Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements

Pension Application of William Reily W26377

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris

Personally appeared, William Reily before me, one of the Judges of thee district of Columbia, and declared upon his honor, that he served his Country as an Officer of the Revolutionary War for near nine years faithfully and truly — in the year 1775 as a Lieut. and Adjutant to a Malitia Regt. in Baltimore County, in 1776 as Lieut. in the Maryland flying Camp, in 1777 as a Captain in the 4th Maryland Regt. of Regulars which Rank he held to the close of the War in the Northern and Southern Army. The latter Commanded by General [Horatio] Gates until his misfortunes [defeat at the Battle of Camden SC, 16 Aug 1780], afterwards by that great and good man General Green [sic: Nathanael Greene] until the close of the War. When he returned from the city of Charleston by sea triumphant to Annapolis with the only Regt. left out of eight which the State of Md. furnished for the Southern Army. that he never lost a tour of duty by Idle furloughs or sickness, that he was blessed with a Constitution suitable to any climate, that he never received any compensation from the United States except a final settlement certificate, which he retained some time and at last, from necessity, had to dispose of it for one eighth its nominal value, upon the general supposition that the Government would never be able to redeem them. That I am now in reduced circumstances & need the assistance of my Country for [signed] Wm. Reily support.

City of Washington Mar 23rd 1818.

City of Washington 2 Feb'y 1820

Sir I received Mr. Edwards [Commissioner of Pensions] letter from the Pension Office requesting an explanatory statement showing that from my reduced circumstances in life I require the assistance of Government for my support & that of my family, in answer to which I respectfully submit the following brief remarks to your consideration. That from a series of years of the most laborious and unremitting exertions, which was continued as long as health & strength would permit with the utmost assiduity in a business that of all others requires most the Strength & vigor of youth, combined with a perfect knowledge of mankind in order to make it profitable, that with the blessings of that Providence which so eminently protected the Patriot soldier of the Revolution I have until late years enjoyed the former, that I do not possess the latter is most evident from the many losses I have sustained & which now compels me in my old age to call on my native country in whose service I spent the Prime of life and endured with cheerfulness the many deprivations and hardships so inseparable from that Glorious Contest, that from the unfeeling, unrelenting disposition of an Individual Landlord callous to all the tender feelings of human nature, and to prevent a recurrence of a like similar treatment I resolved to become the Tenant of the Bank, in other words to obtain a Loan which has enabled me to rear a House only nominally my own that now rents for 650. dollars depending upon contingency for its continuance at that rent, in addition to which I receive a pension from the State of Maryland of 240. making with that of the U States 1130. dollars, out of which I pay Bank Curtails, BK [bank?] discount, Taxes, insurance, & repairs leaving me a balance wherewith I just subsist as I hope it will so appear to you. the House I now reside in belongs to my Son in the BK. of Washington who is also indebted to the Bank so that it takes all that he can save & that of his Brother to comply with the unceasing importunities of the BK which increase with the depressure of the times, all which facts are respectfully submitted, the result of which I hope may be that I am fairly entitled to receive the pension from the U States.

I have the honor to be very Respectfully yr. ob. Serv't. Wm Reily

District of Columbia } SS County of Washington}

On this twenty third day of July, one thousand eight hundred and thirty eight, personally appeared before the subscriber one of the assistant Judges of the Circuit Court of the United States for the said District, Mrs. Barbara Reily a resident of the City of Washington in said

county and District aged about Sixty five years, who being duly sworn according to law, doth on her oath, make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed the Seventh day of July, eighteen hundred and thirty eight entitled "An act granting half pay and pensions to certain widows."

That she is the widow of Major William Reily who was a Pensioner under the act of Congress of the eighteenth of March eighteen hundred and eighteen as a Captain.

