

Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension Application of Paul Louis Celoron: X941

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

(The following is the copy of the letter I [Paul Bentalou] write to Nathaniel Cutting Esq'r. [Clerk for the Branches of Military Lands & Pensions] at the War Department and dated Baltimore 1<sup>st</sup> of August 1811.)

Believing, as I do, that you are convinced of my readiness to serve you whenever in my power to do so I make no apology in craving your assistance to enable me to answer promptly the pressing demands of an old fellow soldier of mine, whose needy circumstances have compelled him to apply to me, to look after the portion of Military Lands, to which he thinks himself entitled; and as his services in the late revolutionary army, are as well known to me as my own, the following sketch from my recollection, will I hope enable you to trace him through the Records of the War Department, and easily to ascertain the legitimacy of his present claim.

My friend. Paul Louis Celoron, is a Canadian by birth, descended of an ancient military French family, who in the latter end of the year 1776 came over from Martinique to the United States, strongly recommended by the general and other authorities of that Island, and was by Congress, appointed captain in the American Army, I believe by brevet; as I do not recollect that he ever was commissioned as belonging to any particular regiment; but this I know, that early in 1777, he joined the Northern Army, then under [Gen. Arthur] St. Clair, and served as Brigade Major to B. Gen'l. Roche fermoy, until St. Clair's retreat from Ticonderoga [6 Jul 1777]. He then continued in Gen'l. [Horatio] Gates's Army, attached to Colonel [Henry B.] Livingston's fourth Battalion of the New York Line, until the final capture of Burgoyne's Army [at Saratoga, 17 Oct 1777]; and in 1778 or 9 he attached himself to Pulaski's Legion, in whose Corps, from its first creation [spring 1778], I commanded the first Troop of Light Dragoons. Gen'l. Pulaski employed Capt. Celoron as his Aid de Camp and remained in that situation until Pulaski received his mortal wound before Savannah [9 Oct 1779]; after that, continued in [Gen. Benjamin] Lincoln's Army, was taken Prisoner at Charleston [12 May 1780], exchanged some time after; he joined Lafayette's corps in Virginia, in which he remained until the capture of Cornwallis at YorkTown [19 Oct 1781]. At the close of the War he left the Country, obtained from the french government a military appointment at the Island of Guadeloupe, there married a lady of a considerable fortune, which was totally lost during the struggles of the french revolution, where the poor fellow now is, reduced to indigence.

From the foregoing, you will perceive that my Friend is clearly entitled to his proportion of the promised military lands; and from your situation, I flatter myself you will be able to tell me whether the appropriation is already made and stands on record at the War Department, and the title to be obtained from thence without any application to Congress and whether this Letter will be sufficient for the Secretary to order the delivery of the Title on the power of attorney which I have? have the goodness to favor me with your answer as soon as may be convenient, and to let me know how, and whether, I may obtain that little pittance for my distressed friend &c.

To the Honourable the Congress of the United States.

The Petition of Paul Louis Celoron an officer in the late American Revolutionary Army

Most respectfully sheweth

That in the year 1776 he came from the Island of Martinique to the United States, with recommendations highly honourable, from the Governor & other authorities of that Island, and was appointed, by Congress, a Captain, by Breves, in the American army, that early in 1777 he joined the northern army under General St. Clair and served as a Brigade Major to Brigadier General Roche Fermoy, until St. Clair's retreat from Ticonderoga, he then joined and continued in General Gates's army, and attached himself to Col. Livingston's fourth Battalion of the New York line, until the final capture of Burgoyne's Army, that in 1778-9 he attached himself to Pulaski's Legion and acted as Aid-de-Camp to General Pulaski, until General Pulaski received his

mortal wound before Savannah, he then joined and continued in Lincoln's army, was taken prisoner at Charleston, and was exchanged some time after, he then joined Lafayette's corps in Virginia, in which he remained until the capture of Cornwallis at York-Town, and when the army was disbanded at the close of the war, he left this country, and obtained from the French government a military appointment at the Island of Guadeloupe and that he has been reduced to Indigence during the struggles of the French Revolution.

Your Petitioner further states that in 1782 or 1783 whilst General Lincoln was President of the Board of war, he caused four certificates of his honourable and useful services to be registered on the records of the Board, one from General Washington, one from the Baron de Kalbe [sic: De Kalb], one from General St. Clair and one from General Lincoln, which records may possibly have been lost in the conflagration of the war office in the year 1800.

Your Petitioner further represents, that his accounts were regularly settled in the Treasury Department, as will appear by the accompanying Document from that Department, but that he has never received his military lands granted by a resolve of the old continental congress to the officers and soldiers of the American Army, who served until the close of the war. That in his present distressed circumstances the military donation Lands, to which he humbly considers himself intitled, is a considerable object to him. Your Petitioner therefore prays, that your Honourable Body, would take his care under consideration, and grant him such relief, in the premises, as to you Honour shall seem meet and he as in duty bound will pray &c.

Paul Louis Celoron

by his Attorney Paul Bentalou

Late Captain of Dragoons in Pulaski's Legion

Baltimore 4<sup>th</sup> of November 1811.