has never before made any application for a pension

[signed] Ellenor Newhouse

District of Columbia }
County of Washington }

On this 18th day of December 1848 before the subscriber a Justice of the Peace in and for the County and District aforesaid personally appeared William Darby Esq in his 74th year, of sound mind, and entitled to full credit and belief; who being duly sworn upon the Holy Evangely of Almighty God declares and says

That he was raised in Washington County Penna That about the year 1781 he was in said County and knew perfectly well Captain Van Swearingen, who was a Captain in Morgan's Rifle Corps who married Eleanor or Nely Virgin as she was generally called and known by in said county That she had three brothers Rezin Virgin, John Virgin, and Brice Virgin That she was under the particular protection of Rezin Virgin; and that when Capt Van Swearingen applied to Rezin Virgin for his sister Nelly aforesaid as his intended wife, Rezin Virgin observed that he had no objection to the marriage, but that he must not ill treat his Sister Nelly, if he did, he must abide the consequences. Rezin Virgin was one amongst the most powerful men in the union. That the said Capt Van Swearingen and Nelly Virgin were married accordingly

in said County and lived together there as man and wife and were so regarded by all the country That Capt Van Swearingen was long Sheriff of Washington County and that at the time of the events he the affiant heard all these circumstances stated and they made vivid impression upon his mind He further declares that Capt Van Swearingen was something of a libertine and had an illegitimate child by a miss Brown who was living there at the time and that it was on account of his libertinism that Rezin Virgin made the threat that he did as he beliees And he declares that he has no hesitation in saying that Eleanor Virgin was the lawful wife of Capt Van Swearingen and that the marriage took place at least 12 years prior to 1794 and that said Van Swearingen had no other wife reputed or otherwise as he believes That the said Captain Van Swearingen and his wife Eleanor or Nelly moved to Virginia and that since that time he Deponent has no other knowledge of them than that he knew where they lived and the time when Van Swearingen died, which was in the year 1799, the year he, deponent, went to Louisiana: That Capt Van Swearingen was one of those kind of men whose acts were generally known and spoken of and that his intimate acquaintance with the late Capt Henry Jolly [pension application S41710] a brother soldier of the said Van Swearingen who constantly spoke of him served to make him remember more particularly the circumstances of this case

[signed] William Darby

NOTES:

The file contains a certificate that the inscription on a tombstone on the farm of William Tarr one mile from Wellsburg reads as follows: "Here lieth the body of Van Swearingen esq. who departed this life on the 2nd day of December 1793 in the 51st year of his age."

On 28 May 1847 John Cox stated that the death of Van Swearingen "was then considered an event of great intrest from the fact that s'd Van Swearingen had been an officer (a captain) in the revolutionary war and was considered in the neighbourhood an important man."

In other documents it was stated that after Van Swearingen's death, his widow's father, Jeremiah Virgin, lived part of the time with her on the farm "about half a mile above" Wellsburg, and that she continued to live there with her second husband until they moved to "the Barrens of Kentucky" about 1804. They then moved to Butler County OH around 1813, and from there to Hamilton County OH around 1817. After the death of John Newhouse on 29 July 1830, Ellenor Newhouse moved to Franklin County OH.

On 20 Sep 1847 W. McCluney of Wellsburg advised James L. Edwards, the Commissioner of Pensions, that the former Nelly Virgin was the last of three wives of Van Swearingen and bore him three children, and later had three children with her second husband.

On 11 Nov 1848 Elenor Newhouse (as she signed) wrote that she was living with a daughter, Eliza Jane Middleton, in Columbus OH. On 17 Nov 1850 in Columbus Elenor Newhouse wrote to a pension agent seeking help in applying for bounty land and commutation pay for the service of Van Swearingen, stating that "hee never aplied for anny thing as hee was welthey and did not need it," but that "mee and one or two of my Childrin is rather Powr."