Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of John Curtis R2599

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

State of Tennessee	}	
Bledsoe County County Court	}	November Session 183

On this eleventh day of November 1833 personally appeard in open court before the county court of Bledsoe County now sitting John Curtis a resident in the county of Bledsoe and State of Tennessee aged seventy four 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.

That he enterd the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated. In the county of Dinwiddie and State of Virginia he entered the Service of the United States in the revolutionary war but at what particular date he is from age & the loss of memory wholly unable to state, as a private soldier, and as a substitute for his cousin Drewry Thrift who was drafted for eighteen months, but upon applicants being informed that there was such a thing as Virginia State troops as contradistinguished from the militia, he cannot tell to which Drewry Thrift belonged, nor has he now any recollection of any such distinction. [See endnote.] He entered the sirvice as before stated in Dinwiddie County for the term of eighteen months under Captain ___ Pegram, (applicant thinks his given name was Robert but is not certain it was) under whom he marched to Cumberland courthouse from which place Captain Pegram returned home and applicant was placed under Captain Lynn, declarant believes he was the captain he was so called; Lynn also acted as a doctor and inoculated applicant with others for the small pox. Applicant was in no battle nor was he in any march of consequence but was stationed at the barracks at Cumberland old courthouse until within about four days of the expiration his eighteen months tour, when a recruiting officer came round and applicant and a certain Hubbard (or Harberd) Lewis [Herbert Lewis, pension application S4529] who had been his messmate took the bounty and enlisted under a Sergeant Halaby for during the war. Applicant remembers that while he was stationed at Cumberland old courthouse two soldiers were shot and two others hung – applicant recollects that he was once placed as a guard over one of them before he was put to death, but does not remember the names of any of them. After applicant enlisted, by some arrangement in the army, he was taken out of the camp and placed with and under Captain Lynn with whom he remained more in the character of of a servant that any thing else, taking care of his horses, his medicine, his papers and going on errands for him until he was finally discharged at a place called the "Piney Fork" on James River [probably Point of Fork at the confluence with Rivanna River], applicant thinks about 25 miles above Cumberland courthouse, but in what county he does not know. Applicant cannot remember the length of his service under his enlistment but believes it was about eighteen months – he is certain it was over a year. He received a written discharge at Piney Fork, which about seven years after the war he sold to Colonel Massenburg in Sussex county for forty dollars and gave up the discharge to Massenburg with a power of attorney or some other instrument of writing which he then gave him. Applicant does not know what Massenburg did with the discharge but supposes he returned it to the war office & asks to have it searched for. Colonel Massenburg told applicant at the time he sold the discharge that he was entitled to land & that he Massenburg would try to get it for him, applicant has never heard any thing of it, nor did he ever see Massenburg afterwards – he was then a tolerably old man and must had died long since – a man of the name of Hix Barner was a witness to the power of attorney which applicant made to Massenburg — He has no documentary evidence of his service nor does he know of any person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to it; he can prove by a certain Wiatt Smith now a citizen of Bledsoe County, who was then a boy, that applicant returned home from the army. – Applicant in all served he thinks about thirty six months, he is certain it was not less than thirty months.

Applicant was born in Dinwiddie or Sussex County in Virginia in the year 1759 or 1760. He has no record of his age, his father died when he was very young, and his mother while he was in the revolutionary war – the account of his age he got from his brothers & sisters and believes it to be true. He lived in Denwiddie county Virginia when called into the service, from which place he moved to Orange county North Carolina shortly after the war, in which county & Chatham county N.C. he lived for about twenty years, from there he moved to Summer County Tennessee where he lived two years, from there to Giles county Tennessee where he lived two years, from there back to Summer County where he lived about two years more, from there to White County Tennessee where he lived about fifteen years, and from there to this (Bledsoe) County where he has lived over eight years and where he still resides

Besides the officers already named he remembers there was a Captain or Col. Kirkpatrick [probably Capt. Abraham Kirkpatrick] in Camp who was a one eyed man. He received one written discharge and has accounted for it as well as he can.

He is known in his present neighbourhood to John Dalton a clergyman and John Bridgman & Joseph McDowel who can testify as to his character for veracity and their belief of his services as a soldier of the revolution

His first term of service was performed as a substitute for Drewry Thrift, for his second term he was enlisted.

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.

John hisXmark Curtis

NOTES:

Under a Virginia law enacted in May 1780, each county whose militia was not already engaged was to recruit or draft one militiaman out of each 15 over age 18 to serve in the Continental army.

A size roll taken at Cumberland Old Courthouse lists John Curtis/ age 14/ height 5′ 5″/ brown hair/ grey eyes/ dark complexion/ planter/ born and residing in Dinwiddie County/ enlisted as a substitute on 6 June 1782 for 18 months. Sized on 26 June 1782.

On 11 Nov 1833 Wyatt Smith stated that he had heard Drury Thrift say that John Curtis had substituted for him for 18 months, and his brother, Isham Thrift, state that Curtis afterwards enlisted for the duration of the war.

On 13 May 1848 Dolly Curtis, 78, of McMinn County TN, applied for a pension stating that she married John Curtis on 10 Oct 1793, and he died 7 Aug 1844. On 4 Nov 1849 she stated that her oldest child was born in Jan 1796. On 21 July 1848 Wyatt and Margaret Smith, ages 90 and 85, respectively, stated that John Curtis and Dolly Honeycutt were married in Chatham County NC.