

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of John Roads R8846

PA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

County of Fairfield ss.

On this [blank] day of [blank] 1830, personally appeared in open court, being a court of record for the County of Fairfield, John Roads, formerly called John Reid – resident in said county, aged sixty eight years, who, being first duly sworn according to law, doth, on his oath, make the following declaration, in order to obtain the provision made by the acts of Congress, of the 18th March, 1818, and the 1st of May, 1820; that he the said John enlisted for the term of twelve months on the 15th day of April in the year 1781 in the State of Pennsylvania in the company commanded by captain John Fezick [see endnote] in the regiment commanded by colonel [blank] in the line of the State of Pennsylvania on the continental establishment; that he continued to serve in the said corps (or vessel) until the expiration of 18 months when he was discharged from the service in George Town [Georgetown] now Washington City in the District of Columbia that he hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension, except the present; that his name is not on the roll of any State, except Pennsylvania; and that the following are the reasons for not making earlier application for a pension: He has made several earlier applications [not found], but has hitherto failed. He made his first application as soon as he knew of the law allowing him a pension for his services

And, in pursuance of the act of the 1st May, 1820, I do solemnly swear that I was a resident Citizen of the United States on the 18th day of March 1818 and that I have not since that time by gift sale or in any manner disposed of my property or any part thereof with intent thereby so to diminish it as to bring myself within the provisions of an act of Congress entitled “an act to provide for certain persons engaged in the land and naval service of the United States in the Revolutionary War” passed on the 18th day of March 1818 and that I have not nor has any person in trust for me any property or securities contracts or debts due to me nor have I any income other than what is contained in the Schedule hereto annexed and by me subscribed. That, since the 18th of March, 1818, the following changes have been made in my property. [not completed]

War Department/ Pension Office/ March 16th 1832

Sir [Lewis Cass, secretary of War] Concerning the case of Mr John Roads who has addressed the enclosed letter to the President of the United States [not found], I have to inform you that the applicant alleges in his declaration that he belonged to he French Army. As there is no law which allows pensions on account of such service, his claim has been rejected. There is however an error in his statement which led me to doubt whether he might not have belonged to the Continental army. He states that he served under Gen. La Fayette [Lafayette]. as that officer did not belong to the French Army, I thought it might be possible to find his name upon some of the Army rolls but the search has been in vain. His name cannot be found and none of the officers he mentions belonged to the Regiment on the Continental establishment. The fair presumption is that he was not a continental soldier; and as the law [of 18 March 1818] provides for none who did not belong to the Continental establishment, a pension cannot be allowed upon the proof exhibited. His own declaration is all the evidence on file in the case.

[unsigned copy, but probably by James L. Edwards, then Chief Pension Clerk]

State of Ohio

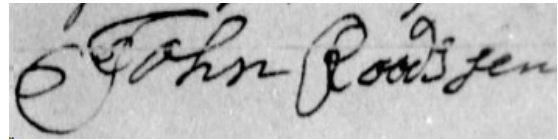
Fairfield County Ss. On this first day of November A.D. 1832 personally appeared in open Court before the Court of Common pleas now sitting in & for said County, John Roads a resident of the County & State aforesaid aged 72 years, who being first duly Sworn according to law doth on his Oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832. That he entered the Service of the united states under the following named officers & served as herein stated. I

enlisted in Reading as a Waggoner in Berks County Pennsylvania, in April 1781 under Capt. John Fizeck who commanded what we called our Brigade of waggons where I also stood guard for some time over the Hessians then prisoners [see endnote] – from thence we marched in a short time to Bethlehem, where we joined the principal army under the command of General Lafayette. Here we lay for some time, until we joined the army of Gen'l Washington before York Town in Virginia that fall; I was at the whole engagement at Yorktown from about the first week in October to almost the last of October we were blockading & fighting & pursuing &c until Cornwallis had to Surrender [sic: Cornwallis, 19 Oct 1781]

About two weeks after this our Capt Fizeck deserted & he was pursued by myself & others, & we caught him & some other deserters in Lancaster County Pennsylvania & took them back to a military post 12½ miles from Little York [in Pennsylvania]. Wherefore I was appointed Captain of this wagon Brigade. Which office I held until July 1782 as well as I recollect when I was Discharged in George Town now in District of Columbia, but it has been lost by time or accident. I can't recollect who signed my discharge. And though I held that office so long, I cannot now remember who signed my Commission as it has been lost & destroyed a long time ago.

