

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Frederick Christman R1942
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

MD

Pennsylvania } SS.
Indiana County }

On this 22nd day of September 1843 personally appeared before me John Cunningham one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas in and for the said County Frederick Christman a resident of the township of Blacklick in the County of Indiana in the State of Pennsylvania aged Eighty Eight years who being by me 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 7 1832. That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated.

That he engaged in the service as a militiaman for the flying Camp under Capt. William Winchester and Lieut Dorsey of Frederick County in the State of Maryland. The Col. who commanded the soldiers of the flying Camp to which this applicant was [attached] Col [Josias Carvel] Hall and Major [John Eager] Howard. That he was marched from Westminster, in the State of Maryland under Capt Winchester to Philadelphia and from thence to Trenton and from Trenton to Brunswick in the State of New Jersey and was encamped there with other flying Camp militia and continentals under Generals [Hugh] Mercer and Reed. That during his continuance in the service of the United States as a flying Camp militia man in the Regiment commanded by Col. Hall and Major Howard of Maryland, he served at Brunswick, New Jersey and at Amboy and on the Hudson river near Fort Lee and in and about Bergen and other military posts in New Jersey and was marched to New York and joined the forces there under Col [William] Smallwood and other officers and continued in the service until the forepart of January, he believes the 4th of January 1777 comprising a period of five months and twenty two days because he remembers that he left home for Philadelphia on Wednesday July 13th 1776.

Again he entered the service of the United States in the Year 1777 in the month of January and served from the 20th of January to the 20th of February 1777 being a service of one month as a drafted militiaman of Frederick County Md. and served the said tour under Capt Graybill [possibly Graybell] and Lieut Evans, militia officers of Frederick County Md. Col. Stricker commanded the militia forces with which he served this tour. Major Veltnor also commanded as near as he can recollect This applicant was ordered to go with Corps of militiamen of Maryland to Philadelphia to assist the standing army That he served the said month at and about Philadelphia. General [Israel] Putnam Commanded principally the militia forces part of the time during this tour preparing for its defences.

And this applicant further says that he was again in the service under Capt [Thomas] Yates as a volunteer and served for one month as a guard over the British prisoners confined at Fredericktown fort Md. This month was served latter end of February and in March 1777. He forgets what time in March this said month expired.

And this applicant further says he served as a volunteer for one month with a detachment of Maryland militia on the western shore of Chesapeake Bay to watch and guard the British and Tories from seizing and taking off the flour and other provision vessels and prevent them from sailing away from the coast. He served this tour as a guard in the month of April 1777.

This applicant further says that he served for one month as a drafted militiaman of Frederick County militia Md. That he marched from near Westminster Maryland with a company of drafted militia of said County to Philadelphia under command of Capt Hanson of Col. Hall's Battalion and that he was marched up and stationed on the west side of the Delaware river with other militia forces. This tour was served in the month of May and June 1777.

This applicant further says that he served for two months as a substitute for one John McKinley and joined a militia company under his own Capt Winchester of Col Hall's Regiment of the Frederick County militia Md. and was marched to Harford Md. Remaining there a short time he was marched to the Head

of Delaware Bay and joined a body of militia forces under the command of Col [Mordecai] Gist and Col [William] Richardson. He was afterwards marched to the Brandywine river to oppose the enemy and contest the passage of said river. That the British Army advanced and compelled the American army to fall back and retreat [Battle of Brandywine, 11 Sep 1777]. This applicant continued with his Capt and Lieut Hansdale under Gen'l. Smallwood who fell in the rear of the British Army after this manoeuvre he marched and joined the main army under General Washington at a place called the Warwick furnace. In the forepart of October following this applicant was marched with his faithful Captain Winchester and the Maryland militia commanded by General Smallwood up on the York road towards Germantown in order as he found out afterwards to attack the British in and about Germantown [Battle of Germantown, 4 Oct 1777]. That this applicant fought in both battles above mentioned. In the Battle of Germantown his companions were all killed, except his capt. and five of his companions. That he & his Capt & five others of said Company only escaped. That after the Battle of Germantown the American Army retreated to the creek called Skippack. This applicant at the expiration of two months from the time he commenced the above last mentioned tour was discharged. That he commenced said tour the latter end of August 1777 and completed the same on the latter end of October 1777.

This applicant turned out again as a volunteer for two months as a guard with other embodied militia of the State of Maryland to prevent the escape of the British prisoners confined at Fredericktown Md. This service was rendered in March and April 1778 under Major Murdock officer of the guard. That he volunteered out of Capt Winchester's company aforesaid.