And that, by the documents now on file in the Pension Office, and reference being had thereto it will more fully appear that in the year 1775 he was a 2nd Lieutenant & Adjutant in a regiment of Militia in Baltimore County, Maryland. That in 1776 he was a 2nd Lieut in Captain John Egar Howard's [John Eager Howard's] company, Col. J. C. Hall's [Josiah Carvel Hall's] Regiment. That in the same year he was a 1st Lieutenant in captain Godman's company 4th Maryland Regiment, Col. J. C. Hall, & that in 1777 he was promoted, by the resignation of Capt. Dan Dorsy to a Captaincy, in which grade (with a brevet rank of Major,) he continued to serve his Country until the close of the Revolution. The Regiment in which he last served was commanded by Colonel John Egar Howard in General Greens division in the most memorable campaign of the South, and that his services, commencing with the earliest period of the War continued for eight or nine years without intermission of duty.

She further declares that she was married to the said Major William Reily on or about the twenty eighth of September in the year of our Lord seventeen hundred and ninety one (28th Sept'r 1791) as will appear by the accompanying paper, in his own handwriting, noting that and other circumstances. that her husband the aforesaid Major William Reily died on or about the Eighth day of July, eighteen hundred and twenty four (8th July 1824) that she was not married to him prior to his leaving the service, but that the marriage took place previous to the first of January, Seventeen hundred and ninety four (1 Jany 1794), viz, at the time within stated, And that she has not since married [signed] Barbara Reily

NOTES:

[Extract from a letter to the Board of War in Philadelphia]
Gentlemen Head of Elk [now Elkton MD] 30th June 1780

Just now arrived Capt'n. William Reily with the Inveleads of the Maryland Division. am sorry they did not come time enough to go with the Convoy, could not imployed a vessell to transport them without impressing one which is very disagreeable Capt'n. Wm. Reily also insists I shall procure one for him at Baltimore as he has Gen'l. Gests orders for forwarding some stores and soldiers from there. I have therefore wrote Mr. Poe [David Poe, Assistant Deputy Quartermaster General; grandfather of Edgar Allen Poe] on the subject desiring his assistance to Capt Wm. Reily (Money must be had or can go no further) shall not have a waggoner left in ten days from this date they are all going a Harvesting where they can get more Dollars pr day than they now get pr month with the advantage of drink, (which argues much with those people) and being paid every Saturday night. with me they have received no pay since February, nor have I been able to give them any....

H Hollingsworth D.Q.M.G'l [probably Deputy Quarter Master General]

Reily also appears among officers publicly remonstrating with Brig. Gen. William Smallwood: Scharf, Col. J. Thomas. *The Chronicles of Baltimore*. Baltimore: Turnbull Brothers, 1874. pp. 183, 184.

"We find the following publication in the Maryland Gazette of Jan. 5th, 1779, in relation to Capt. Norwood, who was court-martialled and dismissed from service for disobedience of orders. It was followed by another of March 1st, 1780, which shows the feeling of certain Continental officers towards Gen. Smallwood:

'For the Maryland Gazette:

Mr. Printer:-As I have been dismissed from a service to which a love of country had attached me, and apprehensive the public would not (without evidence to the contrary) discriminate between me and those who have been dismissed for dishonorable conduct, I beg leave to assure them through your paper, that I have suffered this heavy misfortune for only saying General Smallwood was a partial man and no gentleman. The following certificate voluntarily

given me, will satisfy them of the general tenor of my conduct, and I reserve myself to a proper time, to lay open to the world the whole proceedings of the several Courts which have led to my dismission, where, I am sorry to say, such a system of despotism will appear to be springing up in our army, that an officer who does his duty ever so exactly, and has neglected to pay a servile court to a haughty superior, holds his commission by a very precarious tenure. I am, Sir, yours and the public's most humble servant, Edward Norwood.

Dec. 28th, 1778.'

'The officers of the 2d Maryland brigade do testify that Captain Norwood, (who is discharged the service by the sentence of a court-martial on a disagreement with Gen. Smallwood) during the campaigns in which he served with us, has ever conducted himself in such a manner as to command our warmest friendship and esteem, as an officer and a man of honor; and that notwithstanding his dismission, is and ought to be, esteemed as a gentleman, and valued as a warm friend and advocate for the liberties of his country.

