Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension Application of Abner Gordon (Gorden) W8859 Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Elizabeth Gordon VA

State of Tennessee } ss. Circuit Court Jan'y Term 1841

Hawkins County } on this 27th day of January 1841 personally appeared in open Court Abner Gordon a resident of the county and state aforesaid, aged Eighty

three 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 in the latter part of the fall of the year 1779 seventeen hundred seventy nine at Brunswick Court House (old) in the State of Virginia for during the war. Two men by the names of William Stephenson & William Betty were drafted, and they procured this declarant to enter the Continental Army as a regular Soldier, in order to release them from the tour they were called upon to perform – and accordingly this declarant entered as a Regular Soldier in the Regiment commanded by, as he thinks, Col. Davis [sic: William Davies], who was commanding at Chesterfield Court House to which this affiant was marched under the command of Capt. Overton [probably John Overton] of said Regiment of the Virginia line. He resided in Brunswick County when he enlisted, after remaining at Chesterfield some months he was marched under a Captain Parker into South Carolina to a place called Mulberry Grove, and after remaining in said state some time he was marched to Savannah in Georgia and then he was marched back to South Carolina & finally he came under the command of General [Nathanael] Greene and was marched to Guilford Court House sometime in the month of February 1781 and this declarant was in the battle of Guilford [Guilford Courthouse, 15 Mar 1781], which took place sometime in the month following, after the battle, he with his company were marched back to Virginia and he then came under the command of Baron Steuban [sic: Gen. Baron von Steuben] at Petersburgh [sic: Petersburg] or rather below the Town after a slight skirmish with the British in passing over the Apommatox [sic: Appomattox River] this declarant with the troops under the command of Baron Steuban retreated towards Richmond, after joining the Marquis La Fayette [Marquis de Lafayette] he was marched to the Point Forks at the confluence of the Rivers Rivannah & Fluvanna [sic: Point of Fork at the confluence of Rivanna and James rivers] From Point of Forks Steuban proceeded on his march to join Gen'l [Anthony] Wayne, which was finally accomplished by Steuban & La Fayette [10 Jun 1781] after this junction the Brittish Army under Cornwallis was followed towards Williamsburgh [sic: Williamsburg] and after a slight skirmish, with them, the American army encamped some distance above Williamsburgh, near James River. He was in no other action until the Battle at York [sic: siege of Yorktown] and the surrender of Lord Cornwallis [19 Oct]. This Declarant was in that battle, and was afterwards honorably discharged at the end of the war, which was in the latter part of 1782 he thinks. There was a Capt Lovely [possibly William Lewis Lovely] this affiant occasionly served under. His memory is defective, and he may have made some slight mistakes, but he served from the time of enlistment to the end of the war, was three years. He thinks, tho' he maybe mistaken, that he served some times in the 5th Virginia Regiment

The reason he never applied before this time he was informed that he could not get a pension unless he proved his services by two soldiers which he has been unable to do. His discharge has been lost some time ago.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or an annuity except the present and he declares his name is not on the pension roll of any agency in any state Sworn to & subscribed the day and year aforesaid

Abner hisXmark Gordon

State of Tennessee } This 4th day of April 1842 personally appeared Abner Gordon, a resident of Hawkins County } Hawkins County, aged about Eighty five years, an applicant for a Pension before the undersigned, one of the Justices of the County Court of Hawkins aforesaid, & the said Abner Gordon

being first duly sworn, according to law, deposeth & saith, That some time last Spring he made out his declaration for a Pension in which he set forth his Services, as near as he could remember. His declaration was written by Mr Dicks Alexander, who took down his statement, as he made it, but as Mr Alexander did not ask me if I served in any other capacity than a private, I forgot to name to him that I had served as a Drummer, which I now do – under the drum Major, Harris, for Twelve Months or more in the 5th Virginia Regiment. Sworn to & subscribed before me the day & year aforesaid. John Ball JP for Hawkins County

[Certified by Dicks Alexander.]

Abner hisXmark Gordon

State of Tennessee }

for said county John Rains [possibly pension application W5659] aged a bout eighty five years of age a citizen of said county, and the said John Rains being duly sworn according to Law deposeth and saith that he is a pensioner of the united States at the agency at Jonesboro, the same one who testified in the application of Abner Gorden for a Pension, that the said Gorden and this affiant served together in the Revolutionary War in the Virginia line and were discharged together affiant further states that he was not asked at the time he was examined, if said Gorden served as a Drummer affiant now states that said Gorden did serve some length of time as a Drummer in the Virginia line, and beleaves as said Gorden States, that he served Twelve months or more said Gorden is an old man and his memory very defective from age as he formerly stated, this affiant verrely beleaves said Gorden served as he states, and is well entitled to a pension, this Affiant beleaved that a Drummer was in fact nothing but a private, and that his stating that he was a Drummer would not increase his pension.

Sworn to and subscribed before me This 30th May 1842

John hisXmark Rains

NOTE:

On 2 April 1853 Elizabeth Gordon, 73, of Hancock County TN, applied for a pension stating that she married Abner Gordon on 4 Feb 1806, and he died on 5 June 1842. A William Gorden (as he signed) stated that the marriage occurred in Lunenburg County VA. On 29 Sep 1854 she applied again adding that her marriage was officiated by Rev John Niblet after publication of banns. On 6 Dec 1854 at age 75 she applied again, adding that she married Abner Gordon, who had been "a private (or drum Major)," about 1 June 1798.

The file contains the following letter to the Commissioner of Pensions from Thomas Martin of Sneedsville TN:

"May 3^d 55 Sir

Upon examination I find that Abner Gorden Left his Lawful wife and 2 Children in the State of North Carolina and that Elizabeth Gorden who is now placed on the pension Roll is not his Lawful wife and as I was not in possesion of that fact at the time I made application for her a pension I deem it my duty to inform you of that fact Sir I remain yours/ Respectfully/ Thomas Martin"

On 25 Aug 1856 Elizabeth Gordon stated that her pension had been suspended without explanation, but that she had subsequently been informed that it was because of the above allegation, which arose from a disagreement about the fee Martin was to collect for preparing her application. She stated that in 1809 she and her husband moved from Lunenburg County to Granville County NC where they lived until June 1839, when they moved to the part of Hawkins County that became Hancock County. She stated that there was no proof of the marriage except for the statements of others that she and Abner Gordon lived as man and wife. Her statement was accompanied by supporting documents from witnesses in which the children of Abner and Elizabeth Gordon were listed as William, Alice, David, Elizabeth, James Henry, Martha, and Mary Ann. The eldest was said to be about 50, and the youngest about 28. Martin repeated the allegation on 2 Oct 1856, but the only evidence he cited was a statement he claimed to have heard from a man who had since died.

On 3 Jan 1857 Elizabeth Gordon successfully reapplied for a pension stating that she was about

77, that her maiden name was Elizabeth Maiden, that she married Abner Gordon in 1809, that they had seven children, the oldest being about 46 and the youngest about 29, and that her husband died in Hancock County on or about 5 June 1843.

On 21 Aug 1866 at age 85 and on 4 May 1868 at age 88 Elizabeth Gordon applied for restoration of her pension, which had been suspended during the Civil War, during which time she was "supported by her friends."

On 16 May 1868 and on 4 Nov 1871 Elizabeth Gordon applied for an increase in pension. Her age at the latter application was given as 93.