And this applicant further declares that he served as a private soldier in all the above enumerated periods of service. That he was out in other tours of duty during the Revolutionary War but cannot say at present at what periods he served them. That he was called out in the summer of 1778 with the embodied militia of Maryland for he thinks two months to fill up the ranks of the Continental battalions and to assist the standing army under Gen'l. Washington previous to the battle of Monmouth [28 Jun 1778] and he was out through Virginia towards South Carolina with a select corps of militia from Maryland but has forgotten how long he served. And that now owing to his great age and consequent loss of memory he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his service, but according to the best of his recollection he served not less than fourteen months and twenty two days as a private and for such service he claims a pension. And that during the time he was engaged in the service he did not attend to any civil employment, but was entirely devoted to the service of his Country.

Reasons for delaying to present his claims before. This applicant says that his reasons for not presenting his claims before for a pension are as follows.

That he ever had a dislike to be called a pensioner as long as he was in independent circumstances. That since he came to reside in Indiana County from Huntingdon County Pennsylvania he has sustained many heavy losses through the failure of his debtors. That owing to this fact and to his many losses since the derangement of the currency and the pressure of the times he has become reduced in his circumstances and wishes now to avail himself of the benefit of the law in his favor as one of the Revolutionary soldiers who fought for the liberties of these United States.

He could state many other reasons why he delayed to present his claims sooner but he trusts the above are sufficient and will be satisfactory to the War department.

Interrogatories.

1st Where and in what year were you born?

Ans. I was born in the County of Frederick in the State of Maryland in the year 1755.

2nd Have you any record of your age and if so where is it?

Ans. My age was entered in my father's Bible which I have often seen and in the year 1776 I was 21 years of age. From these facts I know my age to Eighty Eight.

3rd Where were you living when called into the service where have you lived since the Revolutionary War and where do you now live.

Ans. When called into the service I lived in Westminster in the County of Frederick in the State of Maryland. Since the Revolutionary War I have lived in the County of Cumberland and in the

County of Huntingdon Penn's. and in the County of Indiana in Penn'a where I at present live and have lived for the space of ten years past.

4th How were you called into the service were you drafted, did you volunteer or were you a substitute and if a substitute for whom.

Ans. I was drafted and I volunteered and served as a substitute for John McKinley as I have above stated for the periods above specified.

5th State the names of some of the Regular officers who were with the troops where you served such continental and militia Regiments as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service

Ans. Col. [Robert] Lawson, Col. Scott, Major Green, Col [John] Shee, Col [Henry] Haller, Major Chapman, Gen'l Putnam, Capt. Graybill, Col Gist, Col Smallwood, Gen'l. Hugh Mercer, Major Morris, General [David] Forman, [Thomas] Conway and Nash, the latter was killed near this applicant at Germantown Battle [Francis Nash, mortally wounded at Germantown]. Generals Smallwood and Gist or Col Smallwood's and Col. Gists' Regiments or Battalions, Lord Sterling's [sic: William Alexander, Lord Stirling] Battalion, Col Irvine's Battalion, Col Hill's militia Regiment, Col. Perry's militia Regiment; Dr. [William] Shippen was our Physician, Col Murdock's militia Battalion. I was called out of Capt Winchester's Company of militia of the County of Frederick, Md. and served with the flying Camp militia as I have stated. I was called a number of times of times for short tours to assist the Standing Army. I was one of the guard over the British Prisoners at Fredericktown fort. I was a guard on the Chesapeake Bay. I was engaged in the Battles of Brandywine and Germantown, and served as I have stated above. The militia of Maryland were constantly called upon throughout the war, some for longer and some for shorter periods of time.

6th Did you ever receive a discharge from the service and if so by whom was it given and what has become of it.

Ans. I never did receive a written discharge to my knowledge, but was verbally discharged at the expiration of each period of my services

7th State the names of persons to whom you are known in your present neighborhood and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief of your services as a soldier of the Revolution.

Ans. I will state Major Walter Bell, Gen'l Campbell, Dr. E. P. Emerson, Jas. Geer Esqr. Alanson Bills, James Donahay, Dr. Robert Hamill, William Smith, Jonathan Doty [pension application S5356], Baldwin Grant Esqr.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid. Frederick hisXmark Christman

I Frederick Christman the applicant for a pension do hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and I declare that my name is not on the pension roll of any agency in any state.

Sworn and subscribed the day and year aforesaid – Sept. 22 1843 Frederick hisXmark Christman

State of Pennsylvania } SS.

