

American Communal Societies Quarterly

Volume 14 | Number 4

Pages 331-335

10-1-2020

Appendix 4: [Memoranda Concerning Military Pensions submitted by the New Lebanon and Watervliet, New York, Shaker Communities to the New York State Legislature, 1825.]

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Appendix 4

[Memoranda Concerning Military Pensions submitted by the New Lebanon and Watervliet, New York, Shaker Communities to the New York State Legislature, 1825. I-A:20, OCIWHi]

To A. L. Jordan Esq. Chairman of the Select committee to whom was referred the Memorial of the United Society called Shakers.

In compliance with the directions of the committee we have made out the following Memoranda concerning the military pensions, bounty lands &c. legally due to members of sd society, and also respecting the maintenance of the poor of the society. By a minute examination into these matters we find that the amount exceeds our previous statements; but as we believe them to be substantially correct, they are respectfully submitted to the consideration of the committee.

In behalf of the Society
Watervliet Feb. 3 1825

Names of persons who served in the Revolutionary war. and who were entitled to pensions &c.

Jonathan Slosson enlisted January [blank] 1776 under Capt. Shepherd of Westfield, Massachusetts in the Regiment commanded by Col. E. Porter of Arnold's Brigade. He was wounded at the battle of Jones's bridge, between Fort Edward and Fort Ann, tuesday July 22, 1777—had his right hand nearly ruined—was then in a company commanded by Capt. Aaron Rowley—Became a member of the Society of Shakers in 1780—has been considered or entitled to more than 47 years' pension. Say \$2820

Being one of the soldiers who served thro' the year 1776, he is considered as entitled to 100 acres of bounty land. Taken from his own mouth, and confirmed by his brothers David and Nathan Slosson—

Pension 2820—19.267.90

Land 250—250.00

\$2070 = 19.517.90

Hezekiah Rowland enlisted in 1775 under Capt. Tho. Tanner of New Lebanon. He was taken prisoner at the capture of Fort Washington Nov 16th 1776—was disabled by a bayonet wound in his right leg—was with many others poisoned by the British, while a prisoner in New York, the effects of which endangered his life for several years, & from which he never fully recovered—He was parolled in 1777, but remained a prisoner

of war when he joined the society in 1780. He was entitled to seven years' pay. The money was afterwards offered him by his captain, but refused from a principle of conscience. He deceased Nov 23, 1823. Considered as entitled to a pension for 47 years—Also entitled to 100 acres of bounty lands from the United States government, and as he served in the lines of the state of New York, he is supposed to have been entitled to 640 acres of bounty lands from this state. Entitled to 7 years pay at \$96

\$672

47 years pension at \$40 2256

U. States Bounty Land 8250 N.Y. State do 2560 2010

5738

Tho the said Hezekiah Rawland has deceased: yet according to his written covenant of agreement, all his right and claim of whatever nature or description, was by him transferred to the Trustees of the Society in which he lived for the use and benefit of said society. Taken from his own mouth while living, and confirmed by several others.

Asa Farnham, a regular soldier—served several years during the revolutionary war—was wounded in the hip by a musket ball, which penetrated the bone & could never be extracted; he lived many years, but finally died in consequence of the wound. He was considered as entitled to a full pension, say, for 24 years,—was also entitled to 100 acres of bounty lands. Tho he is now dead, his son & heir, James Farnham, who is now living in the society, is considered as legally entitled to the same.

Entitled to 24 years pension at \$60 \$1440

100 Acres Bounty Land [blank] 250

\$1690

Taken from the son James & confirmed by others.

Duncan McArthur, a regular soldier of 1776—lost 7 of his toes by frost while in actual service—which has been a great disadvantage to him ever since—considered as entitled to a pension for 47 years

47 years pension at \$1410

Taken from his own mouth.

Peter Bishop, enlisted under Capt. John Shepherd of Westfield, Massachusetts, as early as the beginning of the year 1776—was an orderly sergeant of the company, and—Quarter Master sergeant to the Regiment, commanded by Col. E. Porter. Served mostly thro' the war—is now dead. His heirs supposed entitled to bounty lands—100 Ac[res]. \$250

Taken from the mouth of Jonathan Slosson who belonged to the same company, and confirmed by said Bishop's sons now in the society.

