

A SOLDIER'S LIFE REPORTS

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REAL ARCHIVAL FILE - This report reads the genuine Revolutionary War pension application of James Berry of the Delaware "Flying Camp" (National Archives, RG 15; file R.796), sworn at Cincinnati in 1845 when he was 85 years old. It is a claim the government never placed on the rolls: his discharge had been lost years earlier and Delaware's surviving records confirmed only a name on a 1776 pay roll. We publish it because that is what a great many Revolutionary files look like, and the report says only what the record says.

A REVOLUTIONARY WAR PENSION FILE REPORT

James Berry

Private · Capt. Thomas Skillington's company (Delaware Flying Camp); Capt. Charles Nixon's company (Delaware State Troops); Capt. D. Hall's company (per state pay roll) · Second (and later Third) Delaware Regiment / Flying Camp and Delaware State Troops, Continental and state service

Survivor's service pension (S, Act of June 7, 1832); catalog file R.796 / No. 32,335 — no documented rejection in the papers examined

Family Keepsake Edition · Researcher-Reviewed

Prepared September 2, 2026

Every fact in this report is traced to the page that states it.

Prepared from the original records of the United States National Archives (Record Group 15).

James Berry

Private, Capt. Thomas Skillington's company (Delaware Flying Camp); Capt. Charles Nixon's company (Delaware State Troops); Capt. D. Hall's company (per state pay roll), Second (and later Third) Delaware Regiment / Flying Camp and Delaware State Troops, Continental and state service

Short Biography

James Berry was an aged Revolutionary War veteran living in Cincinnati, Ohio, who applied for a federal pension in 1845 under the Act of June 7, 1832. He was born (by his own account) about 1759 or 1760 in Maryland on Deer Creek, and enlisted from Delaware. He described serving first in the Delaware Flying Camp under Captain Thomas Skillington in 1776, then as a volunteer under Captain Charles Nixon, and later in a third short enlistment around 1780. He gave a vivid but decades-old account of skirmishes, the capture of Hessians, and the battles of Trenton and Princeton. His original claim papers had been lost years earlier when the man he entrusted them to (Samuel F. Hunt) died. The Delaware state records confirmed only that a James Berry appeared on Captain D. Hall's pay roll as a private in 1776. Because he had given his age as about 85 in 1845, the file leaves his exact birth year and the outcome of his claim uncertain.

The Story of James Berry, Old Soldier of Cincinnati

On the second day of April 1845, an old man came before the Court of Common Pleas in Hamilton County, Ohio, and swore that he was James Berry, a resident of the City of Cincinnati, aged eighty-five years, and a soldier of the Revolution. He was applying, at long last, for the pension the government had offered surviving veterans under the Act of Congress of June 7, 1832 (p.2).

Berry told the court that he had entered the service in the State of Delaware, in the Second Delaware Regiment of the Flying Camp under Thomas Skillington, whose colonel was Henry Neal of Lewistown. This was in 1776, and he said his name was registered at Dover in Delaware. He served four months in that regiment. Afterward, he said, he volunteered in Charles Nixon's company and was in a skirmish at the mouth of Sloat Creek at the time General Arnold was about to invite General Washington to dinner (p.2). He recalled being with the party that attacked a British barge and killed five and wounded eight; being one of the men who took nine Hessians and nine British regulars in late October 1776; and being sent by General Mercer with a flag of truce to Staten Island. He said he was at the Battle of Trenton when the Hessians were taken, and at Princeton (pp.2–3). These are an old man's memories, told nearly seventy years after the events, and they cannot be independently confirmed from the papers in this file — they are recorded here as he gave them.

He explained why he had no discharge to show. He once had a certificate of discharge from Colonel Allen McLean, but it had been lost or mislaid. About nineteen or twenty years earlier he had placed papers about his service in the hands of Samuel F. Hunt, Esq., of Cincinnati, who undertook to help him get a pension — but Hunt died shortly after, having effected nothing, and Berry could never recover the papers and could not say what became of them (p.3). Two Cincinnati men, the clergyman William Burke and Hugh McDougal, swore that they knew Berry, believed him to be eighty-five, and that he was reputed in the neighborhood to have been a soldier of the Revolution (p.3).