Indiana County } Personally appeared before me Robert Doty one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said County John Hartsock of Indiana County, Penn'a who being duly sworn according to law doth depose and say, that he is well acquainted with Frederick Christman, the above applicant for a pension who has sworn to and subscribed the above declaration. That he was well acquainted with him during the Revolutionary War. That this deponent well remembers that the said applicant was drafted out of Capt. William Winchester's Company of the Frederick County militia of the State of Maryland for a number of tours during the Revolutionary War. That he resided in the neighborhood of the said applicant during said War and had a personal knowledge of nearly all the services which the said applicant has stated in his above Declaration. That this deponent saw him Engaged in nearly all the tours specified by him as above. That he saw him engaged as a guard over the British Prisoners at the Fredericktown Fort. That there was a considerable gang of them generally confined there. That this deponent knows of his having served in the flying Camp in the first tour as stated by him in his declaration aforesaid. He saw

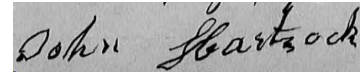
him also engaged in the following tours, viz, His tour under Capt Graybill at Philadelphia in 1777. also at Fredericktown fort in the Spring of 1777. On the Chesapeake during the same Spring and his tour on the Delaware River during the same Spring and following summer Again, his tour for one McKinley with Capt Winchester at the time he went to Brandywine River and was engaged in the Brandywine Battle and Germantown Battle in the summer and fall of the year 1777 and his tour with Capt or Col Murdock in the Spring of 1778 at Fredericktown Fort as above mentioned.

That he remembers although he was young at that time the following officers with whom said applicant served (viz) General Putnam, Capt Graybill, Col Gist, Col. Hall, Col. Smallwood, Major Howard, Col. Perry, and others. This deponent was not liable himself to military duty during the tours which the said applicant performed as above mentioned, but he went out with him and his other friends in many of their militia tours of his own accord and often against the express orders of his parents. That this deponent was about fourteen or fifteen years of age when the above applicant was first called out to serve in the militia service. That he is now in his eighty third year.

That the said Frederick Christman belonged to the embodied militia of Frederick County in Maryland and served as he has above stated, and that he is confident from his own personal knowledge of his services, that he served for a full period of thirteen months in all his enumerated periods of service during the war of the Revolution. And this deponent further says that the said applicant has often been advised to petition or apply for his pension but he always declined to do so on account of having the name of a pensioner whilst he was in affluent circumstances, but he has sustained very heavy pecuniaqry losses during what is called the "Hard Times" and it appears that he is now disposed and anxious to receive the benefit of the law passed for the surving soldiers of the Revolutionary War.

Sworn to and subscribed on this 23 day of September 1843 before me.

[signed] Robt Doty Justice of Peace

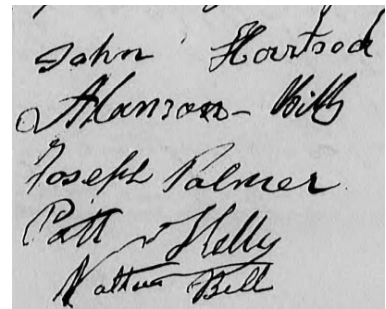


We the undersigned Citizens of the County of Indiana in the State of Pennsylvania Do hereby certify that we are well acquainted with Frederick Christman an aged and respectable inhabitant of said County, an applicant for a pension and who has sworn to and subscribed the above declaration that we believe him to be Eighty Eight years of age that he is reputed and believed in the neighborhood where he resides to have been a soldier of the Revolution and we do concur in that opinion. sworn and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

September 23rd 1843

[signed by John Hartsock, Alanson Bills, Joseph Palmer, Patt Kelly, and Nathan Bell]

[signed] Robt Doty J. Peace



Blairsville October 4th 1843

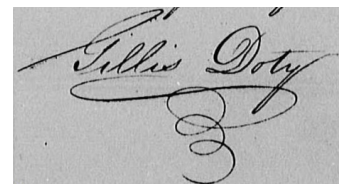
Mr. J. L. Edwards/ Comm'r. of Pensions,

Hon'd. Sir/ Herewith are the Pension Papers of one more old Revolutionary Soldier, Frederick Christman, whose claims for a Pension are based upon services rendered with the Maryland Militia.

The result of this case, please, address to me.

I am very truly, Yours

Gillis Doty



Indiana May 15th 1844

This is to certify that I have been acquainted with Frederick Christman of Indiana County Penn'a. for many years, and I believe he is a man of truth and veracity, and so far as I know has always sustained a good character, and from respectable representations respecting the Character of John Hartsock Sen'r and from what I know of him myself I wou[ld] say he is entitled to full credit. I also am acquainted with the Hon John Cunningham an associate Judge of our County and know him to be a gentleman of high standing and first rate character Given under my hand &c James M Stewart/ Indiana May 15 1844
Hon. Wm. Wilkins, Sec. of War

Blacklick Township Indiana County Penn'a. June 3^d 1844

To The Honourable William Wilkins/ Secretary of War

Dear Sir/ I am called upon to give you A certificate of the characters of Fredrick Christman and John Hartsock. They are both my near neighbors and with whom I have been acquainted for a number of years past. The former is a Revolutionary Soldier and is so reputed and believed in the neighborhood where he resides. The latter person John Hartsock I am told is the principal Witness in the application of Mr Christman for a pension. They are both men of irreproachable characters whose reputation for truth and veracity has never been called in question. Any declaration or testimony which they may have rendered in regard to the Revolutionary Services of Fredrick Christman may be relied upon as truth.