Second Regiment: Thomas Price, Col.; Lilbourn Williams, Capt.; James McCalmont, Surgeon; Hezekiah Ford, Ensign; Edward Edgely, Adjutant; John Gassaway, Lieut.; Edward Dyer, Lieut. and B. Q. M.; Benjamin Price, Lieut.; John Read, Ensign; James Ewing, Lieut.

Fourth Regiment: Josias Carvel Hall, Col.; Samuel Smith, Lieut.-Col.; John E. Howard, Major; Alexander L. Smith, Capt.; Thomas Lansdale, Capt.; Joseph Burgess, Capt.; Edward Oldham, Capt.; James Smith, Lieut.; John S. Belt, Lieut.; Edward Spurrier, Lieut.; Thomas Cromwell, Lieut.; Adam Hoops, Lieut.; Stephen Shelmedine, Lieut.; John Hamilton, Ensign; Nathaniel Twining, Ensign; John Bowen, Ensign; Parker H. Lee, Ensign; John Hartshorn, Adjutant; Richard Pindell, Surgeon; William Riley, Lieut.

Sixth Regiment: Otho H. Williams, Col.; Benjamin Ford, Lieut.-Col.; Andrew Hynes, Capt.; Henry Dobson, Capt.; James Bruff, Lieut.; Joshua Miles, Capt.; Jacob Norris, Lieut.; Richard Donovan, Adjutant; George Jacobs, Lieut.; Benjamin Wright, Lieut.; Charles Beaver, Lieut.; Thomas Parran, Surgeon.

German Regiment: Ludwick Weltner, Lieut.-Col.; Daniel Buchores, Major; George Hubley, Capt.; Peter Boyer, Capt.; Charles Baltzel, Capt.; Bernard Hubley, Capt.; Michael Boyer, Capt.; Martin Shughart, Lieut.; Christian Myers, Capt.; James F. Armstrong, Chaplain."

'Camp, March 1st, 1780.

To William Smallwood, Esq., Brigadier-General:

Sir:--We have no doubt but the joint assertion of a small number of inferior officers will be as much credited, by that part of mankind who have spirit to think for themselves, as the mere ipse dixit of a brigadier; therefore, choose only to remark, that your scurrilous observations on the testimony we gave of our favorable opinion of Capt. Norwood, discovers the malevolence and presumption, more than the probity and liberality of your mind.

'With due respect, we are yours, Otho H. Williams, Benjamin Price, Benjamin Ford, Edward Edgerly, John E. Howard, Hezekiah Foard, Harry Dobson, William Reily, James Bruff, Adam Hoops, Thomas Parran, John Hamilton, R. Donovan, John Hartshorn, Lil Williams, Richard Pendleton, John Gassaway.

N. B.--The other gentlemen, whom you took occasion to abuse in your ungentlemanly performance of 105 pages, are out of camp."

Reily's will dated 13 July 1821 in Washington, DC, left to "wife Barbara Reily, lot situated at northwest corner of Pennsylvania Ave., and 12th St., touching line of Robert King, together with dwelling house and kitchen standing on the ground; to maintain 'our beloved daughter Susan' whom I hereby thankfully commit to her protection."

The paper referred to in the widow's application states that the marriage occurred "at Bloomsbury near Baltimore the seat of her Father, Thomas Brooke Hodgkin Esq," and it lists three children born in Augusta GA, Philadelphia, and Jamaica.

On 21 Feb 1831 Thos. B. Reily wrote to the pension office stating that his father had continued receiving a pension until 4 Sep 1819, "when by some unaccountable error, or inimical

design, he was stricken from the Rolls." He applied on behalf of his mother for the final payment up to 4 Mar 1820. A Treasury document dated 20 Apr 1853 indicates that such payment was made to "the three children of William Reily dec'd."