

[Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters](#)

Pension Application of John Curtis S12645 PA
Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

State of Virginia }
Count of Ohio } Sct.

On this 22nd day of April in the year of our Lord 1834 personally appeared before the County Court for the County aforesaid, John Curtis, a resident of the Town of West Liberty in the county of Ohio in the state of Virginia, aged Eighty One 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 provision, made by the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832; that he enlisted in the army of the United States, on the 5th day of May 1776, for the term of five years with Captain John Garner, (William Helms being at the time his recruiting Sergeant) and served in the Seventh Regiment of the Pennsylvania Line [see endnote], under the following named officers: James Jack and William Moore, Lieutenants of the Company, John Garner, Captain of the same, — Boell, (the first name not remembered) Major of the regiment for about three months after he joined the army, but being taken sick, resigned, and was succeeded by Major Bartholomew, John Gibbins was Colonel of the same regiment. General Erwin [sic: James Irvine of the PA Militia] commanded that division, though for nearly all the time General George Washington, had the Immediate command – upon General Erwin’s being taken prisoner at the Battle of White Marsh or Chestnut Hill [6 Dec 1777, part of the Battle of Whitemarsh, 5-8 Dec 1777], he was succeeded by Colonel Bull, at that time promoted to the rank of General

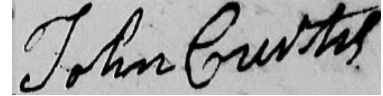
He resided at the time of his enlistment, about Eighteen miles for the Town of Old Lancaster, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and about two miles and a half from a Tavern called “The Square and Compass,” the rendezvous for Captain Garner’s Company. Rather more than three months after his enlistment, the company march to Smithfield, within about 10 miles of the City of Philadelphia, where they joined the regiment, and remained there somewhat more than three months. After which they marched towards Reading and took up a position within about five miles of that town, in a little village the name of which he does not now remember. In this last position or the neighbourhood they remained for about six months, and then descended the Schuylkill as far as Sweed’s Ford [sic: Swede’s Ford, now Swedesford], and then crossed over to Hicking Bridge [possibly over Wissahickon Creek], which was at that time the Head Quarters of that division of the Army. At Hicking Bridge they remained until the Battle of Chesnut Hill about the last of October in the year 1777 [sic]. In which engagement he was wounded by a ball ammediately above the right knee. He had been in no engagement of importance except that of Chesnut Hill, although he was in several skirmishes. It was in the Battle of Chesnut Hill that General Erwin was wounded and taken prisoner, and died about three months after [see endnote] in the city of Philadelphia at that time in possession of the British [26 Sep 1777 - 18 Jun 1778]. He was born in the year 1753 in the lower part of Lancaster county in the State of Pennsylvania. He enlisted voluntarily and served until two or three months after the battle of Chesnut Hill when he was discharged in consequence wound before mentioned. He had no other discharge than the certificate of Doctors Scott & Buchanan who were the surgeons of the regiment: which certificate has been since lost by accident He remained for a short time after his discharge at an Uncle’s in the lower part of Lancaster County Pennsylvania; he then removed to Sharpsburgh [Sharpsburg] in Washington County in the State of Maryland, where he resided until about the year 1806, when he removed to Fayette County in the State of Pennsylvania: and remained there until about three years since when he removed to his present residence at West Liberty in the County of Ohio & state of Virginia.

He has no documentary evidence of his service as above narrated, nor does he know of any individual who can testify from his own personal knowledge of the truth that he has stated above.

He served as a private, for the space of One year and seven months – from the 5th of May 1776 until New Year 1778 when he was discharged as before mentioned in consequence of his wound.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or an annuity, except the present, and he declares he does not receive any annuity or pension under any law of the United States providing for revolutionary officers and Soldiers.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid



State of Maryland Washington County Sc.

On the 7th Day of August 1809 personally appeared John Willson before me the subscriber one of the Justices of the peace in and for the County aforesaid and made Oath on the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God that in the year 1794 he the said John Willson in Company with John Curtis Called upon Captain John Gardner and he heard in a conversation between them the said Captain John Gardner express his regret for the said John Curtis being wounded at Chesnutt Hill and the said John Curtis was then a Soldier in his company and one of the best he had and further this Deponent saith not

Sworn before John Good

Virginia/ Ohio County to wit:

Personally appeared before me the subscriber, a Justice of the peace in & for the county aforesaid, John Good and being solemnly sworn, made oath and said;

That during the Revolutionary War (the precise year not remembered) this deponent resided at Sharpsburgh, Washington County and State of Maryland, and that at the time he became acquainted with John Curtis, the declarant in the declaration, hereto annexed; and that he the said Curtis was then just from the army and it was generally believed and spoken of that he had served as a soldier, and that he and the deponent had resided in the same town for many years. And this deponent believes that the said Curtis had then come from the Army as he then represented.

