

Pension Application for James Willse or Wilsey

W.6539 (Widow: Dorothy)

B.L.Wt.28623-160-55

State of New York

Jefferson County SS

In the Court of Common Pleas of Jefferson County of September term 1832.

On this sixth day of September 1832 personally appeared in open court before the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Jefferson County aforesaid, now sitting James Willse a resident of the Town of Brownville in the Court of Jefferson aforesaid aged 74 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.

I WAS BORN IN Dutchess County in the Town of Poughkeepsie in the year 1758 on the 18th September—I have a record of my age at home in my Bible—at the time I first entered the service as a Soldier, volunteer or militia man in the year 1775 as herein after stated I was living on what was then called “Saratoga Patent”, then in the County of Albany of the State of New York—now the Town of Easton & a part of the County of Washington—in said State—I continued to reside at that place which is now the Town of Easton aforesaid & a part of the County of Washington—in said State—I continued to reside at that place which is now the Town of Easton aforesaid during the whole of the Revolutionary War and until the year 1793 or 1794—when I removed to the Town now called Stark in the county of Herkimer in said State of New York at which last place I continued to reside until about the year 1822 when I removed to the Towne of Alexandria in the county of Jefferson aforesaid, and I continued to reside in the said Town of Alexandria until about 3 years ago last My since which time I have resided in the Town of Pamela in said County of Jefferson until February last where I went to reside in & removed my family to the town of Brownville where I now live in a neighborhood which is about 17 or 18 miles from my former places of residence in said Towns of Alexandria & Parmelia.

I first served as a soldier in the Revolutionary War in the year 1775.

I volunteered in company with about 30 or 40 others living near we went to Crown Point. We were under the command of our Richard Garrison who was selected to command us by ourselves—This was before there was any organization of the army—the people turned out voluntarily—we first went to Ticonderoga--& when we got there we were ordered on to Crown Point to which place and immediately went as above stated—I think it was in May that we arrived at Ticonderoga—at all events it was just after that post had been given up to Arnold—I think Arnold was the person in command at Crown Point when we arrived there—but shortly after we went on with a detachment of nearly all the man that could be raised, towards St. Johns—I was left with a few others to keep possession of Crown Point—but who the commanding officer was I cannot recollect—our Captain Garrison went on with Arnold.—I remained at Crown Point as near as I can recollect about two months—I think that at this time I

was out from 2 to 3 months in the service as volunteer as aforesaid but I cannot recollect the precise time.

In the year 1776 I went out again as a volunteer militiaman and was attached to a scouting party under Col. Cornelius Van-Vechten, we marched from Fort Edward—at this time I was out and in the service about two months as near as I can recollect.

The next service which I performed was in the year 1777 in the Batteaux service—I enlisted sometime in February of that year under Cap John Verner or John Varney of Stillwater I was marched at first in the Company of Capt Vance to Saratoga—where we remained a few days and then we (myself & the rest of Capt Varner's Company) were sent to the west side of Saratoga Lake before the ice broke up to get out timber to construct the Chevauxdefrise [chevaux de frise] that was stretched across the Hudson at the Highlands and also for the use of Fort Montgomery.

On the opening of the river in the Spring of the said year 1777 we were put to the Batteaux service and I continued in that service on board Batteaux under the command of Capt Vaner until some time in the fall of that year—I think in October when I was taken sick with the whooping cough & went home. The Batteaux service which I spoke of above was transporting provisions ammunition and all warlike stores for the use of the American Army—we were exclusively engaged in this business and no other—the Batteaux's which we used were Government Batteaux and were as well as the men who navigated them under the Command of Government officers and we were in every respect in the Continental service.—I was so engaged in this Batteau service about seven months according to the best of my recollection.

During the years 1778 & 1779 I was frequently called upon to go upon scouting parties under militia officers and I was so engaged frequently during those two years and in the whole as much as on e third or one half of the time through the spring summer & fall seasons, & at one time in 1778 or '79 I recollect going out on a scouting party under the command of Lt McCloud or M'Clovers who was one of the officers of Col. Warners Regiment these lying at Fort George—and at various other times I went out on scouting parties under the command of Militia officers as above stated; these scouting parties generally lasted from one to two months.

In point of facts, I was a minute man during the whole of the two years last above mentioned and went as a ranger on scouting parties whenever & wherever my county needed my services—but the names of the officers under whom I served in this way or the precise number of times, or term of time which I served as a ranger, scouts or minute man as aforesaid I cannot state—except that I know that it was more than one third of the time during those two years and I think one half of the Campaigning seasons as above stated.

