

Pension Application for David Brown

S.29021 [The writing was difficult to read, the transcription might not be correct.]

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In my declaration of my services in the Revolutionary War between Great Britain and America I was told that if I could ascertain that I was a listed soldier from enduring the war it was sufficient to obtain pension & I left many particular circumstances that in this declaration I will try to relate some very essential circumstances I was inlisted the war as I have testified in my other testimonys.

I was captivated on the 10th of October 1780 carried to Canada – as I have declared & suffered with hunger cold, wet til we arrived at Montreal come out of prison in March 1781 by petitioning several times Governor Holderman [Haldiman] at Quebec my intention as to make my escape when the spring opened & get home, I joined a party to cut cord wood at a low price and this was our daily exercise and at night put into a blockhouse strongly guarded and in the morning to turn out at bell ringing and go to the bush.

I began to feel by this time the uncertainty of my escape understanding that there was a block house about 40 miles S. East from St. Johns kept by the Tories which kept a continual ransacking the wood and spies that had an intercourse with other Tories at the Cohose Country now and then we that came out of person communicated our minds to each other and what plan to adopt to get away however the winter soon past and that came out of jail with me understood it Gipson, Amblers & Wood & got safe through – some of our prisoners attempted [attempted] and perished by the way—however summer come on I was more liberated and got in the business with one Whitney or Whitman to drive horses for 9 d per day to draw board & plank from a saw mill to the river to raft down to Chamblee—I premeditated every plan to make my escape but they all proved abortive—I call heaven to witness my anxiety to get to my native country—winter the close of 1781 I engaged to chop wood 4 or 5 miles below St. Johns on the East side of the river I was to have 9 d per cord French measure—when spring came I agreed with one Mr. Johns to go with a number of others to Cumberland Bay to get some pine at a fort this is the spring of 1782—now I thought I could certain get home from there for I was about 50 miles on my way but as we went to work on the west side of the lake it made it more difficult however one G. Cosner a prisoner taken at Fort Ann and me often contemplated on our plans to get away but providence obstructed—I was taken with a fever and lay very sick and was sent down to St. Johns to a hospital here I lay sick and weak through the summer 1782 when cold weather began to come on and my fever abated, I was seized with a white swelling on my right arm which lay me

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By almost through the winter commencing the year 1783 this autumn 1783 I experienced a shocking sight of barbarity some tories and Indians that made a secret incursion in the northern settlements and brought in some prisoners and scalps with the rest of the scalp of one Bennet a neighbor of mine—Could I be reconciled to stay voluntarily under a government that would sanction such barbarity—no—however in April ensuing news came to Canada that peace had taken place between Great Britain and the United States now supposing I should soon get home but alas it was worse than before for it was a common report that we Rebels that came in by the knapp of the neck as they termed it was to be sent to Germany to supply the places of the Hessians that was lost in Burguines [Bugoyne's] defeat and was believed by all and many took their lives in their hand and fled some I heard perished by the way.—I still hoped that there would be a free communication opened across Lake Champlain but there was not till October all their passing and repassing was with the flag of truce—A great number come from the states and when they came to St. Johns and was [?] they went where they pleased—I was yet watching some opportunity to get home in July I had an opportunity by permission of the commander at St. Johns to go aboard of a vessel called the Trumble but he had orders not to let me land at any port—what this masters business was I know not except to fetch and cary [carry] passengers and their utensils—I knew not that I was prohibited to go ashore till we lay by in a calm in Cumberland

Bay there was a government vessel that lay there and this Gipson that come out of jail with me and made his escape with Ambler & Wood to Cohose in the spring of 1781 this villain had turned against his country and he was a great woods man became a spy and had been under pay as such by the British government for about 18 months I had not seen him before since he made his escape from St. Johns—we conversed some together and he told me he was a going to shore to hunt some venison for his captain I said I wish I could go with you he said I will speak to your master and get liberty my master gave liberty in case he would vouch for me to be in again in season as my business was to wash the deck and pump as the vessel was quite leaky we landed on Vermont side and I told him I wanted to get home very much he seemed to pity me and said he would help me through to the inhabited country for 100 dollars I agreed to give it when ever he should call at my father's house—we went on that day till we come to one [Avicis?] that come on that spring after Peace and he dealt out spirits [???] being fond of spirits got a bit tipsy and threatened to take me back to my vessel I watched my opportunity and gave him the slip without the least sustenance only the clothes to my body and a heavy cold ran come on and I suffered with cold wet and hunger night and day till to got to Mount Independent here was one [ELQn?] Rowley had settled