And this deponent further states that the paper hereto annexed is a deposition taken before him, in the year 1809 7th of August of one Jno. Wilson (this deponent being at the time a justice of the peace in and for the county of Washington and state of Maryland) – the s'd Jno. Wilson having sworn in his deponent's presence, that he (the said Wilson) had called upon Capt. Jno. Garner or Gardner in company with said Curtis, and that said Garner or Gardner, in the presence of said Wilson had expressed his regret that said Curtis had been wounded at the Battle of Chesnut Hill, and that he the said Curtis was one of the best soldiers in the company of said Garner or Gardner.

And this deponent further states that the said John Curtis is now before him, and that he is the same individual of whom he has above spoken. And that from his knowledge of said Curtis, he believes that he is of the age that he represents and that he served in the revolutionary army as he has stated in his declaration – & further he saith not

Sworn to & subscribed before me this 22nd day of april 1834 [signed] John Good

Isaac Leffler J.P.

Virginia/ Ohio County to wit:

Personally appeared before me the subscriber, a justice of the peace in and for the county aforesaid, Jesse Wheat, and being solemnly sworn, made oath and said. That he has known John Curtis, declarant in the annexed declaration for the twenty years last past and from the intimate acquaintance he has had with him he believes said Curtis to be a man worthy of all credit, being a man of truth and veracity. That he has always understood, and from many circumstances is convinced and believes that said Curtis was a revolutionary soldier and served in the manner said Curtis has stated in his declaration hereto annexed: further he saith not. And I hereby certify that Jesse Wheat the deponent is a man worthy of belief as a credible witness from my knowledge of him and his reputation amongst his fellow citizens.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 22nd day of April 1834 [signed] Jesse Wheat

Rich'd Simons J.P

Virginia/ Ohio County to wit:

Personally appeared before me the subscriber a justice of the peace in and for the County aforesaid, Joseph Wood, and being solemnly sworn deposed and said, that he has been acquainted with the said John Curtis, declarant in the annexed declaration, for the last twenty eight years, and that from many circumstances, together with the common belief of all who knew the said Curtis, he the said deponent is convinced and believes that said Curtis was a revolutionary soldier and has served as he has set forth in his declaration. That this deponent has known the said Curtis intimately during the time mentioned above and that he esteems him the said Curtis, to be a man of probity and worthy of full faith and confidence in every thing that he has stated & further this deponent saith not.

And I hereby certify that from my knowledge of Joseph Wood I believe him to be a man of truth & probity & well deserving of all confidence

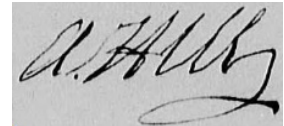
Sworn & subscribed to before me this 22nd day of April 1834 [signed] Joseph Wood
Rich'd Simons

Virginia/ Ohio County to wit:

Personally appeared before me the subscriber a justice of the peace, in and for the County aforesaid, Alexander Hill [pension application R4991], and being solemnly sworn deposed and saith; that he was a volunteer in the Revolutionary Army of the United States, and served from the fall of the year 1776, until the spring of the year 1777, as lieutenant in a troop of Cavalry, and for about three years as Waggon Master in the army – that he was familiar with the current transactions of the day during the Revolution: that he has had several conversations with John Curtis the declarant in the annexed declaration, that he believes from many circumstances mentioned by said Curtis that he the said Curtis was a Revolutionary Soldier & has served as he has stated in his declaration hereto annexed. That he is convinced of this, not only from his own knowledge of the said Curtis, but from the personal belief and representations of those who are more intimately acquainted with the said declarant.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 22nd day of April 1834

Geo Dulty[?]



[On 7 May 1834 a certificate was issued for a pension of \$80 per month, the amount for a Private who served at least two years. The certificate was sent to C. E. Wilson of the House of Representatives.]

[The following report is by US District Attorney Washington G. Singleton who investigated hundreds of pension applications from present West Virginia. For details see my appendix to the pension application of David W. Sleeth S6111.]

John Curtis. Served 2 yr.

I the undersigned John Curtis in pursuance of the requisition of the Secretary of War give the following narrative of my services as a soldier in the war of the Revo. and statement of my age to wit.

I am a native of Lancaster County Pa. was born on the 5th May 1753. I lived in the county of Frederick Va. during the war of the Revo. I think it was in the year 1776 I was drafted in Frederick County Va. to serve in the army west of the alleghania mountains [sic: Allegheny Mountains] against the Indians. I refused to stand the draft and went into Pennsylvania to evade pursuit which was made . On getting to the Square and compass, a tavern in Lancaster cty. Pa. on the road from Lanca. to Philadelphia I fell in with then Capt Gardner a recruiting officer under whom I enlisted for three years or during the war, Capt Garner or Gardner marched his Company (about sixty men) to Hicken bridge Pa. then joined Genl Washingtons army was attached to Col. Gibbons Regt. dont recollect its number. Majors Bowl & Bartholamy's Batalion. Gen'l. Irwin was also at Hicken bridge and in command. Capt Garner's company to which I belonged was a rifle company. his Lieut. & Ensign was James Jack & William Moore. our company was scouting about was marched from Post to Post some times pursueing & some times being

