

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Joseph Thomas W6277

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

[Punctuation partially corrected.]

State of Virginia Kanawha County, to wit

On this 21<sup>st</sup> day of October 1833, personally appeared in open court before Lewis Summers, Judge of the Circuit Superior court of Law & Chancery for said county, Joseph Thomas, a resident of said county of Kanawha, aged 74, who being first duly sworn, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress of June, 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated. The said applicant was born in 1759, in the county of Buckingham Virginia. In the year 1777. when corn was about a half leg high, he enlisted under Lieutenant Clough Shelton, of Capt. James Franklin's Company. was (Shelton) was at that time recruiting in Buckingham. Franklin's company of regulars was raised in Buckingham, Amherst and perhaps other counties, and at the time this applicant enlisted in it, it was at the White Marshes, or Chesnut [sic: Chestnut] Hill near Philadelphia. Lieut. Shelton marched to join that company, via Georgetown, Md. (now D.C.) At the latter place he was detained (perhaps a month) by the sickness of his men, who had, many of them, to undergo inoculation [for small pox] before they were fit for service. Some time in the month of September 1777, this declarant thinks, the recruits joined Capt. Franklin's company, in the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment Virginia Regulars, under Command of Col. Edward Stephens [sic: see endnote]. The main body of the American force under the commander-in-chief Gen. Washington he thinks, was at this place, when this affiant joined the company in which he had enlisted on the day after his arrival at the White Marshes there was an engagement or skirmish between a body of the Americans under command of Col. [Daniel] Morgan and a party of Gen. Howes [William Howe's] British forces [Battle of Whitemarsh, 6 Dec 1777]. Night coming on, hostilities ceased, and the next morning the British were on their march to Philadelphia. The American army followed immediately. Winter coming on, it took up its quarters at Valley Forge. In the Spring, or early in the Summer of 1778, the British evacuated Philadelphia and the American army pursued it in its retreat through New Jersey [see endnote]. During the Spring of this year, this declarant believes the American army remained in the vicinity of its late winter quarter, watching the movements of the royal forces. When the former crossed the Delaware, this affiant thinks Gen. Washington ordered Gen. [Charles] Lee in advance and some time in June [28<sup>th</sup>] the detachment under his command engaged with the British at Monmouth Courthouse. The engagement had closed when this affiant reached Monmouth in the body of the Americans commanded by Col John Green of Culpepper [sic: Culpeper], Virginia. He thinks the main body of the American forces marched into Monmouth at the same time. After this engagement, the British pursued their retreat to New York and the Americans followed without the beat of a drum, during the first night. Not having overtaken the British, the American army crossed the North River and marched down toward New York, to the White Plains & soon after retraced its steps and recrossed the Hudson at Stony Point. It was then kept in motion until the approach of winter drove them to quarters. this affiant was in service when Stony Point was reduced by the Americans [sic: Battle of Stony Point NY, 15 Jul 1779], but was not in the detachment which accomplished it. The American forces were next concentrated under Gen. Washington in the vicinity of this place, until the before mentioned approach of winter when this affiant thinks, they encamped at Middlebrook, or Bonbrook [sic: Bound Brook NJ]. He will here state that about the close of 1777, Capt. Franklin resigned and returned to Virginia, and Lieutenant Shelton was promoted to his station, under whom this applicant continued to serve until he left the army, which he thinks was in November 1778. He served the term for which he enlisted and at the end of it received a written discharge which is now lost. He has no documentary evidence of his service, nor does he know of any one to whom he can refer as being personally acquainted with the services to which he now makes oath. He has no record of his age.

He hereby relinquishes every claim to a pension, 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] Joseph Thomas

[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). See also the endnote.]

Joseph Thomas - Pensioner receives \$43 pr annum.