I am Dear Sir your obedient Servant/ Walter Bell

To the Honorable William Wilkins, Secretary of War.

D'r Sir/ We are well acquainted with Major Walter Bell, the above subscriber and know him to be an honest upright man, on whose representations the fullest confidence may be placed.

Very Respectfully Your Obt. Servts. S. McAnulty Edw P Emerson

I do hereby Certify that I have been acquainted with Frederick Cristman and John Hartsock Sen'r for between fifteen and twenty years past and that they are both men of respectability and veracity and that during the whole of said time their character has been without reproach and above suspicion

In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of June AD 1844.

Jas McKennan

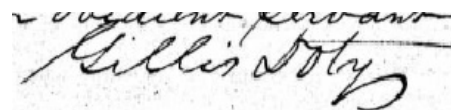
Blairsville June 12, 1844

To the Honorable William Wilkins,/ Secretary of War

Dear Sir,/ I herewith send you the testimonials of the Hon. James McKennan associate Judge of our County, Doct'r. James M. Stewart and Major Walter Bell of the same County in favor of Frederick Christman a Revolutionary Soldier and an applicant for a pension, and John Hartsock a witness for the applicant. James McKennan Esq, Doct'r. James M Stewart, Samuel McAnulty and Doct'r. Edward P. Emerson, are men of known respectability and high standing, and we presume they are all known to you as such. These testimonials in behalf of Messrs Christman and Hardsock are honorable indeed, and we presume will satisfy the Department that they are men of truth. The next question is how long is this applicant to remain unrequited for the perilous services which he rendered during the struggle for our Independence at Brunswick, Philadelphia, Fredericktown Fort, Chesapeake Bay, Delaware River, "Battle of Brandywine," and "Battle of Germantown," where his companions were all slain, excepting five. This aged soldier's application was transmitted to the War Department in September 1843. Since which time his claim has been buried in oblivion, for we have not been able during this long interval to obtain the least information from the Department respecting it. Nine months have elapsed since his papers were (we presume) filed in the Department and still this old defender of our Country remains in statu quo. We were informed that certain other applications, were not acted upon, because there were hard suspicions entertained that the draftsman did not act right. We can assure you that those suspicions were perfectly groundless. The papers were drawn according to the true intent and meaning of the applicant; and according to the exact Rules of the Department, substantiated by credible witnesses and duly

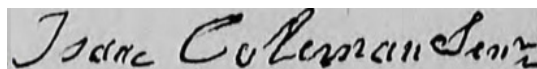
authenticated before the proper authorities. Those authorities who received the testimony and the persons who gave it, have been certified to the Department as men of high respectability and unquestionable veracity. The above is a brief statement of the applicant's case, which for apparent reasons is herewith transmitted. He and his friends are anxious to have the application attended to as soon as practicable, and if upon the testimony submitted, a pension could be granted, it will meet the approbation of all who are acquainted with his character and situation. With great respect I am/ Your obedient servant

Gillis Doty



State of Pennsylvania, Indiana County Ss: Before me the subscriber a Justice of the Peace in and for said County personally appeared Isaac Coleman Sr. of Westmoreland County, who being duly sworn according to law doth on his solemn oath depose and state that he is well acquainted with Frederick Christman the above applicant, and knew him well during the Revolutionary War. that this deponent resided near Westminster, Md. in the neighborhood of said Christman That this deponent and said Christman were out in the service of the United States together with the Frederick County militia for a number of tours in the years 1776 1777 and 1778. That one William Winchester was their militia Captain and he remembers Col Hall and Major Howard, also Lieutenant Evans, Gen'l. Putnam, Col. Gist, Col. Smallwood, and other officers had command of them at various intervals, at Philadelphia, New Brunswick, New York, Fort Frederick, Chesapeake Bay, Brandywine & other stations during said years. That they both belonged to the embodied militia of Maryland, and when first called out they left home about the middle of July 1776 and were gone in the service for rising five months with the flying Camp troops. And in the winter and spring of 1777 they were out for a number of months, for certainly four months altogether, and in the fall of 1778 they were out in the service of the United States at various places And this deponent cannot now say how long the said Christman did serve in all his tours, but according to the best of his Judgement And recollection he must have served for one year at least, and it is more than probable, he served much longer, but how much longer he cannot now depose. This deponent is now Eighty seven years of age and would have applied for his pension himself and has often been advised to do so, but thinks he can do without one for the present. Sworn and subscribed on this 17th day of June A.D. 1844 before me.

Robt Doty J.P.



House of Rep. 3^d Feb 1845

Sir [J L Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions]

Some time ago I left at your office some additional testimony in the case of the application of Frederick Christman for a pension I will obliged if you will examine his case and make him such allowance as may appear just with as litle delay as possible.

Respectfully Yours
H D Foster

Indiana, Penn'a. Feby 18 1845

Hon. J. L. Edwards, Esquire/ Commissioner of Pensions/ Washington, D.C.