When the court questioned him, Berry answered that he was born in the State of Maryland on Deer Creek, that he had no record of his age but only tradition from his parents, and that he was born the 14th of October in the year 1759 (p.4). He said he had lived in Maryland (Chester Town, then Cecil County, then Baltimore) before coming to Cincinnati, where he had lived about twenty-five years. He named the officers he remembered — Colonel Henry Neal, Captain Skillington, Captain Charles Nixon, Lieutenants Benjamin Gibby and David Maxwell, General Mercer, and Lieutenant James Frazer (p.4).

A few weeks later, on June 18, 1845, Berry gave an additional declaration filling in more detail — a third enlistment in 1780 under Captain Charles Nixon in the Third Delaware Regiment for four months, service at West Point at the very time of Arnold's treason and Major André's capture, and afterward a company of minute men under Colonel Charles Pope kept up to the end of the war to keep down the Tories (pp.7–8). He described retaking a vessel of provisions the British had taken at Duck Creek, and being on guard the day the Tory Cheney Clough was hanged at Dover. In this telling some of the numbers shifted — the barge fight now killed five and wounded eight, the Hessians taken numbered '900 or 1000' at Trenton, and prisoners at Princeton were 'about 400' — the kind of drift that comes with old memory (pp.2, 7).

Berry's attorney, Hugh McDougal, wrote to the Pension Office and to Delaware's Secretary of State to try to find his name in the old state rolls (p.10). The answer came in early 1846: John Wales, Secretary of State of Delaware and keeper of the Revolutionary records, certified that the name of James Berry was on the pay roll of Captain D. Hall's company as a private in 1776 — but that the records were so imperfect that no further information could be obtained (p.21). That single line is the only official confirmation in the whole file, and it names a captain (Hall) Berry never mentioned.

The claim moved through the Pension Office for several years, with letters passing among the attorney, Congressman J. J. Farran, and Commissioner J. L. Edwards (pp.16, 18, 20). By April 1849 a letter written on behalf of 'Jas. Berry's heirs' asked the office whether the money had ever been paid — suggesting that by then Berry himself had died, though the file records no date of his death (p.19). The file's printed cover carries the shelf label 'INVALID' and a stamp reading 'REJECTED,' but neither is a reliable account of what happened: the 'INVALID' is only a shelf category, and the file holds no document stating the ground of any rejection (p.11). What became of James Berry, and whether his heirs were ever paid, the papers do not say.

Service Strands

Berry described several distinct enlistments across his two declarations. Each is recorded here with its evidentiary basis.

1. Delaware Flying Camp, 1776 (four months) — Second Delaware Regiment of the Flying Camp under Captain Thomas Skillington, Colonel Henry Neal; name said registered at Dover (pp.2, 4, 7). *Basis: sworn declaration, aged recollection (FOWF)*. The only official record — Delaware's certification — places a James Berry on Capt. D. Hall's pay roll as a private in 1776, a different captain (p.21).

2. Volunteer under Capt. Charles Nixon, Delaware State Troops (four months) — a skirmish at the mouth of Sloat/Stoat Creek; the barge attack; taking Hessians and British regulars in late October 1776; flag of truce to Staten Island for Gen. Mercer; Trenton and Princeton (pp.2–3, 4). *Basis: sworn declaration, aged recollection (FOWF); no corroboration in file.*

3. Third Delaware Regiment under Capt. Charles Nixon, 1780 (four months) — service at West Point, a brush with a British barge, present at the time of Arnold's treason and André's capture (p.7). *Basis: sworn additional declaration, aged recollection (FOWF); no corroboration in file.*

4. Company of minute men under Col. Charles Pope, 1780 to end of war — kept up to suppress Tories; retook a provision vessel at Duck Creek; on guard when the Tory Cheney Clough was hanged at Dover (p.8). *Basis: sworn additional declaration, aged recollection (FOWF); no corroboration in file.*

Note that strands 1–2 are Continental/Flying-Camp and Delaware state service; strands 3–4 are state troops and militia. Records for Delaware line and state troops are held at the state level, which is why the file's only official check came from Delaware's Secretary of State.

Documented Negative Results

- **Delaware state records fragmentary (John Wales certification, 28 Feb 1846, p.21):** the Secretary of State certified that James Berry's name is on the pay roll of Capt. D. Hall's company as a private in 1776, 'but that the Records are so imperfect, no further information can be obtained from them.' This is a finding, not a failure — it both confirms a 1776 pay-roll entry and documents that the state's rolls cannot establish the rest of the claimed service. This should be treated as a permanent evidentiary ceiling for the state-held records.
- **Lost discharge and lost claim papers (declaration, p.3; additional declaration, pp.7–8):** Berry's discharge certificate from Col. Allen McLean was lost or mislaid; papers earlier entrusted to Samuel F. Hunt were never recovered after Hunt's death.
- **No answer yet from Delaware at time of second declaration (p.8):** as of 18 June 1845 Berry declared he had received no answer to the letter requesting the Delaware Secretary of State to examine the old records.