When I joined Lafayette's army at Bethlehem a few days – thence to Baltimore – from thence to Little York in Virginia – at York Town during the action a little man, a French man attended the artillery, called, as well as I recollect Rushambu [sic: Comte de Rochambeau]. I was in the Service put it all together from April 1781 to July 1782 as before stated.

I hereby relinquish every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and declared that my name is not on the pension Roll of any state or territory whatever

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John Roads".

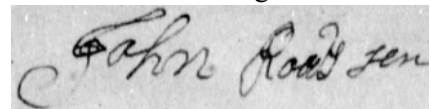
Interrogatories put to the said Roads in open court under oath & his answers

1. Where were you born & in what year.

Ans. In the City of Philadelphia Water Street in 1761.

2. Where were you living when called into the service &c

Ans. I was living in 9 miles of Redding town at Pattens furnace. Since the Revolution war, I lived in Berks Co. Pensy for several years and thence I removed to Fairfield County where I now live. I have heard Lewis Cass [sic: Lewis Cass, Secretary of War] plead in our Court, at Chillicothe & at Lancaster. I think he plead a cause against me once. I never have been able to ascertain how my Discharge was lost but, I have not seen the Commission or discharge for a great many years – nor do I recollect who signed them.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John Roads".

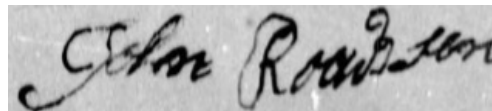
To the Honorable Mr Chaney in Congress And General McClain I Enlisted in Reading Berks County Pa in April AD 1781 under Capt John Fezieck where I stood guard for some time over the Hessians then prisoners from there was marched to Bethlehem where we joined the army then under the Command Genl Lafayette from there we was marched to Baltimore from there to York town Virginia Oct 29th [sic] where we had the pleasure of taking Cornwallis and the Army under his Command on the 14th of Nov 1781 I was appointed & received the Commission of Captain in the Room of Capt John Fezieck who was Broke of that post in which I served untill the 17th of July 1782 at which time I received my Discharge at George Town on the Evening that we arrived on the Battle Ground I was Dismist from the Baggage Waggon & taken to join the artillery under the Command of Shambeau who attended the artillery through the Engagement which lasted nine Days & nine nights on the ninth Day untill about three o'clock

PM when Cornwallase surrendered to Gen Gorge Washington the Army under his Command on the second Day after the Battle I saw Cornwallase and his Aidecamp Ride out in front of the Army [see endnote] When I had Received my Commission I was putt at the head of seven men to Drive two hundred Beef Cattle & allso was Apointed forriage Master

I was Examind Before the Court & also E Massey who was on the Battle Ground questioned me on evry Circumstance & Declaird that I was Correct in my statement

To convince you that I was in the Continental Service I will also give you some of the names that I can recollect yet Gen Waggon Master Miller Fransis Mason [Francis Mason] who I enlisted with my own Bounty which the sum of Eight Dollars which I had Receive he was in the Continental service seven years Before I Enlisted him & one Mr Hamilton who assisted in Driving the two hundred Cattle & also one Mr Myers

I was Born March the 6th AD 1761 which would make me 73 the 6th of March last I should hav writen to you Before But was kept Back upon the account of writing to Pennsylvania for another evidence I hav not got an answer yet But if more proof is needed I Can furnish two more they are at a Distance & and rather unhandy & evry one that sees Declaration Considers the proof allredy prodused sufficient to satisfy But if it is necessary to hav more proof pleas to write me as soon as posible & I will furnish it & I hope you will Do all you Can for your old friend and Revolutioner Yours & May the 5th AD 1834



State of Ohio Hocking county personally came before me William Applebee Whoe being Duly Sworen Deposeth and sayeth that in AD 18[edge of page here and at * below] he came over the ground mentiond in this declara[*] and verly believes the statement here on contain[*] to be the truth and further this Deponent sayeth [*]

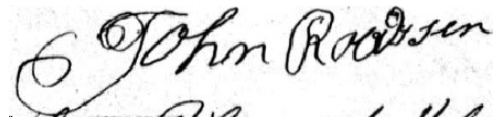
William hisXmark Appleb[*]