Sir./ A communication from your department requesting me to cross examine Frederick Crissman, an applicant for a pension & John Hartzock, who testifies to the services of Crissman, together with the application &c, reached me last night.

Supposing the death of Crissman unknown at the department when your letter was written; and that the application, if persisted in, would necessarily undergo a change of form [see endnote]; the roads being in bad condition, and the streams high & unbridged on the direct route to Hartzocks, distant from this place twelve miles; I ventured to forbear his crossexamination for the present.

The last will &c of Frederick Crissman the applicant for a pension, is filed in the proper office here, bearing date the 3rd day of July last, probate whereof was made on the 17th of the same month; and

letters testamentary thereon granted to Jonathan Hartzock, his grandson, (son of John Hartzock the witness) and Thomas Campbell, Executors &c. This fixes Mr Crissmans death between those dates.

He bequeaths specific pecuniary legacies to each of his nine children or their issue; amounting in all to \$1002.00. An appraised Inventory filed in the same office exhibits assets to about the same amount. His daughter, Mrs Hartzock, is left the principal share, \$900. I believe all his children were settled in the world[?] years before his death. I knew him personally, thirty years ago, in Huntingdon County; and have occasionally seen him since his residence in this county, which I had not thought more than five or six years. He owned a small but valuable farm in Huntingdon Co. embracing the location of a lead mine & furnace, and what was the "Lead mine fort," in early times [now Fort Roberdeau near Altoona]. Pursuit of the mineral had been discontinued, however, before he became the owner. But the land was good. He sold this farm some years ago, and, it is my impression, divided the bulk of his fortune amongst his descendants. Altho' somewhat acquainted with his business, I have heard of no losses, nor have some of his neighbours whom I have seen here to day, heard of any losses sustained by him, of late, or at any time. Tho' the statement on that subject in his application may be true. His character for truth, fidelity, & integrity, was good. I could not suppose him capable of making a false claim.

After deviating thus far out of the cause suggested by your letter, may I be excused for offering a few remarks on the names & titles of persons referred to, in the answer Mr Crissman appears to give to the 7th interrogatory?

The military rank of Walter Bell, "Major," is new to us here. We never heard of it before. "Gen. Campbell," has been dead for fifteen years [see endnote]. He left issue, sons & daughters – but no "Generals." James Geer Esq'r, The title is new. Mr Geer keeps a village tavern, and is the son of Roger Geer, a pensioner [application S8552]; who, tho' his papers were prepared by the fictitious [see endnote] "Gillis Doty," is believed to have been a deserving man. James Donahey and Alanson Bills, are harmless persons, I believe, and stated related as father & son in law. I believe Donahey is the son of an old Soldier, long dead; and has been encouraged by a person in this county, with regard to a claim on the government, grounded on an alleged loss of land granted by Pennsylvania to the father, as a soldier of her line; which may or may not be well founded. We know of no "William Smith." There is a "William T. Smith," in Blairsville, a man of respectability. But he would not lift a letter addressed to "William Smith." It would be more likely to fall into the hands of the scrivener who prepared Mr Crissmans papers.

Jonathan Doty, is a superannuated man; father of Robert Doty, the Justice who certifies to Mr Harzocks character; and of the "true [undeciphered word]" or Gillis Doty, proper. The two Drs were veritable personages, Hammil is since dead, & Emerson is on his way to Europe. But, "Baldwin Grant, Esquire," is a pure creature of the imagination; a poetic fiction, to speak in the mildest conceivable terms. [see endnote] A son of Gen. Campbell who has lived probably fifty years within four miles of Mr Crissmans last residence, whom I saw to day, never heard of this Esquire before, – never hear of the name of Baldwin Grant. It is perhaps proper to say, in view of the above statements, that I have never heard aught in disparagement of the character of John Hartzock.

The observations made above, diverge, I am aware, from the course assigned for me; but the possibility as well as the necessity of the prescribed cross examination having been precluded by the death of Mr Crissman; it seemed not impertinent, or a departure from the object contemplated by the department, to indicate the turpitude of the acter, to whom in this case all that is wrong in the application, if any thing is wrong, is fairly imputable. Seeing that, tho' this application may be considered at an end, perhaps, by the death of the applicant; the individual referred to as the only one blameable, is still in full life, and may continue the practice

Most respectfully/ Your Obt Ser't/ R. B. McCabe

Indiana, 18 Feby 1845

Dear Sir [Hon. H. D. Foster, Esq, Washington D.C.]

I received your communication last night, with the accompanying documents, relative to the claim of Frederick Crissman dec'd. for a pension.

