

Pension Application for James Serrine

R.17742

Declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress of the 7th of June 1832.
State of Pennsylvania
County of Wayne SS.

On this third day of December A.D. 1860 personally appeared in open court before the Court of Common Pleas of said County of Wayne James Serrine a resident of Texas Township in said county of Wayne James Serrine a resident of Texas township in said County of Wayne and State of Pennsylvania aged on the 15th day of May last one hundred and 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 provisions made by the act of Congress passed June 7, 1832.

That I the said James Serrine enlisted or volunteered without an enlistment (I do not recollect which) in the army of the United States in one of the two years 1777 or 1778, I cannot confidently[ly say] which—I do not recollect in what Regiment, but think it was in the Continental Line from the fact that I remained so long in service—It might have been in the militia—I am not confident which, but I served under Colonel Hyatt and Captain George Lane—I do not recollect the names of the field officers, but I do remember the names of James Convert, David Reed, and William Christian as persons who served with me and were in the same tent.

And I recollect seeing Col. Drake and Major Drake his son passing through our camp occasionally.

I am confident that no witness survives who knew anything of my services in the army.

I was born in Philipstown then Dutchess now Putnam County, New York State about seven miles south easterly of West Point. And with the exception of the time I was in the service I continued to reside in the same house until it was burned sometime after the Revolutionary War—A portion of the United States Army or of the militia were encamped in the place called "Canossus Hollow" which was perhaps a mile distant possibly a little more or less from the place where I was born and where I then resided. Captain George Lune then in Command at Canossus Hollow requested me to enlist or volunteer my services, and it was in compliance with said request that I served—I do not remember in what particular month I entered the service but think it was in one of the years aforesaid—I remained in the service and subsisted in the camp aforesaid from the time I first entered the service as aforesaid, a term of three or four years—I and others with me in the camp exercised as soldiers two or three hours each day—Almost every day squads of a dozen or more as scouting parties would go out in different directions, often to the Hudson river—sometimes Capt. Lane would go out with a larger body of men to reconnoiter—We surmised that one of our main duties was to guard the chain that was stretched over the Hudson river near West Point.—At two different times it was rumoured in camp that the British were crossing the lines, that is the lines of demarcation between the British and American armies—At each of those times a large part if not the whole of our troops were called upon to go to White Plains—At one time we reached White Plains; at another time we stopped a little short [of the] British, it was said, having retreated. We returned to the camp we had left—We occasionally met Scouting parties of the British and fired a few rounds—One time we met a Scouting party of British of about equal numbers with us, and there were many rounds fired on both sides—Numbers were wounded—none killed—The British surrendered as prisoners and were put in the Provost which was a kind of Log Prison, built to keep prisoners in, on the line between Dutchess and West Chester—They were kept until they were exchanged—I was not engaged in any other battles during my service.

I was out on a Scouting party at the time Major Andre' was taken by John Paulding and others—said Paulding afterwards resided within a few rods of me when I resided at Serub Oak Plains—I was familiarly acquainted with him, and we often drank a mug of cider together.—We were as I should judge within four or five miles of Andre' when he was captured not far from the lines between the two armies. We did not return from this scout until Major Andre' was hung—I was present and saw him executed.—We then returned to Camp—I remained there in the performance of my duties, and there was little diversity in said duties, until it was rumoured that we were to go to New York—Our force all kept and proceeded together down on the east side of the river, occupying about two days in the march, until we reached New York Island, where we then and soon after met other troops, -- We dug entrenchments, built forts and apparently were preparing for battle—We were thus engaged from six to ten days perhaps, and were then ordered to build our fires and make them as brisk as possible, and then prepare to move, to stant [stand] as still as possible and proceed to the river—we did so and found the barges all ready for our embarkation. We went on board the barges and the troops I was with landed in New Jersey on the opposite side of the Hudson River—As we were about to land I put out my foot to ward off another barge and slipped so that my foot and thigh came down between two barges and they jumbled my thigh so bad that the Doctor pronounced me unable to proceed any further, and I received a check allowing me to go home—I do not know what officer signed the check, and it has long since been lost and gone—I performed no further service during the war.

I was disabled by reason of said injury from doing any labor for near four years and the effects of said injury are still plainly visible upon my thigh—The next of our force, proceeded, as I have been informed and believe, to Yorktown where the siege and surrender of the British under Cornwallis afterwards took place.

While on New York Island I frequently saw Gen. Washington—

After the war, my father being dead, I continued to reside with mother at Philipstown until said house was burned—She then hired another house not far distant—We remained at or near Philipstown after the war for several years—How many I can only conjecture from other facts better remembered; should thus judge it about five or six years—Then my mother and self removed to Serub Oak Plains, Westchester County—I remained there for five or six years and at the end of that time when about thirty years of age I married a wife residing in Sleepy Hollow—I removed to New York and there followed the drey mans business for about four years—I then returned to Somerstown now Westchester County not far from the line and drove the saw mill of one Solomon Fowler upon

shares about five years. Having succeeded in raising money enough to buy a farm I bought one of Daniel Requa in the same town of Somerstown about a mile distant from said Saw mill. I lived on said farm about twenty two years—I had paid for it five pounds per acre and sold it for fifty dollars per acre to one Sylvanus Sillick whose father John Gould Sillick was a soldier of the revolution older than I was—I then removed to a place about two miles from Port Jervis on the route from Port Jervis towards Forestburg and bought about seven hundred acres of land of John Dickinson—I continued to reside on said land for about five years and giving bait per acre? Surrnas Bridges and thereby getting in debt. I was sold out by the sheriff—I then removed to Ten Mile River in Sullivan County and from thence drove Judge Wickham's saw mill for about two or three years—I then removed to Lackawanen township Pike County and drove Peter Killanis saw mill for about two years—I then moved to Vanauken Eddy in the same township, two miles below the narrows of the Lackawanen and bought a farm of Lewis S. Conyell through his agents, the Hon. Nathaniel B. Eldred, and the Hon. William H. Dimmick (the latter now a member of Congress) and remained there for some thirty years or more to the 26th October last when I came up to Texas township, Wayne County to reside with a Grand Daughter the wife of a Mr. John Hocker where I have continued to reside until the present time.