Sworen to and subscribed before me this 5th Day of February AD 1835 John Goss/ Justice of the p[*]

Lancaster Fairfield County Ohio February the 26th 1835

This is to inform you that in the Late war I render services to goverment which I never received any Compensation it was in the years of 1812 & 13. When Fort Meags was beseaged [sic: Fort Meigs, 28 April – 9 May 1813] there was a special call by Gen. Wm. H. Harison [sic: William Henry Harrison, future President of the US] September 1st 1812 I valenteered at that time under Gen. Leach and found my own horse bridle and saddle and fusee at my own Exspence at the same time my two sons Benjamin & William Roads volenteered and when we arived at Lower Sanduckey [sic: Lower Sandusky] we was discharged but my two sons Benjamin & William was drafted from that place to Detroyt [sic: Detroit] if more proof of this is wanted I can prove it by Lieutenant G. Wagoner who was at Detroyt When I went after my two sons which were sick which cost me about two hundred Dollars for which I Received no pay for my services which I can prooffe By Capt. George Sanderson who give me one hundred Dollars to bear my exspences home and to pay it to Mr Williamson then Sheriff which I according to his directions – when we volenteered we was out 12 or 15 days the time that the volinteers went out there was with me J. Beecher H. Boyl and Mr Tucker and anumber that I Cant Recollect at this time I will mention a few more the the men that was out at the same time Col. Wm Crook John A Collans John Mgeesey John Marsh sen. Peter Rudolph Sen. at the sam time Capt Sumner was with us and Governer Meags [sic: Meigs] was at Lower sandusky and befor we got to the fort sent us orders that we should Come in in double file which we did by his Directions and Gen. Wm. H Harison dilivered a great speech and we was discharged there for I think that as I have assisted in obtaining the Libertes of the Country and also to Defend those Liberties and now when I am not able to surport myself and famely that as goverment has made provisions for the Releif of such that I ought to Receive some of the benefitts of it as I have heped both in person and property to surport the same I hope to be assisted now by it

I Received your [James L. Edwards, then Commissioner of Pensions] letter of the 25 of February [1835] on the 8th inst (March) which informed me that there has been no Clame presented for me or cannot be foun on Record for the last two years. it is something astonishing as I have filed my Declaration and have been Examined in open Cort and fulfilled the Requirements of law for that purpose and sent it on by Mr Chaney now in Congress that it has not underwen and investigation by this time for I cant see what more can be wanted to substantiate my Caim then is all redy done But I beleive it is grudge By the torryes that I have not it before now but so it is I am in great want of it as I am giting so infirm that I am not able to see and atten to things as I would wish there fore I stand in need of help [undeciphered word] sir pleas to give me such instructions as is neded if there is any thing more wanted there or if you will be so king as to send me word by letter as soon as you can Conveinintly and if I git any pension pleas to send it on as son as you posible can and you will Confer a favour upon your friend you will not think hard that I am so much bothers to you for you are the onley one that that i can put dependence in to git Correct answers pleas t to Direct your Letter to Lancaster fairfield County Ohio and by so doing you will oblige your friend and obedient serv. the old revlution



War Department/ Pension Office/ March 25, 1835

Sir [John Roads, Sr.], The papers in your case have been again examined. You allege to have served as a wagoner, and also as a Captain in the wagon service, from April 1781 to July 1782. The service in which you were engaged cannot be recognized as being of that character provided for by the act of June 7, 1832. [See endnote.] Your claim has therefore been rejected, and the papers filed in this Office.

I am respectfully/ Your Ob't. Servt./ James L. Edwards

[The following is undated]