Supposing that the death of the applicant, which happened between the third & seventeenth of July last, might dispense, or allow the depart't. to dispense with the examination of Mr Hartzock, I have not gone to see him; the roads being in bad condition, & no bridges on the direct road, over two lick or blacklick creeks. I have, however, mentioned the fact of his death, as above, in reply to the Commissioner of Pensions; and made some observations as to the pecuniary circumstances of Mr Crissman. Also a few remarks on the names, titles, &c. which the fictitious "Gillis Doty," vouches in reply to the 7th Interrogatory of Mr Crissman. From my personal knowledge of the applicant, I have no doubt that he served as stated, tho' I never was aware of his having so served, or that he claimed to have served. But he would not, I think, have made a false claim. Nor were his circumstances necessitous [see endnote]. But it would be wrong to permit even a good claim to be successfully urged, with so much of deception as has been used in this case. At least I think so. That, however, is extrafunctional.

[Another paragraph deals with matters unrelated to pension applications.]

I am, very respectfully/ Your Obt Ser't/ R. B. McCabe

Blairsville, February 21 1845

Dear Sir [H. D. Foster]

I wish to say one word to you about the cases of Lilengood[?], Davidson, & Christman. Their friends have repeatedly enquired of me if I knew what had been their fate. I told them that they might depend on your doing all in your power in their behalf I would thank you to send me a line respecting the result of their cases thus far which I will communicate to them forthwith. There is a conspiracy in our Borough against the Post-master, the ring leaders of which are making every possible exertion to have him removed at the commencement of the next administration and to have Wm Scott elevated in his place. These gentlemen are both foreigners by birth. One is from the land of Erin and the other from Brittainia's dale[?]. How the battle will go is uncertain. Barr is an efficient and well qualified post officer & has discharged his duty faithfully, and being a tremendous firm and unwavering democrat I hope he may be continued notwithstanding their paper batteries. Most respectfully/ your friend

Jno Gunning Bedford

House of Rep 27 Feb

Sir [J L Edwards]

I received the letters enclosed last night relative to the claim presented to you of Frederick Christman. It appears from Mr McCabes letter that Chistman the applicant has been dead some months before Congress met This fact has been carefully concealed from me by Mr Bedford as you will perceive by his letter to me. I am satisfied therefore that there has been too much desposition[?] evinced by persons concerned in this claim to allow me to make any further application[?] in relation to it

Respectfully[?]/ H D Foster

State of Pennsylvania

at a Court held for Indianna [sic] County June Term 1847 Satisfactory evidence was adduced in Court to prove that Fredric Christman was an applicant for a pension and was reputed and believed to have been a Soldier of the Revolutionary war that he was a Resident of the County of Indianna aforesaid and died on the Eighth day of July 1844 that he left no Widow and that Susanna Cristman now Susanna Hartsock Elijah Cristman, John Cristman, and Samuel Cristman are the Only Children and only heirs at law in fee to the said Fredrick Cristman above named.

I A W Taylor Clerk of the County Court do certify that the above evidence is taken from the records in my Office

In Testimony whereof I have hereunto affixed my official Seal this 28th day of June
A.D. 1847

[signed] A. W. Taylor, Proth[onotar]y

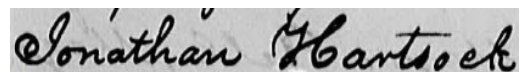
Blairsville, Pa. Febuary 14 1848

Dear Sir [Honorable Simon Cameron, U.S. Senate]

Some four or five years ago my Grandfather Frederick Christman, a Revolutionary Soldier, now deceased, applied for a pension under act of June 7th 1832 – pending the claim before the Pension office, he died in summer of 1844. In the year, 1846, proof of his death and heirship was made before a Court of Record and transmitted to the Commissioner of Pensions, who then refused to act upon the papes already filed in his office, on the ground as he alleged, that they were made out by persons who signed the names of other persons to them. His allegation is false. The claim is a just one, and ought by all means to be allowed, and while we would by no means lend ourselves to the procuring of a pension fraudulently, we are not disposed to see an honest claimant suffer on account of the peculiarities or prejudices of those who have to adjudicate the claim. His services were proven by several credible wintnesses whose characters for truth and veracity were certified to by the Honorable Judge McKennan, Dr. Stuart, Major Bell, Major Amel and other respectable men of Indiana County, besides a strong tradionary certificate signed by respectable persons. The commissioner and the agent who drafted the papers are not on the most friendly terms, and owing to divers misrepresentations, he entertains strong prejudices against him; but surely his prejudice or whimsical notions ought not to operate against the claims of the heirs of this Revolutionary soldier. He was in the Battle of Germantown, and he and his capt. with but few of his companions escaped the sword. This claim was sent for prosecution to Messrs T. L. & A. H. Smith of Washington City, and afterwards those agents transferred their pension business to Messrs Davidge & Semmes who wrote to inform us, that owing to the pressure of their business, they could not devote that attention to the claim which it merited. We are therefore left destitute of an agent to attend to it and we have been advised to solicit you as our Senator, to demand of the Commissioner of Pensions a certified Copy of the papers filed in his office for your inspection relative to the claim of the heirs aforesaid, and to lay them before the National Council for their decision. We do therefore most respectfully request you will as soon as convenient, require of the Department the original or at least of copy of the papers in relation to the said claim and have them presented and referred to the appropriate committee for their action; since the Commissioner has rejected the Claim and refuses to act on it. If it should be required we can furnish sworn copies of all the original papers now on file in the Pension office in regard to our claim. We hope you will give us your assistance in obtaining what we are by law and justice entitled to. I have thus endeavored though feebly to give you an outline of the case, and trust you will not leave it unnoticed. For my character and standing in this community I refer to Augustus Drum Esqr. of Indiana, Major Walter Bell, D. H. Barr Esqr. P.M. of Blairsville, Dr. Edward P. Emerson same place. Please write and oblige yours very Respectfully,