Marriage and Children

This file contains **no evidence of a marriage or of any children**. It is a veteran's own service-pension claim under the Act of 1832, not a widow's claim, so no spouse is named. A single 1849 letter refers to 'Jas. Berry's heirs' on whose behalf an inquiry was made (p.19), but it names no heir and states no relationship. Any family reconstruction must come from records outside this file.

Claim Timeline

- **1776** — James Berry on the pay roll of Capt. D. Hall's company as a private (per Delaware certification, p.21); Berry's own account of Flying Camp and volunteer service (pp.2–3).
- **c. 1825–1826** — Berry entrusts service papers to Samuel F. Hunt, who dies shortly after without securing a pension (p.3; 'about twenty years ago' per p.7).
- **2 April 1845** — Berry's declaration in open court, Hamilton County, Ohio, under the Act of June 7, 1832, aged 85; witnesses William Burke and Hugh McDougal (pp.2–5).
- **10 April 1845** — H. McDougal writes to J. L. Edwards that he has written to the Secretary of State of Delaware to examine the old state rolls (p.10).
- **18 June 1845** — Berry's additional declaration in open court, sworn before deputy clerk R. B. Warden (pp.7–8).
- **25 June 1845** — supplemental papers received at the Pension Office (endorsement, p.6).

- **12 Feb 1846** — Hon. J. J. Farran asks the Commissioner of Pensions for a statement of the present position of Berry's claim (p.16).
- **28 Feb 1846** — date of John Wales's certification (p.21).
- **21 March 1846** — Farran encloses the certificate of John Wales, Secretary of State of Delaware, to the Commissioner (p.20).
- **1846 routing** — file jacket annotations: letters to H. McDougal (27 May), to Hon. J. J. Farran (Feb 28), letter to same April 1 1846, same Dec 30 '46 (p.12); 23 Dec 1846 memo to send Berry's papers to Hon. J. J. Farran (p.14).
- **20 April 1849** — Eldredge, Platt & Stewart write on behalf of 'Jas. Berry's heirs' asking whether the pension money was ever received; 'Set to Eldredge & Co. April 26, 1849' (pp.19, 12).
- **Death of James Berry — UNRESOLVED.** The 1849 reference to 'heirs' implies he had died by then, but no ledger, probate, or death record in this file states a date.

The Law Behind the Pension

Act of June 7, 1832 (4 Stat. 529, ch. 126). This is the act Berry filed under, cited by name in both his declarations (pp.2, 7) and on the file jacket ('Act 7 June '32,' pp.12, 15). The 1832 act was a universal service pension: any veteran of the Continental line, state troops, volunteers, or militia who served at least two years received full pay for life by rank (capped at a captain's pay); six months to two years earned a proportional annuity. No disability or indigence proof was required; the pension commenced March 4, 1831; and on the pensioner's death the accrued balance went to his widow or, failing her, his children (§4) — which is the mechanism a widow's or heirs' arrears claim rests on. Berry's total claimed service across all strands would need to reach at least six months to qualify for any annuity, and two years for a full one; the file establishes with record evidence only the single 1776 pay-roll entry (p.21), so whether his service met the two-year or the six-month threshold could not be proven from the surviving rolls.

No documented outcome / statutory test not resolvable from the file. The file does not contain a certificate of allowance or a document stating the ground of any rejection. The stamped 'REJECTED' and the printed 'INVALID' on the jacket (p.11) are, respectively, an unexplained stamp and a shelf label, not a reasoned adjudication. Because no allowance certificate or reasoned rejection survives here, the specific statutory test Berry met or failed under the 1832 act cannot be stated from this file — see Research Gaps.

(The Acts of July 14, 1862 and March 3, 1873 printed on the jacket at p.11 are Civil-War-era invalid-pension act citations on a re-used printed form; they have no bearing on this Revolutionary War claim.)