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The spring before here I got some victuals here he gave me [?] game what course to steer back from the lake to some inhabitants about 15 miles I got through that day and took the state rode and went home on the 15th day of August 1783 the 4th day after I got home this traitor Gipson came to my my [sic] fathers & swore he would carry me back dead or alive for he had pledged a great sum to my master to see my safe return to the vessel but my father was captain of the militia he sent a file of men with him to take him [to] Albany jail this was the last I ever saw Gipson he broke away from the guard before they reached Albany and got back to Canada and I heard he lived and died at the Bay of Quinty—now I testify as a dieing [dying] man that I made every effort to get home before I should not come out of prison had I known the difficulty of getting away—there was an exchange of prisoners in the Fall of 1781 or 1782. I have forgot which but I never knew nothing of it til I saw the prisoners come from Quebec and embarked for their native country have I regretted my bad fortune I looked with a wishfully aching heart to go with them but could get no permission their number was established now I recognized the faces of my comrades & my officers that was taken prisoner with me—this brought to my memory afresh the cruelty and inhuman barbarity of the tories and savages of tomahawking 5 of our galliant officers and scalping 23 of our brave soldier besides what I saw in the year 1779 on the 14 mile island on Lake George where 2 boat loads of men women and children tomahawked and scalped—the savage shouts of the Indians over us prisoners when our arms was pinioned behind us when we marched 4 days round Lake George and suffered with weariness and hunger—while the savage brutes a holding their pow wows over the scalps of my officers and mess mates—could any rational man supposed could reconcile myself to say with such inhuman people any longer than there was a door opened for his escape. No. I appeal to heaven that I got back as soon as I probable could—

Now the reason why I come back to Canada I had not the least idea of ever sitting my foot on Canada ground again but in the year 1784 I married and my wife had a brother and uncle in upper Canada and they was often out – and told me the privileges of the Country that we could have land given us &c so in the year 1792 in September I moved to Canada & made application for land but was rejected by the leading men because I and my father house were all Rebels and I have never owned an acre of land since I have been in Canada—but here is my children, and my childrens' children, here I buried the wife of my youth and am now 72 years old & very infirm and do humbly pray that the good people of my native country would consider me as worthy of a pension by the act of the House of Congress. (Signed) David Brown

Written by my own hand sworn before me the 14th August 1833?. A. C Brown J.P.

State of New York
County of St. Lawrence SS

On this twentieth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty four personally appeared in open court before the Honorable the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of the County aforesaid David Brown a resident of the Town of Augusta in the Province of Upper Canada aged seventy years and ten months who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Provision of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832 entitled an Act supplementary to the act for the relief of certain officers and soldiers of the Revolution.

That in the year 1779 this declarant enlisted as a private in Captain John Chipman's Company in Colonel Seth Warner's Regiment in the month of October or November of that year for and during the war at Fort George and served in that capacity at the post aforesaid until the tenth day of October in the year 1780 when Fort George was captured by the enemy under Major Carlton and carried to St. John in Lower Canada and confined two or three months on board a guard ship called the Washington which had been captured from the Americans from them was removed to Chambly in the Province aforesaid and there confined two or three weeks and thence removed to the City of Montreal where this declarant with others of his regiment also taken at Fort George were [?] in close confinement until the month of March 1781 when this declarant with some other petitioned the Governor of Lower Canada and were released from close confinement on condition of joined a wood party at St. Johns where this declarant with six others of his regiment were engaged by the enemy in cutting wood for which they were paid three pence for every three fourths of a cord cut in a day being kept while at work under a guard and at night confined in a Block House at St. Johns—

That the object of this declarant and his companions in entering into this service was to avoid close confinement choosing rather to labor in the open air and also if possible to make their escape— that three of this part did make their escape through the wilderness to Upper [Coo?] in Vermont and this declarant heard of their safe arrival there but that this declarant was deterred from making a like attempt by the great toil and risk necessarily attendant upon a long journey through the wilderness without roads, guides or supplies.

That this declarant was confined at St. Johns as last aforesaid until the month of August 1783 after this declarant was there informed that Peace was proclaimed.

That then this declarant was not liberated by the enemy but made his escape alone the other prisoners being detained by the enemy for what what [sic] purpose this declarant does not know and followed the shores of the lake to Mount Independence through the wilderness during which journey this declarant was compelled to swim across the rivers and creeks along the shore and suffered dreadfully from hunger and exhaustion.

That on the 15th of August of the year last aforesaid this declarant arrived at the house of his father in Cambridge in Albany County in the State of Ne York.

That soon after declarant arrived he applied to Talman whose Christian name this declarant does not recollect at Arlington Vermont who was PayMaster to Colonel Warners Regiment for his back pay and received from the said Talman one hundred and thirty two cents in final settlement.

Notes that at the time Fort George was captured the said Talman was absent to Boston for supplies and was not taken prisoner with the regiment. That during the time this declarant served at Fort George aforesaid Colonel Sofford or Stafford was Lieutenant Colonel under Colonel Warner, Major Bronson was a prisoner at the time this declarant entered the corps and Captain Chipman under whom this declarant enlisted acted as Major, Lieutenant Paine was attached to Captain Chipman's Company while declarant belong[ed] to it before Fort George was taken and ensign Lighthall belonged to the same company. That after this declarant returned to Albany County he remained in Cambridge until 1797 when declarant removed to Springfield in (then) Montgomery County in the state aforesaid where he

remained until 1792 when he removed to Augusta in the Province of Upper Canada and has since resided there.