I borrowed some money of Benjamin Holbert to pay the balance of purchase money due for said land and permitted the deed to be made to him as security for said money. I afterwards repaid said money and received between six and seven thousand dollars my share of my mother's Estate borrowed of Holbert and received a deed from said Holbert of said land—I afterwards conveyed this land to my daughter and son in law, Lyman L. Law and Fanny M. Law his wife and their heirs on received a bond from them to support and clothe me during my life. They permitted the land to be sold for taxes to one James Watson which they ought to have paid and neglected in great measure to perform the conditions of their said bond.

This brief history of my life and my private affairs will afford both the reason why I have not hereunto applied for a pension and why I now at this late day make the application—I had served my country in my humble capacity and I knew long ago that I was entitled to a pension under the aforesaid act of Congress but I determined never to apply for it while I could support myself and family—Up to the time I parted with my last real estate I was able to procure a livelihood. By that act I parted with the power to help myself or control my destiny and am thus reduced to a state of want and dependence which leaved me no choice of alternatives.

The record of my age was entered in the family bible which was kept in the family of my mother till she died—I do not know what afterwards became of it—I think the entry in the bible as to my age read thus

"James SIRRINE born 15th May 1758"

My mother moved to New York before I was married and took up her resident in the city—I did not go there with her or live with her in the city—but after I was married I lived in the city at the same time she did but some distance from her—She left the city after I did and came back to a place called "Stoney Street" about a mile distant from where I had resided in Serub Oak Plains—She was distant six or seven miles from Peekskill Landing—She bought a farm of fifty acres then of Caleb Morgan a tory of the revolution—she transferred the farm by some sort of conveyance to my brother Elisha SIRRINE—My mother then bought of Sylvanus Sillick the place I sold to him in Somerstown and there resided until she died.

He herby 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) James SIRRINE

Sworn to and Subscribed before me in open court December 3d 1860. Jno. K. Jenkins Provst?

Letter dated April 12, 1937

Reference is made to your letter in which you request the Revolutionary War records of Isaac SIRRINE who served under Lieutenant Colonel Reuben Ferris and of James SIRRINE (surname variously spelled) who served under Colonel Morris Graham, both Isaac and James having served from Dutchess County, New York.

There is no claim for pension or bounty land on file based upon service in the Revolution of an Isaac SIRRINE, under any spelling of the surname. Such claims are the source of Revolutionary War data furnished by this office. The record has been found of only one James SIRRINE, which follows as found in the papers on file in claim for pension, R.17742, based upon his service in the Revolutionary War.

James SIRRINE was born May 15, 1758, in Philipstown about seven miles southeast of West Point in that part of Dutchess County which was later Putnam County, New York; the names of his parents are not shown.

James SIRRINE, while a resident of Texas Township in Wayne County, Pennsylvania, applied for pension December 3, 1860, and alleged that, while living in the place of his birth he volunteered in 1777 or 1778, served as private in captain George Lane's company, Colonel Hyatt's New York regiment, engaged on scouting parties during which he was in a severe conflict with the British who were taken prisoners, that he was present at the execution of Major Andre; that during his service he was injured in his foot and thigh by slipping between two barges in attempting to land; he alleged that a part of the time he served under Major Penier at Campous Hollow and that he remained in service three or four years.

His claim was not allowed as he failed to furnish proof of service in accordance with the requirements of the pension law.

After the Revolution, his father being dead, James SIRRINE continued to reside with his mother in Philipstown, New York, for five or six years, then moved with her to Serub Oak Plains, in Westchester County, New York, New York, where he lived five or six years. He then married ____Oakley, of Sleepy Hollow, sister of Jared Oakley who served in the Revolution with him. He next moved to New York City where he remained about four years, then to Somerstown in Westchester County, New York where he lived about twenty-two years, thence to a place about two miles from Port Jervis on the road to Forestburg, resided there about five years, thence to Ten Mile

River in Sullivan County, New York, for about two or three years; from there, to Lackawanan Township, Pike County, Pennsylvania, and lived at Vanauken Eddy in that township two miles below the Narrows of the Lackawanan for about thirty years or more, thence to Texas Township in Wayne County, Pennsylvania. The given name and other details regarding soldier's wife not stated.

Reference was made to eight children of the soldier, James Surrine, and his wife, but the only name given was that of a daughter, Fanny M. who at twenty-one years of age married one Henry D. Barnard who died about four years later by drowning. About five or six years after his death, his widow, Fanny M., married one Lyman L. Law, a teacher, in Pike County, Pennsylvania. In 1861, she was aged fifty years, a resident of Pike County, Pennsylvania, and stated that her father had lived with her and family for twenty-six years and until October, 1860, also, that her parents had four children older than she and three younger. October 26, 1860, the soldier, James Surrine, moved to Texas Township in Wayne County, Pennsylvania, to live with a granddaughter who was then the wife of one John Hocker; the name of his granddaughter and names of her parents not shown.

At the time James Surrine was residing in New York City, his mother, also, lived there but not with him. She moved from that place to one called "Stoney Street", about a mile from Serub Oak Plains and sic or seven miles from Peekskill Landing, and died prior to 1860 in Somerstown, New York.

Reference was made in the claim to James Surrine's brother Elisha Surrine, of "Stoney Street", also, to his mother's brother, Elisha Barton, a resident of Sing Sing.