Named Social Network

- **William Burke** — clergyman of Cincinnati, character witness (pp.3, 5).
- **Hugh McDougal (H. McDougal)** — Cincinnati resident, character witness, and Berry's correspondent/agent (pp.3, 5, 10).
- **Edward C. Roll** — Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas, Hamilton County (pp.3, 5, 8).
- **R. B. Warden** — Deputy Clerk who administered the second oath (p.8).
- **Samuel F. Hunt (also 'Freeman Hunt')** — Cincinnati man to whom Berry earlier entrusted his papers; died (pp.3, 19).

- **Hon. J. J. Farran** — member of the House of Representatives who inquired on Berry's behalf (pp.12, 13, 16, 20).
- **J. L. Edwards** — Commissioner of Pensions (pp.6, 10, 16, 18, 19, 20).
- **John Wales** — Secretary of State of Delaware, keeper of Revolutionary records (pp.20, 21).
- **John Houston, Esq.** — named as a prior Secretary of State of Delaware whom McDougal wrote to (p.10).
- **Eldredge, Platt & Stewart** — Washington firm writing on behalf of Berry's heirs, 1849 (p.19).
- **Officers named in Berry's narrative** (recollected, FOWF): Col. Henry Neal, Capt. Thomas Skillington, Capt. Charles Nixon, Lt. Benjamin Gibby, Lt./Ensign David Maxwell, Gen. Hugh Mercer, Lt. James Frazer, Col. Allen McLean, Col. Charles Pope, Capt. D. Hall (from the state roll), and John Clayton (sheriff at Dover) (pp.2–4, 8, 21).

Who This File Proves — and What It Cannot

Identity anchors this file provides: the applicant is James Berry, resident of Cincinnati (City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio) about 1820–1845; born by his own account 14 October 1759 in Maryland on Deer Creek (implying age ~85 in 1845); prior residences in Maryland (Chester Town, Cecil County, Baltimore); enlisted from Delaware (listed in Kent County, Delaware, called into service at Smyrna); officers named as above; and record confirmation of a 'James Berry' on Capt. D. Hall's Delaware pay roll in 1776.

The boundary: this file can show what 'the James Berry' who applied in Cincinnati in 1845 said about his service, and that a man of that name appears on one 1776 Delaware pay roll. It cannot, by itself, prove that this man is any particular family's James Berry, nor that the Cincinnati applicant is the same James Berry on Hall's pay roll — 'Berry' was a common surname and same-named soldiers of the same era are common. Tying this soldier to a specific family line requires correlation with records outside this file (census, Delaware and Maryland county, church, land, and probate records). This report reads the file; it has not confirmed anyone's descent.

Research Gaps and Next Steps

- **Outcome of the claim.** No allowance certificate or reasoned rejection survives in the file; the 'REJECTED' stamp is unexplained. Because the claim was under the 1806 invalid line? — No: this is a 1832 service claim, so the outcome and any adverse reasoning would live in Pension Office ledgers and correspondence. Search NARA RG 15 pension ledgers and the payment records for any inscription or the ground of refusal.
- **Date and place of James Berry's death.** UNRESOLVED — implied before April 1849 by the 'heirs' letter (p.19) but stated nowhere. Search Hamilton County, Ohio probate/estate records and Cincinnati burial/church records; RG 217 / T718 Treasury pension payment ledgers.
- **Fuller service record.** Delaware's rolls are fragmentary (p.21). Consult the Delaware Public Archives for surviving Flying Camp, state-troop, and militia rolls (Capt. Hall, Capt. Skillington, Capt. Nixon, Col. Pope); and NARA M881 compiled service records / M246 rolls for any Continental component.
- **The heirs.** No heir is named. County probate and census records would identify who was acting in 1849.
- **Birth-year confirmation.** Berry gave 1759 (p.4) yet was described as 85 in April 1845 (implying c.1759–1760); Maryland (Harford/Deer Creek area) baptismal or family records could settle it.

- **State bounty land.** No federal B.L.Wt. is present; if Berry or his heirs pursued Delaware state land for this service, those records are at the state level, not in this file series.

The Service in Context

No single published history matches this unit exactly as the file names it — a common situation with records of this era, where units were renamed and reorganized and veterans recalled them by their commanders. Rather than guess, this section gives the verified picture of the service this tour was part of.

Delaware, one of the smallest states, sat directly in the path of British operations against Philadelphia, so its part-time soldiers were repeatedly called from home to meet threats close by. The Delaware Assembly passed a militia act in 1776 that remained in effect throughout the Revolutionary War, requiring nearly all white males aged 18 to 50 to enroll in militia companies.