Robert Cunningham, a regular soldier in the revolutionary war—

served several years—was supported by the society many years from motives of charity, while in a state of consumptive decline, of which he died—Being destitute of property he was, by the pension law, entitled to 3 years pension at the time of his decease—According to his agreement the family of the Society in which he died is entitled to his claims if they chose to enforce it—

Entitled to 3 years pension at \$96 a year—\$288

Solomon Higly enlisted & served several years in the revolutionary war—He was supported by the society, and member thereof for several years, after being, in consequence of old age, unable to labour, and being destitute of property to support himself—He is now dead; but was, at the time of his decease entitled by the pension law, to 4 years pension—

4 years pension at 96 dollars a year \$384

Elisha Parker, a regular soldier, served through the revolutionary war—Until he was taken prisoner at the capture of Charleston, S. Carolina, May 12th, 1780—Entitled to 100 acres of land on this own account, and also to 100 acres as heir to his father, who was also a revolutionary soldier, and entitled to to bounty lands. About 3 years ago, a military agent offered to procure these lands for him, but, he declined the offer. Taken from his own mouth

—500

Gideon Cole enlisted in July 1775 under Capt. Caleb Carr of Warren R.I. in a Regiment commanded by Col. Richmond. He served one year and was regularly discharged—Having never possessed any property, and being now unable to support himself, is considered as entitled to 7 years pension at 96 dollars a year—\$672

The pension above from the year 1818 unto the year of 1840, when Gideon died, at compound Int[erest] amtd to to \$4,706.83.

Theodore Bates enlisted in the continental army about April 1779 in a regiment commanded by Col. Voorhees, being the first regiment under Gen. Glover—served 4 months & was regularly discharged—He soon after enlisted again & served 6 months in the same division of the army—was then regularly discharged—In 1782 he enlisted again in the same division & served till the end of the war & was again regularly discharged in June 1784. His whole term of service exceeded 3 years. Supposed to be entitled to 100 acres of bounty lands.

Being destitute of property he is considered as entitled by the pension law to 6 years pension at 96 dollars \$576

Taken from his own mouth & confirmed by others.

100 acres bounty lands at \$.50 [blank] \$250

Jonathan Mills, enlisted July 1775 under Capt. Baker of Chester N. Hampshire, in the brigade commanded by Gen. Green—served one year and was regularly discharged- He afterwards enlisted again under Capt. Reynolds in the Regiment of Col. Nicolls- The whole term of his service was 4 years & one month when he was regularly discharged- He came into the society without property—was then an aged man- brought in his very aged mother-in-law who was supported several years by the society, being unable to support herself—He is considered as entitled to 6 years pension at 96 dollars—576

He is also supposed to be entitled to 100 acres of bounty lands—at \$2.50—\$250

Benoni Wright a regular soldier of the revolutionary army—Being destitute of property, or any relations in the society, was supported many years by the society—lived to be upwards of 90 years of age, and for 20 years was scarcely able to perform any manual labour—is now dead—and at this time of his decease was entitled to 4 years pension.

at 96 dollars per annual—\$384

There are several other members of the society to whom arrears for military services were due; some of whom had the money offered them after they embraced the faith of the Society in 1780, but conscientiously declined accepting it—But it is our wish, in making out our estimate, to keep within the bounds of moderation; we therefore forbear to particularize these minor claims.

It may be objected that the claims of the pensioners mentioned in the statement might have been brought forward & the money received before the claimants joined the society; and therefore their claims ought not to be reckoned previous to that time—In answer to this we would observe that the Act of Congress granting pensions was not passed until the year 1780, the very year in which most of those who were disabled in the service joined the society, which was the cause of their declining to make application; and as the law allows the pension money to be drawn from the time the disability took place, it seems but just and reasonable that it should be reckoned from that period.

In the article of expense for the maintenance of the poor, we consider the following a moderate estimate—

There are within the bounds of the society no less than 14 persons supported by the society who never brought in any property, and who, in consequence of advanced age or disability, are unable to support themselves—some of them have never been able since their first commission with the society.

Calculating the annual expense of supporting each of these at 50 dollars, which we consider a low estimate, the amount is \$700—We consider this estimate, both in point of numbers and expense, not to exceed on an average the estimate of many year past.—

There are now in the society not less than 30 children from one to ten years of age all of which are either orphans or the children of parents who were unable to support and bring them up—These are all supported and schooled at the expense of the society—

Note. We would remark that with respect to the maintenance of the poor by the society, it would be entirely contrary to our religious faith & consciences to allow any person citizen, male or female, who has been proved a faithful member of the society, to suffer want, whatever may be their age or infirmity. Yet the society has taken in many, both aged & children who were poor & needy, merely from motives of benevolence & charity, without feeling under any obligations to them whatever—and this practice we might discontinue without any violation of our religious principles.

We cannot estimate the average expense of these 30 children at less than 50 cents each week, which will amount to 780 dollars annually. And we believe the annual expense of the society, for the same purpose, for 15 years past, on an average, does not fall short of the above estimate.

We are far from wishing to make an ostentatious display of our acts of benevolence; but we feel it incumbent upon us to demonstrate that it is not from parsimonious views that we seek an exemption from military requisitions. We are therefore induced to state, in addition to the foregoing, that the public donations of the society, in repeated instances of conflagrations, pestilence & to the suffering poor not of the society, who are daily calling upon us for relief, and which, at a moderate estimate, cannot be less than \$1500 annually, for more than 30 years past—Add to this our labor & expenditures on the public highways, over & above our legal taxation, the amount of which has not been less than \$6000.

[Note: the texts of I:A-11 and III:A-17, OClWHi, are very similar to this document, although they provides less detail regarding the service of each veteran.]