I the undersigned Joseph Thomas In pursuance of the requisition of the Secretary of War give the following statement of my age and Revolutionary Services to Wit. I was born August 3<sup>rd</sup> 1759. I am a native of Buckingham County Va. removed to Kanhawa County in 1798. as well as I can now remember, it was in Novr 1776 I Enlisted in Buckingham county va. for Three years. I Enlisted by Reuben Thomas, a recruiting sergeant - in the succeeding Spring I was rendezvoused at Charlottsvill [sic: Charlottesville], attached to Capt Cluff Sheltons company, the 6<sup>th</sup> Virginia Regt. then commanded by Col. Edward Stephens. Joined my Regt. at White Marsh - and marched with the Regt. to Vally Forge. was there attached to General Weedens [sic: George Weedon's] Brigade, remained at Vally Forge the Winter of 1777 & 1778. in the succeeding summer the army under Genl Washington moved from the Vally forge through New Jersey, to New York pursuing the British under Clinton, who had in that Summer left Philadelphia. at Monmouth we (the American Army overhalled the British under Clinton, and had an engagement. I was attached to Washington's Division of the army, which did not get up until the Battle was over. the american army crossed over the north river, and went to the White Plains After remaining there for a "smart space" and then moved over to Robinsons Plain, below Fort Montgomery [in Orange County NY], and there remained until the winter season set in - I Enlisted as before stated for 3 yrs. but at Vally forge in the Spring of 1778 before the campaign opened I reenlisted, during the war. - in the fall of 1778 I got a furlough for 114 days. returned home, and rejoined the army at the expiration of my furlough at Middlebrook or Bonbrook dont recollect which. on rejoining the army I prevailed on my Col. Samuel Haws [sic: Samuel Hawes], to take a substitute in my place. I accordingly hired Jeremiah Walker, who took my place, & I returned home. - In my original Declaration I stated that I was discharged in 1778 - but after returning from Charleston and reflecting on the subject, I then recollected that I was in error - that I was furloughed & not discharged as now stated - with the exception of the last stated fact, I told J. M Laidly, who wrote my Declaration, the same in substance I now tell - In Witness of all which I hereto subscribe my name. Jany. 4, 1835. Joseph Thomas.

Witness Thos. J. Baites[?]

A Copy

W. G Singleton

Note - this man sustains as good a character as any in the county - the mistake which he details as having occurred in his original Declaration I esteem imaterial and think ought not to operate against him

W. G Singleton Jany. 16 1835.

Buckingham County - State of Virginia viz:

I Dugald Ferguson, a justice of the peace for the said County hereby certify that Moses Wright [pension application S39923] a pensioner of the United States personally appeared before me, and made oath on the holy evangelists of Almighty Good that, that he inlisted as a private for three years and first served under a Capt. James Franklin - who was discharged from the service - that then the said Moses Wright was placed under Capt Clough Shelton & continued under him until the expiration of the time of his enlistment - and that Joseph Thomas enlisted for the same time & served in the same company with him during his enlistment. The Company when first organized started from Amherst Court house in Virginia and joined the army at head quarters at Middle brook in the state of New Jersey. at the time the said Joseph Thomas enlisted he was a resident of Amherst County Virginia and I believe removed to Kanawha County in the same State a considerable time past - and is still a resident thereof

Given under my hand this 23<sup>rd</sup> Februy 1836. D Ferguson

NOTES:

Col. Edward Stevens commanded the 10<sup>th</sup> Virginia Regiment of Foot at the time Thomas

enlisted. The regiment was renumbered the 6<sup>th</sup> on 14 Sep 1778.

The British left Philadelphia on 18 June 1778 because they did not consider it defensible, not because they were retreating from the American army, which was greatly weakened by the winter at Valley Forge. After leaving Philadelphia, the British made New York its headquarters.

Thomas initially received a pension of \$43.33 per year, which was appropriate for service as a private for 13 months. Thomas's statement to Singleton and the deposition of Moses Wright indicate service of at least two years, which should have merited a pension of \$80 per year. At Singleton's suggestion, James M. Laidley requested that the Pension Office correct the error. Judging from the pension certificate, this correction appears to have been made, perhaps posthumously,.

On 12 Sep 1846 Rebecca Thomas, 85, applied for a pension stating that she was born and raised as Rebecca Thomas in Buckingham County and was married to Joseph Thomas by Rev. David Patterson near Providence Meeting House in that county "more than sixty years since." She stated that Joseph Thomas died 1 Aug 1839. In 1846 Samuel Hudson, and his wife Nancy, 54-year-old daughter of Joseph's brother, James Thomas, deposed in behalf of Rebecca Thomas's application. Another document states that there were 11 or 12 children, including Lewis (the eldest), Polly, Washington, Henry, and Matthews. A document dated 17 Dec 1846 stated that "the old lady's health is rapidly declining."