These men reported roughly nine times a year for drill. The state was divided into three counties, further divided into "hundreds," and companies were raised locally within them. The war reached Delaware's own ground in 1777. The Battle of Cooch's Bridge, also known as the Battle of Iron Hill, was fought on September 3, 1777; it was the only significant military action on the soil of Delaware and took place about a week before the major Battle of Brandywine.

Afterward, British General Howe's forces occupied Wilmington in 1777 in preparation for an assault on Philadelphia. Militia were also turned inward against dissent: the 1780 Black Camp Rebellion was a brief Loyalist uprising in Sussex County during the war. Service was typically brief. Militiamen mustered by county, drilled periodically, and marched out in short rotations, sometimes serving alongside Continental troops. In December 1776, for example, three New Castle County militia companies marched to Philadelphia and remained in service until February 1777.

_Sources: <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=140181>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Cooch's_Bridge; <https://www.ancestry.com/historical-insights/war-military/american-revolution/delaware-during-the-revolutionary-war>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1780_Black_Camp_Rebellion; <https://revolutionarywar.us/continental-army/delaware/>_

(This section was verified by web search. Everything else in this report is drawn only from the soldier's own file.)

Document Inventory

Page	Document Type	Summary
1	File jacket / cover card (printed form 3-1776)	Pension Office cover: 'Del.' service, 'Berry, James,' number 'R. 796'; blank contents lines. Tier 4 finding aid.
2	Declaration in open court (page 1)	Sworn declaration of James Berry, Hamilton County, Ohio, 2 April 1845, aged 85, under the Act of 7 June 1832; recites Flying Camp service under Skillington/Col. Neal 1776, volunteer service under Charles

		Nixon, skirmishes, taking of Hessians, Trenton and Princeton.
3	Declaration in open court (page 2) with witness certificate	Continuation: four months in Nixon's company; lost McLean discharge; papers entrusted to Samuel F. Hunt who died; relinquishment clause; signature of James Berry; character certificate of William Burke and Hugh McDougal, sworn 2 April 1845.
4	Court interrogatories and answers	Standard 1832-act questions: born in Maryland on Deer Creek, 14 Oct 1759 (tradition only); residences; enlisted at Smyrna/Kent County Delaware in Flying Camp under Skillington, volunteer under Nixon (Delaware State Troops); officers named; discharge from Col. Neal long lost; witnesses named.
5	Court certification of service and clerk's certificate	Court declares its opinion that applicant was a Revolutionary soldier and served as stated; certifies Burke as clergyman and McDougal as credible; Clerk Edward C. Roll certifies the proceedings, 2 April 1845.
6	Endorsement / docket (verso)	Filing endorsement: 'Rec'd 25 June [18]45,' 'Suppl[ementary]... James Berry,' routing to J. L. Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions, Washington. Tier 4.
7	Additional declaration (page 1)	Additional declaration of James Berry under the Act of 7 June 1832; expands Flying Camp service (Lt. Gibby, 2nd Lt. Maxwell), retaking Hessians at Cuckold's Town Staten Island 1776, Trenton (900–1000 Hessians), Princeton (~400 prisoners) c.3 Jan 1777; 1780 enlistment under Capt. Charles Nixon, Third Delaware Regiment, at West Point; Arnold/André; lost papers via Hunt.
8	Additional declaration (page 2) with clerk's certificate	Continuation: McLean certificate mentioned; company of minute men under Col. Charles Pope 1780 to war's end;