That declarant was born at what was called the [Oblag?] or Quaker Hill in Dutchess County in the State of New York in the year 1763 and removed with his family to Cambridge aforesaid in the year 1774. That he has a record of his age transcribed by declarant from his father's Bible in the year 1785 as near as declarant can recollect which is now at his house in Augusta aforesaid and the only record within the knowledge of this declarant.

That he never received any written discharge from service and that Thomas Fraser Esquire and Timothy Hodges are persons residing in his neighbourhood to whom this declarant was personally known during the Revolutionary War and since and who have testified to Declarant's veracity and their knowledge and belief of his services.

And he hereby relinquishes every claim to a pension or annuity except the present and he declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any agency in any state. (Signed) David Brown.

Sworn & subscribed the day & year aforesaid. A. C. Low, Clk

Town of Oswagatchie
County of St. Lawrence
State of New York SS.

Thomas Fraser Esquire a Justice of the Peace of the Town of Edwardsburgh in the County of [?] in the Province of Upper Canada being duly sworn according to law deposeth and saith that the family of this deponent in the Revolutionary Contest were attached to the Royalist party. That they ad previously resided at Ballston in the State of New York and in the March of 1780 this deponent (being then about thirteen and now sixty seven years of age) with his mother and several other female members of his family left Ballston and proceeded to Fort George with the view of going to Canada under the protection of a Flag of Truce which they understood was proceeding to Canada with the wife of the British Colonel Butler & several Royalist women.

That deponent and his family arrived at Fort George about three days after the said flag had left –for Canada in consequence where of deponent & family were detained and did not proceed to Canada until October following. That the first three months of their detention was [?] in the barracks at Fort George & the remainder of the time they were sent to a place called Queensborough where they remained until they were sent on.

That Fort George during the time deponent was detained there was occupied by a part of Colonel Seth Warner's Regiment under the command of Captain Chipman. That deponent then knew David Brown whose declaration to obtain a pension is hereunto attached. That the said Brown was then and there a private soldier. That deponent does not recollect seeing the said Brown again after deponent left Fort George until some time after Warner's regiment was taken prisoners and that deponent saw him a prisoner at St. Johns.

That since the year 1792 the said Brown has resided in Augusta in Upper Canada the town adjoining this deponent and deponent has been acquainted with said Brown during that time the said Brown has maintained a good character for truth and veracity. And that it is generally reputed and believed in the neighbourhood where he resides that the said Brown was a soldier in the American Army of the Revolution and deponent has always recollected having seen this there at Fort George as aforesaid. (Signed) Thos Fraser

I certify that the said Thomas Fraser has been proved to me to be a credible witness and that the above affidavit was duly subscribed & sworn before me this 17th day of May 1834. John Fine, First Judge of [?]

State of New York

St. Lawrence County SS.

William Brown of Walford in the County of Grenville in the Province of Upper Canada, being duly sworn, deposeth & saith that he is a Justice of the Peace for said County and duly commissioned.

That during the war of the Revolution between the United States & Great Britain deponent's father resided with his family called Little White Creek in the then County of Albany & State of New York. His father's name was William Brown. Deponent says his brother David Brown in the year 1779 or 1780 engaged in the American service as a soldier to help guard the frontier posts & at first deponent believes he was only a militia man for a certain number of months & deponent recollects that on one of these occasions, his brother David, went out with his father as a waiter, which was previous to the time said David went to Fort George.

Deponent further says that on one of the times that his brother was off duty as a militiaman man he exchanged places with one Mark or Marks a Continental soldier or at least it was understood by all the family at home that he had done so, that in the course of the season the post, which according to the best of deponents recollection was Fort George or Fort Edward was taken by a party of British troops from Canada & the American Troops were killed or taken prisoners & carried to Canada.

Deponent well recollects the consternation & alarm that followed. Deponent's father was at that time a militia Captain & had been called out with his company on the occasion of the approach of the British. On his return the family were all anxious when from him whether deponent's brother, David Brown, was among the slain, or had been taken prisoner. Deponent recollects, that he told the family on his return that he & his company with the other forces sent up on the occasion, arrived on the battle ground on the after part of the day of the battle & that he carefully searched the bodies of all the Americans that were left on the field & that his son David was not among them—that he found one that he took for him until he examined one of his legs for a wound that he had given himself before that time with an axe, then he knew it was not his son.

He further stated, that inasmuch as he could not find him among the slain he believed he had been taken prisoner & carried into Canada, by the British, which deponent verily believes was the case.

For about the time or soon after the close of the war, the said David Brown made his escape & returned home & related that he after leaving home, engaged in the Continental service—that he had been taken prisoner at Fort George or Fort Edward & made his escape from Canada as deponent has above stated & this story of his was believed by the family & deponent now believes it. Deponent recollects that a short time after the said David arrived home said David was followed by a man of the name of Gipson a British soldier from whom it appeared the said David had fled & escaped. Said British soldier said he himself did not dare return to the British army in Canada without his taking the said David Brown back with him. He alleged that the said David had escaped from him while in his charge. Said David refused to return. Deponent's brother now resides in Augusta U.C. (Signed) William Brown.

Subscribed & sworn before me this 22d day of June 1835. A. C. Brown JP