

Pension Application for Stephen McGown

R.6723 (Widow: Margaret) Married August 1791. Stephen died October 10, 1842.
State of New York
Otsego County SS.

On this ninth day of July 1833 personally appeared before me James O. Morse First Judge of the County of Otsego Stephen McGown a resident of Cherry Valley in the County of Otsego N.Y. who I certify from age and bodily infirmity cannot attend court, aged seventy one years, who being fist duly sworn, according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress, passed June 7, 1832.

That he was on the tenth day of June 1778 (his being then sixteen years of age) called into actual service in a company of militia at Cherry Valley aforesaid where of Thomas Whitaker (1) was captain.

That during that summer Col. Alden (2) arrived at Cherry Valley with his regiment to guard the fort there, that this deponent was ordered with others to do duty in Col. Alden's Regiment which he did.

That the service the deponent did was mounting guard at the fort and assisting as a soldier in guarding and defending it.

That in the month of November 1778 Cherry Valley was invaded by a force commanded by the Indian Chief Joseph Brant (3) & the refugee Col. Butler. (4) That on the eleventh day of November 1778 this deponent was taken prisoner at Cherry Valley aforesaid by the said force, that he was taken on the same spot & at the same time that Lieutenant Holden (5) a subaltern of said Regiment was taken.

That about two minutes before he was taken he this deponent was severely wounded in his wrist by a musket ball fired at him by an Indians. That Lieutenant Holden commanded the party that was with this deponent & that they were about half a mile from the Fort when this deponent was taken—

This deponent further says that after he was taken he was marched to the places & continued a prisoner for the time stated in his first declaration or affidavit hereto annexed to which he asks for leave to refer.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever 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 or territory—and this deponent further says, that the only force he ever served with was the Regiment of Col. Aldens (6) that after he was transferred from Capt Whitaker's Company to Aldens Regt he was in a company or rather a detached party commanded by said Lieutenant Holden.

That the reason of his deponent's being required to do duty was that there was a scarcity of men & everyone who was sixteen years (7) of age was compelled to do duty—

That he this deponent while in service & also while in prison was not engaged in any civil employment. (Signed with his mark) Stephen McGown

Subscribed & sworn to the day and year above written before me. James O. Morse First Judge of Otsego County.

Letter in folder dated March 12, 1931, written in response to an inquiry.

You are advised that it appears from the papers in the Revolutionary War pension claim R.6723, that Stephen McGown was born December 10, 1762, in New Castle County, Delaware.

When about four years of age he moved to New York State, and while living in Cherry Valley, New York, enlisted June 10, 1778, served as guard at the fort at Cherry Valley, and was in Captain Thomas Whitaker's company, Colonel Alden's New York regiment. At the battle of Cherry Valley he received a musket ball wound in the wrist and was taken prisoner. He was held prisoner until 1779 when he was carried to Fort Niagara, where he was taken sick and confined to the hospital. While in the hospital he was purchased by Captain Powell of the British Army and taken to Catlin (?) Island; from there to Oswego, and from there to Kingston, Canada. When peace was made in 1783 he was permitted to return home.

He was allowed pension on his application executed November 10, 1832, at which time he was living in Otsego County, New York.

He died October 10, 1842.

The soldier married August 10, 1791 at Cherry valley, Otsego County, New York, Margrett or Margaret Willson.

In 1843 she was living in Cherry Valley, New York, and was seventy-three years of age.

She died May 3, 1844, and was survived by the following children:

Janette McGown, a resident of Cherry Valley, New York.

Catharine, wife of Robert W. Foster, a resident of Lehman, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

Eleanor, wife of George Wilson, a resident of Cherry Valley, New York.

Stephen McGown, a resident of Alligator, Columbia County, Florida.

William McGown, a resident of Lyons, Wayne County, New York Post Office. Alloway.

John McGown, a resident of Burton, Berrien County, Michigan.

Elisha McGown, a resident of Lyons, Wayne County, New York, Post Office, Alloway.

Phebe McGown, a resident of Cherry Valley, New York.

James McGown, a resident of Cooperstown, New York.

End Notes—R.6723—Stephen McGown

1. Thomas Whitaker was appointed captain on October 17, 1776 in Colonel Samuel Campbell's First Regiment of Tryon County Militia.
2. Ichabod Alden was the Colonel of the Sixth Massachusetts Continental Regiment. Alden's Regiment was sent to reinforce the militia t Cherry Valley.
3. Captain Joseph Brant was the second in command.
4. It was his son Captain Walter Butler who commanded the attacking forces. Major John Butler is often confused with Walter especially 50 to 60 years after the fact.

5. Aaron Holden was a first lieutenant in Alden's Regiment.
6. McGown was not part of Alden's Regiment but under Alden's command as he was the overall commander of the garrison at Fort Alden in Cherry Valley.
7. The militia law for New York was everyone who was sixteen to fifty who was able bodied was to enroll in the militia company's district in which they resided. Stephen wasn't 16 until December 10th may not have been actually enrolled in Captain Whitaker's Company. But if a parent consented to the enlistment he could serve or if he served as a substitute for his father. Unfortunately there appears to be no muster rolls in existence for Whitaker's Company. It is possible that they were destroyed at Cherry Valley on November 11, 1778.