		retook provision vessel at Duck Creek; on guard when Tory Cheney Clough hanged at Dover; John Clayton sheriff; no answer yet from Delaware Secretary of State; sworn 18 June 1845 before Clerk Roll by deputy R. B. Warden.
9	Docket / address wrapper (verso)	Filing marks: 'April 14 1845,' 'James Berry, June 7 1832,' addressed to J. L. Edwards, Pension Agent, Washington City. Tier 4.
10	Correspondence — H. McDougal to J. L. Edwards, 10 April 1845	Cincinnati; McDougal reports writing to John Houston, Secretary of State of Delaware, to examine old state-troop files where Berry's son-in-law (18–20 years earlier) placed his name, seeking a certificate; will forward if found.
11	File jacket — printed 'INVALID.' cover (1870 arrangement) with 'REJECTED' stamp	Printed jacket citing Acts of July 14 1862 and March 3 1873 (Civil-War-era form re-used); name 'James [struck: Joseph] Berry'; blank service/enlistment lines; 'REJECTED' stamp. Tier 4 — shelf label, not evidence of a disability claim or of a reasoned rejection.
12	File jacket / docket slip	Pasted slip: 'No 32.335, James Berry, Ohio, 796'; routing notes — letter to H. McDougal 27 May, Hon. J. J. Farran Feb 28 '4[6], letter to same April 1 1846, same Dec 30 '46, 'Set to Eldredge & Co. April 26 1849,' 'Act 7 June 1832.' Tier 4.
13	Docket / endorsement (verso)	Notation 'Jas. Berry / Wants papers' and reference to Hon. J. J. Farran, House of Representatives. Tier 4.
14	Internal memo, 23 Dec 1846	Instruction (initialed 'JLE') to send the papers of James Berry to Hon. J. J. Farran, House of Reps, if they can be sent, and to enter the memo in the books.
15	Docket wrapper (verso)	Filing label: '32.335 / James Berry / Ohio / Act 7 June '32.' Tier 4.
16	Correspondence — J. J. Farran to J. L. Edwards, 12 Feb 1846	Hall, House of Reps; requests a statement of the present position of Mr. Berry's claim referred to in an accompanying

		letter, addressed to the Commissioner of the Pension Office.
17	Address wrapper / cover (verso), postmarked Taylorsville KY Apr 8	Addressed to J. L. Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions, Washington D.C.; endorsements referencing James Mills and 'June 7 1832'; signature J. W. Stone. Tier 4.
18	Correspondence — James W. Stone to J. L. Edwards, 5 April 1845 (Taylorsville, Spencer Co., KY)	Encloses the declaration of James Mills in proof for a pension; vouches for Mills's character and explains delay in applying. NOTE: this letter concerns a different applicant (James Mills), apparently filed here in error.
19	Correspondence — Eldredge, Platt & Stewart to A. S. Edwards, 20 April 1849	On behalf of the heirs of James Berry, a private of the Delaware State Volunteers who filed under a law of 1832 c.1836 via Freeman/Freeman Hunt of Cincinnati; Hunt died alleging the papers were lost but circumstances suggest he received/used the money; asks whether the money was paid or the papers are on file.
20	Correspondence — J. J. Farran to J. L. Edwards, 21 March 1846	Encloses the certificate of John Wales, Secretary of State of Delaware, relative to Jas. Berry, an applicant for a pension.
21	State service certification — John Wales, Secretary of State of Delaware, 28 Feb 1846	Certifies that James Berry's name is on the pay roll of Capt. D. Hall's company as a private in 1776, but that the records are so imperfect no further information can be obtained. Tier 2; partial/negative result.
22	Fold3 source-information page	Digitizer metadata: Delaware; Berry, James; Pension No. R.796; Rev. War; M804; NARA RG 15; catalog 300022. Tier 4 wrapper.

Every Fact and Its Source

Each substantive fact in this report, with the document that states it. Tier 1 = sworn or own-hand documents; Tier 2 = official contemporaneous records; Tier 3 = claim-process paperwork; Tier 4 = administrative material. Notes mark facts a witness learned second-hand, values worked out by calculation, and uncertain readings.

Fact	Source document (page)	Tier	Notes
The applicant is	Declaration in open	1	—

James Berry, a resident of the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio.	court, sworn 2 April 1845 (p. 2)		
James Berry stated his age as 85 years on 2 April 1845.	Declaration in open court, sworn 2 April 1845 (p. 2)	1	corroborated by second source
Witnesses William Burke and Hugh McDougal believed Berry to be 85 years of age.	Witness character certificate, sworn 2 April 1845 (p. 3)	1	corroborated by second source
Berry stated he was born in the State of Maryland on Deer Creek, on 14 October 1759, having no record but only family tradition.	Court interrogatories and answers, 2 April 1845 (p. 4)	1	reading uncertain
Berry stated he had lived in Maryland (Chester Town, Cecil County, Baltimore) and had lived in Cincinnati about twenty-five years.	Court interrogatories and answers, 2 April 1845 (p. 4)	1	learned by notification
Berry declared he entered service in Delaware in the Second Delaware Regiment of the Flying Camp under Capt. Thomas Skillington, Col. Henry Neal, in 1776, serving four months.	Declaration in open court, 2 April 1845 (p. 2)	1	source conflict
Berry declared his name was registered at Dover, Delaware.	Declaration in open court, 2 April 1845 (p. 2)	1	reading uncertain
Berry declared he volunteered in Capt. Charles Nixon's company (Delaware State Troops) and served four months, and was in a skirmish at the mouth of a creek near West Point.	Declaration in open court, 2 April 1845 (p. 2)	1	reading uncertain

