

Pension Application for Stephen Gates

R.3946

State of New York

County of Schenectady SS.

On this seventeenth day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred & thirty two personally appeared in open court before the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas in and for said county now sitting Stephen Gates a resident of the City of Schenectady in said County and State aged nearly eighty two 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.

He was born on Long Island in the town of Huntington in the County of Suffolk in the State of New York on the 15th day of November 1750. He has no record of his age except that contained in his family Bible.

When he was called into the service of the United States in the army of the revolution he was living in the town of Saratoga in the County of Albany in said town, since the revolutionary war [sic] he has lived in Dutchess County & Albany County in said state & he now lives in Schenectady aforesaid.

He entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated.

In the fall of the year 1775, he was enrolled in Captain Woodworth's Company of Militia in the Regiment under command of Colonel Graham. His other company & field officers whom he recollects were Lieutenants Ballard & Philip Rogers & Lieutenant Colon Van Vechten—In the Brigade commanded by General Schuyler. In this company he served until the end of said war.

On the 4th day of August 1777, he was ordered off by the scouts of the American Army to the South, and directed to take his effects out of the reach of the enemy who were threatening to descend in that quarter. He accordingly removed his family, and a few articles which in the hurry of the occasion he could conveniently take with him to Dutchess County and immediately returned as a volunteer to Stillwater with Lieutenant Philip Rogers aforesaid and joined the American Army under General Gates as he was well acquainted with that district of country, he was chosen a guide to the scouting parties of the American army. The night before the general action; near Stillwater he came into the American camp, went into the field of action the next morning and saw the regular British troops & the Hessians fly before them, and never gave up the pursuit until they were driven to Burgoyne's headquarters near Bemis's Heights. He remained on duty until Burgoyne surrendered.

He was then ordered by Colonel VanVechten & his other superior officers to bring the cattle that had been left on the farms of the Tories who had gone over to the enemy, and also of the Whigs who had been obliged to abandon their habitations.

After performing this service he was discharged from duty for the time being; to wit on the first day of November 1777. His whole term of service under this expedition

was three months and four days. His family returned to their former residence about the 1st day of January 1778. They had left it full, but found it empty.

The years 1778, 1779, & 1780 were very troublesome on account of continual alarms. Such was the exposed state of the country, that the enemy threatened incursions in every quarter and every season of the year. It was necessary to send out scouts constantly to reconnoiter and watch the enemy, both night and day. Many of the Inhabitants living in the vicinity of said lake and Fish Creek were influenced by one Jones a noted tory to join the enemy. Said Jones raised a company of disaffected persons & made many murderous and predatory incursions on the frontiers where the claimant lived.

The claimant went out with a party and succeeded in breaking up said company, but said Jones himself eluded their vigilance & made his escape. He joined other parties of tories, which reinforced by Indians formed a numerous party and laid waste the frontiers in the vicinity aforesaid & along the Mohawk river. The claimant served in all these scouting parties but the precise number of days he served in each & how often he served, it is impossible for him to specify.

In the year 1779, Captain Tripp & the claimant were ordered to arrange the inhabitants of the frontier settlements where he lived into two divisions and they the said Captain Tripp & the claimant performed the duties of "patrols". They made secret marches that they might not expose themselves to the disaffected inhabitants. They engaged in this service about four weeks, and in that time the enemy withdrew for a short time to wit until October in the year last named. But on the twentieth day of that month, they made their appearance near fort Edward & Miller & burned the habitation of the Whigs & destroyed their cattle. They continued their depredations for twelve or 15 days when owing to the excursions of different scouting parties they were compelled to retire. The different occasions in which he served during the year 1779 in repelling the incursions of the tories & Indians he cannot specify nor yet the length of time he served in each.

In the spring of the year 1780 when the enemy under Sir John Johnson returned from their incursion on the Mohawk settlements, the claimant served with a detachment that was sent to cut off the enemy's retreat on their way to Canada, but in this the Americans failed, as the enemy had gained the march of them. In this is expedition he was out twelve days. On his return home and after retuning there about three hours he was ordered out again on an alarm & marched to Fort Edward. He there received orders to go home & collect a scouting party which he did, & with which he served fifteen days.

These are all the tours he can distinctly remember. Alarms were so frequent & he was consequently called out so often that it is impossible for the claimant to make a complete & perfect statement of them. But he can conscientiously testify that the period he was out in actual service exceeds greatly nine months, he thinks he can say more than one year.

The following are the names of some of the regular officers whom he knew, or who were with the troops where he served, and such continental and militia regiment or companies with which he served, or as he can recollect, viz: Those before named.

In addition to the above twelve months service he served for more than three months under Captain & Lieutenant Armstrong at Salem east of Saratoga during the years 1778 & 1779.

He never received any written discharge from the service.

He has no documentary evidence and knows of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to his service. ; He has not seen any of his fellow soldiers for more than thirty years past & believes they have all departed this life.

The following are the names of person to whom he is known in his present neighborhood, and who can testify as to his character for veracity and their belief of his services as a soldier of the revolution to wit. Rev. Salmon Stabbins, James Walker, Derick C. Groot Esqr &c.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present, and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state. (Signed) Stephen Gates

Subscribed and sworn to the day and year first aforesaid. John S. Vrooman
Clerk