pursued by the enemy. at Sweets ford we fell in a party of Hessians and fired upon them. they after spikeing one of our swivels [swivel guns] and casting it into the Schoolskill retreated across the river without returning our fire – they had come across the river for the purpose of plundering – after our company had been ranging about and around this country for about two years [sic] we returned to Hicken bridge and joined the army then under Genl. Washington. Shortly after we rejoined Washington he had an engagement with the British army – the latter occupied Chesnut Hill. our army the room[?] between Chessnut and [illegible] Hill on the Hights of the latter Hill Genl. Washington was stationed. during the engagement a flag was sent in from the British army asking a cessation of Hostilities. the proposition was declined by General Washington. the british army made a charge upon the Americans, the latter retreated. – in this engagement I received a wound from Musket ball just above the knee. (here he shewed the wound. it seemed to have been a severe one) – after recovering partially from the effects of my wound I was discharged and sent home. I got a written discharge which I sent on with my Declaration. I was upwards of two years in actual service. James Wheat wrote my Declaration to whom I gave the same statement in substance now given – he charged me \$20. In Witness of all which I hereto subscribe my name July 1 1835
Witness/ N. Goff [Nathan Goff] A Copy W G Singleton/ July 5 1835 John Curtis

[Curtis's pension was suspended presumably as a result of Singleton's investigation. I could find no explanation in the file except for the following unsigned and undated note not in Singleton's handwriting: "accord'g. to his own statemt he servd only 17 months – and this now doubtful." Curtis actually claimed to have served from May 1776 to at least Dec 1777.]

House of Rep's Ap'l 14, 1836.

Sir [James L. Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions], In bringing before the Committee certain revolutionary pension claims, I hope you will not think that I distrust, or in any way whatever censure your decisions. I do not. I have the utmost confidence in them, and in my reports to the House I have in nearly every instance been governed by them. But my constituents require this of me in some few instances & I of course must give their claims all attention. I therefore must again ask a favour of you, it is, to have prepared & send me copies of the pension papers of John Curtis of Ohio Co. Va. as soon as convenient. I am, Sir/ Most respectfully/ Wm. S. Morgan

Pension Agency/ NW Bank of Virginia/ December 7th 1837

Dear Sir [J. L. Edwards]

Accompanying this letter please receive two others addressed to me by Major Good & James S Wheat Esq in relation to the case of Jno Curtis.

From Mr Curtis' own representation and from the general opinion of those acquainted with him, I am convinced that he served in the Army of the Revolution, and think that he is justly entitled to a pension. He was formerly on the roll of the Richmond Agency. But at the time of Mr Singleton's investigation of the vouchers of Pension in this District, his name was stricken from the roll.

Mr Curtis is very old and imbecile; and in consequence of the almost entire failure of his memory may have made some contradictions or unsatisfactory statements to Mr Singleton; If such was the case, due allowance should be made for his very advanced age, and the failure of his mind. He is, as is represented in the accompanying note of Mr Wheats, in very necessitous circumstances and upon the whole it would be not only an Act of Justice but of Charity to replace his name on the roll.

The statements of Major Good and Mr Wheat may be relied upon as correct. The former is one of our oldest citisens, and both are gentlemen of the highest respectability

I am very respectfully/ Your obt Serv't/ Arche C Woods/ Pension Agent

[Parts missing from the right edge of the page are inferred in brackets.]

Col. Woods, Dear Sir: Accompanying this [illegible word] you have another from Major Good in relation to the pension of John Curtis, which has been suspended by order of the Com'r. of Pensions. You may remember my formerly requesting a letter from you to the Commissioner giving your opinion as to Curtis's right to a pens[ion] you thought you could do so, if you had seen a letter as I have here left, upon which to found your opinion.

Mr. Curtis & his wife, both very aged & infer[m] are now in necessitous circumstances, and the renewal of this pension would secure the few remaining years from penury and want. From the best information I have been able [to] obtain I am satisfied that he is justly entitl[ed] to the pension that was granted: and I am inc[lined] to believe that such a letter from you to the Commissioner as I have mentioned above, will secu[re] the restitution of this pension. You may theref[ore] have it in your power to relieve the wasnt of an aged & suffering soldier of his country.

Dec. 2^d 1837

Yours very respectfully/ James S. Wheat

To Col. Archibald Woods Pension Agent &c

Sir, Whilst I resided in Sharpsburg Washington County, Maryland, Mr. John Curtis came there to live, having just left the army. This was during the Revolutionary War. that he had served in the Army as he represented, was the general opinion and belief of the people in that place and neighbourhood, and I never heard the fact doubted by any one at that time. From the report and general belief of everyone at that time as to the fact of John Curtis having served in the Army as he represented, I am of the opinion that he ought to receive a pension.

Very respectfully yours &c.

Cascade farm/ November 15, 1837

John Good

NOTES:

Curtis appears to have served in the militia, in which enlistments were seldom for more than a few months per tour.

Gen. James Irvine lived until 28 April 1819.

On 9 May 1835 Curtis's original certificate was replaced by one for a pension of \$63.33 per year for 19 months service, sent to A. Woods of Wheeling.