Jonathan Hartsock, Grandson of Frederick Christman deceased.

[See below and endnote regarding this signature.]



Dear Sir [J L Edwards]

Can you give me any information in regard to the case refered to in the accompanying letter?

The writer seems to be laboring under some error in regard to his claim – but if they have been acted on, you will please send me the papers. Yrs very respectfully/ Simon Cameron/ 22 Feb. 48

[No date]

Dr Sir [D. Crump]

I return you the letter of Mr McCabe; and have sent him the one I received from Hartsock. I know McC. well, and am sure he will unravel the mystery. With great respect/ Simon Cameron

Pension Office/ March 3rd 1848

Sir [Hon. Simon Cameron],

I have the honor to return herewith Mr. Hartsock's letter and to state that a claim was present to this Office in the name of Frederick Christman in 1844 under circumstances which induced the department to believe that the papers were fabricated by an Agent who corresponded through the Post Office under the name of Giles Doty, and with Doty's consent, and that Christman was not himself acquainted with the statement contained in his application. At the instance of the Hon. H. D. Foster we addressed a letter to Richard B. McCabe, Esqr., a respectable lawyer of Indiana, Penn. requesting him to cross examine Christman, with a view of ascertaining how far the statements in his declaration set forth the facts in his case; but as Christman was not at that time living, a re-examination could not be had. I enclose Mr. McCabe's reply, which I have to request you will return, from which you will learn that our suspicions as to the fabrications are borne out, that several of the persons whose names are mentioned in this answer to the seven interrogatories had no existence, which furnishes satisfactory proof that Christman was not himself apprised of the statements made in his declaration, and consequently, the claim which was not his, was therefore rejected.

The Department is under the belief that a fraud was attempted to be practised in this case, and had it been discovered soon enough might have been the subject of legal investigation; and as I do not wish that papers should go out of the Office upon which such a judgment has been passed, have to request that you will call and examine them for yourself, at such time as may suit your convenience.

I have the honor to be, Very respectfully, Your Obt. Serv't./ G W Crump

Blairsville, March 20th 1848

Hon. S. Cameron, U. Senate/ Washington] Dear Sir

I have just seen Jonathan Hartsock, and shewed him the letter purporting to be from him to you, dated Feby 14 1848 herewith returned. He had never seen it before. Mr Hatsock makes the following statement, in relation to the application of Frederick Crissman for a Pension, and its renewal by his heirs, of whom Hartsock is, to my knowledge, one.

Some time back, Jonathan Doty, the father of "Gillis Doty," whose name it is alleged, has been used by another person in corresponding with the Pension office, obtained a pension. Jonathan Doty is deemed a wealthy farmer, and resides not far from where Frederick Crissman made his home, viz with Jonathan Hatzocks father. Dotys pension was obtained through the Agency of Mr John G. Bedford of this place, who also prepared Frederick Crissmans papers. Old Mr Hartsock a witness in Crissmans case – viz, John Hartsock, is considered in his dotage, – but Frederick Crissman was, I beleive, of sound mind, and good character.

After his death, Mr Bedford advised the heirs to renew the application, & prepared the papers. The letter now returned is in his hand writing; and after it was sent, he apprized Jonathan Hartsock that he had written, but not of the contents of the letter.

The heirs of Crissman, at least this one, for there are several, are desirous, if the case of their ancestor comes within the purview of the Pension laws, to have it acted on, that they may receive their money. If successful, Mr Bedford gets a share; if not, he gets nothing.

I have attended so little to pension business, that I do not now recollect whether the act of 1832 provides for necessitous persons, only, or whether its provisions are irrespective of the pecuniary conditions of the applicant. Frederick Crissman was not in necessitous circumstances, nor is any of his family, that I know of.