Berry declared he was with the party that attacked a British barge, killing five and wounding eight.	Declaration in open court, 2 April 1845 (p. 2)	1	reading uncertain
Berry declared he was one of the men who took nine Hessians and nine British regulars in late October 1776, after which Gen. Mercer sent him with a flag of truce to Staten Island.	Declaration in open court, 2 April 1845 (p. 2)	1	reading uncertain
Berry declared he was at the Battle of Trenton when the Hessians were taken and at the Battle of Princeton.	Declaration in open court, 2 April 1845 (p. 2)	1	reading uncertain
Berry declared that in 1780 he enlisted under Capt. Charles Nixon in the Third Delaware Regiment for four months, serving at West Point at the time of Arnold's treason and Major André's capture.	Additional declaration, sworn 18 June 1845 (p. 7)	1	reading uncertain
Berry declared he afterward belonged to a company of minute men under Col. Charles Pope from 1780 to the end of the war, retook a provision vessel at Duck Creek, and was on guard when the Tory Cheney Clough was hanged at Dover.	Additional declaration, sworn 18 June 1845 (p. 8)	1	reading uncertain
Berry named as officers Col. Henry Neal, Capt. Skillington, Capt. Charles Nixon, Lt. Benjamin Gibby, David Maxwell,	Court interrogatories and answers, 2 April 1845 (p. 4)	1	reading uncertain

Gen. Mercer, and Lt. James Frazer.			
The name of James Berry is on the pay roll of Capt. D. Hall's company as a private in the year 1776, but the records are so imperfect no further information can be obtained.	State service certification of John Wales, Secretary of State of Delaware, 28 Feb 1846 (p. 21)	2	source conflict
Berry once had a certificate of discharge from Col. Allen McLean but lost or mislaid it; he never received a written discharge from Capt. Skillington's company.	Court interrogatories and answers, 2 April 1845 (p. 4)	1	—
Berry applied for a pension under the Act of Congress passed June 7, 1832.	Declaration in open court, 2 April 1845 (p. 2)	1	corroborated by second source
About nineteen or twenty years earlier Berry placed papers relating to his service in the hands of Samuel F. Hunt, Esq., who undertook to help him get a pension and died shortly after without effecting anything; the papers were never recovered.	Declaration in open court, 2 April 1845 (p. 3)	1	—
The clergyman William Burke and Hugh McDougal certified they knew Berry and that he was reputed to have been a soldier of the Revolution.	Witness character certificate, 2 April 1845 (p. 3)	1	—
The Court of Common Pleas declared its opinion that the applicant was a Revolutionary soldier and served	Court certification, 2 April 1845 (p. 5)	1	—

as he stated.			
The additional declaration was sworn 18 June 1845 in open court before Clerk Edward C. Roll by deputy R. B. Warden.	Additional declaration, 18 June 1845 (p. 8)	1	—
Hugh McDougal wrote to the Secretary of State of Delaware (John Houston) to examine the old state-troop files for Berry's name.	Correspondence, H. McDougal to J. L. Edwards, 10 April 1845 (p. 10)	3	—
Congressman J. J. Farran requested from the Commissioner a statement of the present position of Berry's claim on 12 Feb 1846.	Correspondence, J. J. Farran to J. L. Edwards, 12 Feb 1846 (p. 16)	3	—
J. J. Farran enclosed the certificate of John Wales, Secretary of State of Delaware, to the Commissioner on 21 March 1846.	Correspondence, J. J. Farran to J. L. Edwards, 21 March 1846 (p. 20)	3	—
An internal memo of 23 Dec 1846 directed that Berry's papers be sent to Hon. J. J. Farran, House of Representatives, and the memo entered in the books.	Internal Pension Office memo, 23 Dec 1846 (p. 14)	4	—
The file jacket records routing letters to H. McDougal (27 May), to J. J. Farran (Feb 28), a letter to same April 1 1846, same Dec 30 '46, and 'Set to Eldredge & Co. April 26 1849,' with 'Act 7 June 1832.'	File jacket docket slip (p. 12)	4	—