Having enlisted in Reading Berks County Pennsylvania in aprile about the 15th 1781 under Capt John Fezick at which place I stood guard for some time over the Hessians then prisoners: from that place I was marched to Bethlehem wher we joined the french army then under the command of Gen. Lafayett from thence we were marched to baltimore from thence to york town in Virginia where we had the pleasure of takeing Cornwallace & the army under his command on the 19th of october 1781 about two weeks after which surrender I was appointed & received the commition of a Captain & also was forragemaster I was Capt in the Room of Capt. Fezick who deserted & being persued by myself & others to Lancaster Pa – where we took & brought him & 3 others back 12½ miles this side of little york wher we delivered the Capt up to the commanding officers & he received his sentence & was punished & discharged which office I held till July 6th 1782 if my memory serves me right being at this time enfeebled by age & through much travile from place to place has ben unfortunate as it respects my papers, they are lost, & therefore cannot mention dates precisely but did continue in the above office till the 16th of July at which time I received my discharge in Georgetown I laid in my Claim several times previous to this through the medium of a member of the Legislature Mr. Mills & others but never received anny satisfaction from anny one but Mr Mills who obtained a Letter assuring me of the justice of my claim & that there would be no doubt in the justice of my claim & that I should be relieved soon. I also made application when the law first took its exhistance to Judge Scoffield & Philemon Beecher but nothing was done

NOTES:

The file contains what appears to be a summary of John Roads's service written by him in German. Because of poor penmanship and spelling I have not attempted to translate it. In this paper John Roads wrote his own name in one place as Johannes Rath. He spelled the name of his Captain as Johannes

fögtzig in one place and as Johannes föghig in another.

The Hessian prisoners had been captured at Saratoga on 17 Oct 1777 and kept at Albemarle Barracks in Virginia until February 1781, when they were moved to Lancaster to keep them out of the reach of Cornwallis's army. Since they were usually guarded by militiamen, it is likely that Roads's service was in the militia, rather than in the Continental line as stated.

Cornwallis was not personally present at the surrender at Yorktown.

The regulations for administering the act of 1832, which were approved by James L. Edwards, states that the act provided for "all persons enlisted, drafted, or who volunteered and who were bound to military service, *but not those who were occasionally employed with the army upon civil contracts, such as Clerks to Commissaries and to Store Keepers, &c. Teamsters, Boatmen, &c.* (My italics.) If Roads was an enlisted soldier and not an occasional employee under civil contract then he was entitled to a pension under the act of 1832.

On 18 Feb 1851 David Roads (as he signed), son of John Roads, deceased, and John Crooks, administrator of John Roads's estate, assigned power of attorney to pursue the claim for a pension.

The file contains a family record in the handwriting of John Roads translated from German script as follows:

John Roads Sen born 6 March 1761

my wife born 3 March 1756

Liopolid [Leopold] born 14 October 1784

Johannes born 4 April 1786

Jacob born 5 March 1788

Samul [Samuel] born 2 December 1789

Lõuiamiu born 23 January 1792 [possibly the son later named Benjamin]

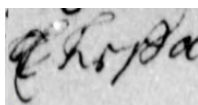
Wilhelm born 3 March 1794

David born 6 June 1796

Daniol [Daniel] born 26 June 1798

Andonnis born 26 July 1800

Acarahm born 5 February 1803



Rhoda[?] born 7 November 1805

grandchildren at that time 57 in all

The following newspaper clipping is in the file without explanation. I could find no record of the author's military service.

ADVERTISEMENT.

TO the surviving Officers and Soldiers of the Revolution, and the legal Heirs and Representatives of the deceased:—The subscriber, supposed now to be the last surviving Colonel of the Revolution *but two*, has been for several years past, and is still frequently appealed to, from various quarters, for information, testimony and advice, on revolutionary rank and services—insomuch that the postage of such application has become burthensome. He has therefore determined to take his stand this winter in Washington, for the purpose of receiving and attending to such applications, giving advice and instructions upon all points essential to sustaining and aiding all such claims as he knows and believes to be just, and preventing the imposition of those on the public he believes to be otherwise. For his time, trouble and actual expense, he will require a reasonable remuneration, in proportion to the claims received and also in proportion to the condition of those receiving. He requires and will received nothing from the extremely needy—particularly of widowg [sic] and orphans; neither in cases depending entirely on his own testimony.—The reputed hard grindings of persons, calling themselves agents, on those war-worn veterans and their heirs (whether true or false) it is well known, have operated very much to the prejudice and injury even of the best of these

claims. A general agency, therefore, founded on the above principles and [page torn] most endearing brotherly affection that ever were formed among men, it is hoped, will have a happy redeeming [undeciphered word] over the merits of the survivors, and [the rest largely undeciphered]

JOHN NICHOLAS, Late Colonel[undeciphered word]

Washington Dec. [date illegible]