

Pension Application for William Brookins

R.1242

Declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.
Pennsylvania, County of Cumberland SS.

On this 4th day of Dec'r A.D. 1832 personally appeared in open court before the Judges of the Court of Cumberland County State of Pennsylvania now sitting William Brookins a resident of the Borough of Shippensburg County & State aforesaid aged sixty six years, who being first affirmed according to law; doth on his solemn affirmation make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th, 1832.

That he entered the service of the U. States as a Volunteer in the company of Capt. Hecock or Hitchcock I don't recollect which whoes [whose] residence was at that time in the Town of Sheffield Burkseshire County and State of Massachusetts our Lieutenants was David Tracy of the same town of my residence who did the duty of Ajetant [Adjutant] in our Regiment and Noble of Sheffield to the best of my recollection David Tracy was an adjoining neighbor [sic] and was frequently in the serves [service] in my Father's Company—

We mustered our company in the town of Great Barrington at that time the seal of Justice for Barkshire [Berkshire] County and was Inspected by General John Ashley who resided in Sheffield B. County and very shortly after we marched to Albany in the State of New York from thence to Saratoga and joined our regiment commanded by Seers of the State of Massachusetts. I continued at Saratoga as our station for three months or more.

The time of entering the service & our discharge I have not any document to rectify the failour [failure] of my memory except the year I well remember was seventeen hundred & eighty one in the heat of the summer & we had snow and freesing [sic] cold weather before we were discharged, our whole regiment was discharged together, therefore we had no individual discharges our commander in chief at Saratoga was General John Stark the hero of Bennington Battle that was fought the summer Burgoin was captured.

I remember very well the rejoicing we had on the arrival of the information of the captor [capture] of CornWallace & his army I then was in camp but very frequently absent on scouting parties or detachments in order to contend with our enemy, sometimes traveling the whole night without ten minutes rest, other times incamping [encamping] in the woods cold freesing [freezing] weather with out fire when our party was small for fear of our enemys discovering we was not ordinary regular Battle during the time of service but frequently placed wherever attact was expected every four & sometimes every moment, frequent night alarms one out of many I recollect for a distinct manner our company was ordered to the redout where the enemy was expected to make an attact [attack] & a Colonel McKinster took the command & requested two or three men to go and reconnoiter the woods, that was near the redout & offered my servis with two more of my comrades we went to the edge of the woods where we could hear the enemy very distinctly walking among the leaves & sticks cracking under their feet we hailed but receiv'd no answer, one of my companions fired & the next one fire the first one loaded and fired again I very coolly reserved my fire expecting our enemys would come out where they might be distinguished in some degree, I expected a shot every moment at length I thought they was very near I fierd [fired] leaving me alone I thought protect to return also, on entering the redout [redoubt] I reported my opinion to the Colonel & we waited some time for them & I in the mean time climbed onto the top of the redout & hollored for them to come on for we was waiting for them, there being a fire in the redout that shone upon me, the Colonel advised me to come down as I was a good a mark for them. I mention this circumstance with a view to bring forward Colonel McKinster expecting he might be know[n] by some of the war Department.

An other time I was with a Lieutenant's command ordered on a privet [private] expedition started about the setting of sun or little later crossed the North River hovering a pilot we took a

circuitous rout[e] through fields woods & swamps till about midnight or after, then halted in suitable place and kept our knapsacks & [?] for battle decreed out little band one part to advance a few rods a head to attack a house & barn the same instant we made the attack very successfully one captured two Canadian Officers, as spies [spies] & two Tories [Tories] in the barn we found them armed & after securing them safely, the commanding officer requested four men to volunteer to go about one mile farther, up the river & take whoever we found there I was one of the four that undertook the business & we succeeded in taking two at that place on our return we had to pass the place where we captured the first prisoners & our main body had started hearing one of our guns fired & expecting a risk every moment [moment] however we escaped & returned to Saratoga safe with all our prisoners next morning after sun rise tho exceedingly fatigued &c.

I was ordered on another expedition commanded by a Colonel Reid if my memory is correct respecting [respecting] the commander's name we marched a good part of the way in the night time crossed a very dangerous creek on smooth logs very [?] some tumbled in & got out as they could went & told being near the front we marched far enough for the detachment to form again & waited along line suffering with the cold in silence as we were not allowed to speak accotably? For we expected the enemy to attack us every minute [minute] we formed again & marched to a rising ground [sic] Edward. There we found a detachment of our army that had been sent out before us we there encamped without tents or huts as well as we—cold [could] next day we had a snowfall [snowfall] upon us & steared off very cold however we had to suffer out several days waiting for the enemy to attack us but they kept their distance till we was all but starved [starved] to death having only a small piece of bread about as big as a man's fist without meat [meat] or any thing but river water for a number of days how long I cannot remember.

But this is a picture of some part of our suffering during our campaign. It may be possible [possible] some may be yet living who may recollect the greater alarm we had that fall; an alarm was fired with; cannon & [?] sent down the state of New York & into Massachusetts the militia arrived from Massachusetts nearly one hundred miles & other parts flocked in to assist us, we had all the plan of the attack & our officers appointed their stations &c read at the head of our Regiment that evening [evening] we expected the enemy would arrive [arrive], I was on the outward picket that night but & suppose [suppose] the enemy had found we were ready for them & they kept their distance from us, our mode of attack was to allow the enemy to advance very near make one regular fire & then charge with bayonet this was our orders I well recollect, a fresh supply of ammunition was issued that evening flints &c. I have been [been] absent forty four years from that part or section of the country where I was then known to have performed & passed through those [?] above mentioned that I don't now know of one living in this world that could testify to my services in the army during the important struggle for our Independence.

Interrogations put by the court.

[1st] Where and in what year were you born. Answer: I was born in New Marlborough Berkshire [Berkshire] County & State of Massachusetts the sixteenth day of January one thousand seven hundred and sixty six 1766.

2nd Have you any record of your age. Ans. I have a record of my age in my Bible in my house taken from my father's family Bible.

3rd Where were you living when called into Service & where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live. Answer. When I was called or entered the service I was living in the same town, County & State where above mentioned where I was born and the spring of the year seventeen hundred & eighty two my Father moved with his family into the Township of Philipston Albany County & State of New York and I was enrolled in the company of Capt'n John Schonmarkons [Schoonmaker?] and there was a call for men that season I with some other young men volunteered our services for an unlimited time to go to the frontiers of our State determined to stay [stay] as long as we

were needed accordingly we aquiped [equipped] ourselves and marched a part of the way and our orders were countermanded and we returned home. This was the last call for men that he ahd during the war or struggle for our Independence. And in the year seventeen hundred and eighty eight moved into the State of Pennsylvania Cumberland County and Borough of Shippensburg which has bin [been] my place of residence ever since & is now my home and I further stated that I relinquish every other claim whatever to a pention [pension] or annuity except the present and that my name was never placed on any pention roll of the agency of any state. (Signed) Wm. Brookins

Affixed & subscribed in open court 4th Dec'r A.D. 1832 before Jno, Harper Clerk, Court of Common Pleas.