Very respectfully/ Your Obt Ser't/ R. B. McCabe

P.S. I have learned, since my letter to the Com'r of Pensions of Feby 18th 1845; that "Baldwin Grant," therein named, is a brother in law of Bedford; & was then a clerk in one of the forwarding houses in Philad'a. He was here in 1846 and purchased all Bedfords property, – or covers it, by a pretended purchase. Such is the report

(Private & confidential)

Blairsville, Indiana Co. Pa./ 7 April 1848

To J. L. Edwards Esq/ Commissioner of Pensions/ Washington D.C.

Sir I had occasion, lately, to reply to Gen. Cameron of the U. S. Senate, in reference to a communication he had received, concerning an application pending in your office, for a Pension to Frederick Crissman or his heirs. It turned out in that case, that "Jonathan Hartzock" whose letter to Gen. Cameron was in the hand writing of John G. Bedford, had never seen the letter, nor heard of it, until some time after it had been dispatched.

About the first of this months Bedford removed from this place, ostensibly for New Lisbon, Ohio; but his destination is uncertain. Perhaps "Charidon [Chardon]," or some point in Geauga County where it is possible he has confederates. For you will please to observe that, procuring Pensions, is a more profitable & safe business than passing counterfeit money, & presents peculiar attractiveness to persons of that class in morals.

Many of the papers prepared by Bedford are attested by his daughter "Mary Jane." I have reason to believe that her name appears to many forged papers. This winter she was placed at a school in Steubenville, and some time when there, her testimony was taken on a rule or Commission. But the questions and answers were sent previously by her father, in writing, and she was directed, if other questions were propounded to say she did not remember. Her schoolmates have seen these injunctions – leading to perjury, I presume.

Several respectable persons have urged upon me, the duty of apprizing you, of Bedfords removal; & the probability he will resume his swindling operations from another point, where, as before intimated, he may have colaborers.

His daughter has been expelled the school for pilfering. Baldwin Grant, referred to as a voucher, by Frederick Crisman in his original petition, though entirely unknown in this region, turns out to be a brother in law of Bedfords, & resided in or near Philadelphia at that time.

I trust Sir, you will excuse the freedom taken on this occasion – for really, I think the Gov't. should lay hands on this knave on the happening of the next misfeasance.

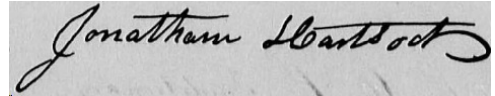
Very respectfully/ Yours &c/ R. B McCabe

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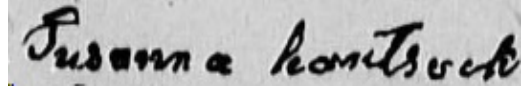
The following comments relate to the letters by R. B. McCabe dated 18 Feb 1845. In cases where an applicant died while a case was pending, the Pension Office would still proceed, and if the application was approved, the amount of the pension from 4 March 1831 until the date of death would be given to the heirs. The pension act of 1832 did not require that the applicant be in necessitous circumstances. Proof of service in the militia required only that two neighbors of the applicant certify his honesty and his reputation as having been a soldier of the Revolution. It is unclear, therefore, what motive there could have been for fabricating additional character witnesses when at least two authentic ones were available. Of the 10 names listed in the answer to the 7th Interrogatory, five were found in the 1840 federal census for Indiana County. Alanson Bills was presumably the Allenson Bills in the 1850 census. James Donay was presumably the James Donahue in the 1850 census. Gen. Charles Campbell died in 1828. Baldwin Grant was not a resident of Indiana County, but contrary to McCabe's letter, he was not "a pure creature of the imagination." As McCabe noted in his last two letters above, Baldwin Grant lived in or near Philadelphia and was the brother-in-law of the pension agent, John Gunning Bedford. James Geer was not found in the censuses for Indiana County. Although McCabe stated that Gillis Doty was fictitious, Gillis Doty, 54, is listed as the head of a household in the 1850 Indiana County census. The signatures of Gillis Doty in the pension application of Roger Geer (S8552) and several others match that of Gillis Doty shown above.

On 6 July 1847 at Blacklick Township, Indiana County a power of attorney to pursue the claim for a pension was executed by the children of Frederick Christman, Susanna Hartsock, Elijah Christman,

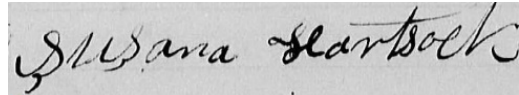
John Christman, and Samuel Christman. Jonathan Hartsock signed as a witness, as shown here for comparison with his “signature” by Bedford, shown above:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jonathan Hartsock". The letters are dark and the ink is slightly faded, with a prominent flourish at the end of the word "Hartsock".

Susanna Hartsock’s signature on this document is shown thus:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susanna Hartsock". The signature is written in a similar style to the one above, with a clear and legible cursive hand.

On 30 Nov 1852 Susana Hartsock assigned power of attorney to pursue the claim for a pension for her father’s service. The signature on this document appears thus:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susana Hartsock". The signature is written in a similar style to the one above, with a clear and legible cursive hand.