

Pension Application for Elisha Alexander

W.8325 (Widow: Sally) Married October 11, 1801. He died October 22, 1843.

B.L.Wt.19505-160-55

Declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress, passed June 7th 1832.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

County of Franklin SS.

On this nineteenth day of September A.D. 1832 personally appeared in open court, before Richard E. Newcomb, Judge of the Court of Probate, now sitting, Elisha Alexander, a resident of Northfield in the County of Franklin & commonwealth of Massachusetts, aged seventy nine 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 7th, 1832.

That I entered the service of the United States under the following named officers & served as is herein stated viz:

I was born in the said Town of Northfield on the 8th day of December A.D. 1753, as appears from the records of the said Town, & I have always resided in the said Town, except when absent in the service of the U.S. or on occasional business.

In the month of April 1775 there came news to Northfield, that the regulars had been out & fought a battle with our people at Concord. I was then a member of a company of minute-men, which had previously been raised in Northfield & in readiness to march at short notice & as soon as we learned that our services were wanted, we marched, under the command of Capt. Williams; Lieut. Wright & Ensign Lyman being our other officers. We directed our course to Concord, which we reached three or four days after the battle. I saw the ground where the battle was fought, still bloody, the jail broken open & dwelling houses & furniture exhibiting marks of violence. From Concord we marched to Waltham, where we were ordered to stop, no quarters being ready for us at Cambridge. We stayed at Waltham about one week, when we marched to Cambridge. Major Gen. Ward was in the command of the army, at the time I arrived, but I do not remember that our company was incorporated into any regiment. The officers whom I remember as with the army at this time were Gens. Ward & Putnam, Warren, & I think Heath. I remember also the Cols. Ward & Putnam.

The only service which has made an impression on my mind, different from ordinary camp duty, was being placed as sentry over some wounded British [British] prisoners, in the house of Col Vassell I think. I left the army & came home, either the last of May, or the first of June, my memory will not enable me to state with exactness the day, but my brother Simeon thinks that he joined the army the first of June & he joined at the time I left. I was with the army at this time, somewhat more than one month, I believe about 6 weeks.

About the middle of September 1775, my brother Simeon returned home from the army & I went down to join a second time. During my absence the soldiers from Northfield, who had continued with the army, had joined a company from Hadley (a town lying near Northfield) which company was at the time I arrived at Dorchester, officered by Capt. Kellog, 1st Lieut Lyman, 2d do [Lieut] Sheldon. This company I

joined. Ward was our Col. but we had no Major for one of our Majors, Bigelow, had gone to Canada with the expedition under Arnold & Barnes, one other Major was, as I was told, broken for cowardice shown at the battle of Bunker Hill. We were stationed at Dorchester. I was made corporal of the company & soon after orderly sergeant. I remained with the army till the first day of January, the time which I had agreed to serve & then I came home. I was in the service at this time three months & an half.

In the month of July 1776 the American army was retreating out of Canada & there came to Northfield a requisition for men. We did not like to join an army which was retreating & which we also heard had the small pox, but some bounty was offered & at length the required number agreed to go.

I was one of the volunteers. Samuel Merriman was our Capt Goodell our first & Power, (who died during the campaign) our second Lieut. We left home towards the last of July & rode to Charleston N. H. where we found an officer named Brown, who ordered us to march to Ticonderoga. We crossed over into Vermont marched by what was then called the old Crown Point road, to Rutland, thence for some distance down the Creek & thence across to the lake opposite to Ticonderoga.

We halted a few days on the shore of the lake, there being no boats ready to receive us, & when boats came we were conveyed to Mount Independence & stationed there, for the reason that there were no tents for us, & at Mt. Independence we could easily obtain wood to construct huts. When tents came, we were moved over to Ticonderoga. Gen. Gates commanded the post. Briquet (so we called him, I do not know how his name was spelled) was Brig General. Woodbridge was the Col. of my regiment & Leonard the Major. I think there was no Lieut Col. with the regiment. Gen. Arnold was at the fort. There was much sickness in the army. Our object was to stop Burgoyne from coming out of Canada & we were occupied in building breastworks & mounting canon.

It was proposed to build a fleet powerful enough to render us masters of the Lake. We did build one & a battle was fought on the water, but I was not on board of the fleet, though some of the men from my company were after the battle only two of our ships returned to the fort, the rest, being as I heard, run ashore & burned by Arnold who commanded the fleet.

Immediately after the battle the militia were sent for & came in, in great numbers. Soon after the battle on the Lake, the British [British] Fleet, with the army on board came in sight & a spy boat came on in advance of the fleet. We saw them sounding & knew that they belonged to the enemy, so a gun was brought to bear upon the boat & one ball passing across it killed three men.

After Burgoyne's army was captured, I saw a young British soldier, then a prisoner of war, who told me he was in that boat & that a general officer named Phillips was on board for the purpose of reconnoitering our position. This spy boat went back to the fleet which soon after sailed away for St. Johns, as we supposed & we saw no more of them. The army was then marched away under the command of gen. Gates, my company was dismissed & I came home. I had no written discharge. I was in the service of the United States at this time four months.

In the year 1780 news came to Northfield, that Royalton Vermont had been burned by the enemy. I turned out with a company from Northfield, under the command of Capt Elisha Hunt & marched in the supposed direction of the enemy, as far as Oxford N.H. learning that the enemy had retired we returned home. I can not tell exactly how long I was absent, but I think about three weeks.

At each of these periods of service I was a volunteer. I never was in a battle. I have never had any documentary evidence of having served. My brother Simeon Alexander knows of my having been out & I can procure his testimony as to this fact.

I hereby relinquish every claim to a pension or annuity, except the present & declare that my name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state. (Signed) Elisha Alexander

Signed & sworn to the day & year aforesaid. Rich's Newcomb, Judge of Probate.