In the early part of that year 1780 a call was made upon each state by the continental Congress (as I understood) to furnish a certain quota of militia either by volunteer or by draft—and about the first of March 1780 I entered the service as one of the state troops of the State of New York under that requisition—I cannot now

recollect whether I was drafted or whether I entered the service as a volunteer but I am quite confident that I entered the service as a volunteer—

I was first mustered and enrolled in the Company of Capt Chipman (who had been an officer in Co. Warners Regiment) at Fort Edward about the first of March 1780—I remained at Fort Edward [until] about the first of March 1780. I remained at Fort Edward under the command of Capt Chipman until about the first of August, where our Capt. Drake took the command of the company which had previously been commanded by Capt Chipman and we were there marched with the rest of the Regiment to Fort Stanwix—the no. of the Regiment to which we were attached I do not recollect—but it was called Col. Harpers Regiment of Levies. I did not see Col. Harper however while I was attached to the Regiment, he was said to be sick—and the Regiment was under the immediate command of one Major Hughs during the whole time that I was attached to it.

We were marched to Fort Stanwix as above stated and relieved Col. Van Schaick's Regiment which had been previously stationed there.—I remained at Fort Stanwix attached to the same Company & Regiment above stated until the time was out for which I volunteered or was drafted which was nine months and which expired about the first of December 1780—I was there regularly discharged & went home—but whether or not I received a written discharge I cannot remember—but if I did receive a written discharge it is lost or destroyed.

Again in 1781 & 1782 I was frequently called out with other militia to repel the invasions of the enemy or to go on scouting parties—and I did frequently serve as a scout and otherwise under militia officers during those two years—and in all as much as five months during those two years—but I cannot now recollect the precise times—where I so served or how long at each time or under whose command except that I well remember being out two tours under Col. Peter Yates of Schaticoke. [Schaghticoke]

I further depose and say that I know of no person now living whose testimony I can procure, who can testify to the service above stated.

I presume there are old people now living in Washington County or elsewhere who could testify to some part of my service above stated but from my age and infirmity and poverty I am unable either to go thence or procure them to come to me so that I can get their testimony in my behalf—I do not know, however of any one of my comrades who served with me who are not living—

And I do hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and I declare that my name is not on any pension roll of the agency of any state. (Signed) James Wilse

Sworn & Subscribed in open Court September 6, 1832. P. Burchard Clerk

Letter in folder dated February 14, 1931, written in response to inquiry.

You are advised that it appears from the papers in the Revolutionary War pension claim, W.6539, that James Willse, or Wilsey, was born September 13, 1758 in Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County, New York.

While residing at "Saratoga Patent" in Albany County, which was later Easton, Washington County, New York, he enlisted and served as private in the New York troops as follows: in 1775, two or three months in Captain Richard Garrison's Company; in 1776, two months on scouting parties under Colonel Cornelius Van Vechten; to February, 1777, seven months in Captain John Waner's (or Warner's) Company in batteau service; during 1778 and 1779, was minute man and was often out on scouting parties; from March 1, 1780 nine months in Captains Chipman's and Drake's Company, colonel Warner's Regiment; during 1781 and 1782, five months on scouting parties two tours under Colonel Peter Yates.

After the Revolution, soldier lived in Easton, Washington County, New York, until 1793 or 1794, when he moved to Starks, Herkimer County, thence in 1822 to Alexandria, Jefferson County, New York, and in May 1829 to Pamela, in said Jefferson County.

He was allowed pension on his application executed September 6, 1832, while a resident of Brownville, Jefferson County, New York, having moved there in February of that year from Pamela, Jefferson County, New York.

He died December 11, 1844 in Milford, Oakland, County, Michigan, where he had moved in 1838.

James Willse married March 24, 1816 in Springfield, Otsego County New York, Dorothy Hutchinson.

His widow, Dorothy Wilsey was allowed pension on her application executed February 7, 1854, while a resident of Milford, Oakland County, Michigan, aged sixty-eight years.

Mareus B. Wilsey, oldest son of soldier and his wife, was a resident of Milford, Oakland County, Michigan, in 1855. His father stated that he went to Michigan to live with his children, names of any others are not shown.

The Revolutionary War records of this bureau fail to show a claim for pension on file on account of the services of John Garmo, all spellings of that surname searched.