The file bears internal Pension Office number 32,335 and catalog designation R.796.	File jacket and docket slips (p. 12)	4	source conflict
The file jacket is stamped 'REJECTED' and bears the printed shelf label 'INVALID.' on a re-used form citing Acts of July 14 1862 and March 3 1873; no document in the file states a ground of rejection.	File jacket (1870 arrangement) (p. 11)	4	—
A letter of 20 April 1849 was written on behalf of the heirs of James Berry, asking whether the pension money had ever been received; the veteran had apparently died by then, but no death date is stated.	Correspondence, Eldredge, Platt & Stewart to A. S. Edwards, 20 April 1849 (p. 19)	3	—
No date or place of James Berry's death is stated anywhere in the file; death is UNRESOLVED, implied before April 1849 only by reference to his heirs.	Correspondence, 20 April 1849 (p. 19)	3	calculated/derived
A 5 April 1845 letter from James W. Stone (Taylorsville, Spencer Co., KY) transmitting the declaration of James Mills is present in the file and concerns a different applicant, apparently cross-filed in error.	Correspondence, James W. Stone to J. L. Edwards, 5 April 1845 (p. 18)	3	—

Hard-to-Read Entries

These are original handwritten records, in places faded or damaged with age. Where a word could not be read with confidence, it is flagged here rather than guessed at - nothing in this report is invented. A researcher

reviewed each entry below against the original scans; some were made out on a closer look, and the rest remain genuinely unclear.

- **Page 2** - flagged as hard to read (The creek name at the barge-skirmish site is written in an older hand and reads variably as 'Sloat,' 'Stoat,' or possibly relates to 'Duck Creek' mentioned later (p.8); cannot be read with confidence). A researcher re-checked it against the original scan; it remains genuinely unclear, which we note honestly.

Where the Documents Disagree

Here two or more perfectly legible documents say different things. That is a finding about the record, not a reading problem - both versions are shown, and neither was silently preferred. Where the evidence clearly favored one reading, the story above follows it, and the note here says why - a visible weighing, never a silent one.

- **Page 4** - the documents disagree here (Interrogatory answer (p.4) states born 14 Oct 1759; the declaration and witnesses (pp.2,3) give age 85 as of 2 April 1845, which implies birth about 1759–1760. Consistent within a year, but resting entirely on tradition ('no record only tradition from my parents')). Both readings appear in the report; review confirmed the disagreement is in the record itself. Our read: Both point to c.1759–1760; no true conflict beyond ordinary rounding. Treat 14 Oct 1759 as the stated birth date but note it is tradition-based and unverified. Not adjudicated to a hard year — birth-year confirmation is a research gap.
- **Page 21** - the documents disagree here (Berry swears he first served under Capt. Skillington in the Flying Camp 1776 (pp.2,4,7); Delaware's official certification places James Berry on Capt. D. Hall's pay roll as a private in 1776 (p.21). Different company commanders for the same 1776 service). Both readings appear in the report; review confirmed the disagreement is in the record itself. Our read: The contemporaneous state pay roll (Tier 2) is the better record for the unit; Berry's recollection is 70 years old (Tier 1 but aged). The two may reflect different short enlistments or a memory error; do not silently reconcile. Verify against surviving Delaware rolls for both captains.
- **Page 7** - the documents disagree here (The additional declaration (p.7) gives larger, rounder figures than implied in the first declaration (pp.2-3); barge-fight casualties ('five killed, eight wounded') are consistent but other counts drift). Both readings appear in the report; review confirmed the disagreement is in the record itself. The evidence is evenly balanced; we do not choose between them.
- **Page 19** - the documents disagree here (Berry's declarations name Samuel F. Hunt (pp.3,7); the 1849 heirs' letter (p.19) refers to 'Freeman or Freeman Hunt.' Same person described, name given differently). Both readings appear in the report; review confirmed the disagreement is in the record itself. Our read: The sworn declarations (Tier 1, closer to the events and by the principal) support 'Samuel F. Hunt'; treat 'Freeman' as a later approximation. Minor variant.
- **Page 1** - the documents disagree here (The cover gives R.796 while internal dockets give 32,335; both are administrative numbers for the same file (the number '796' also appears on p.12)). Both readings appear in the report; review confirmed the disagreement is in the record itself. Our read: Both belong to this file — R.796 is the catalog/NARA designation, 32,335 an internal Pension Office number. No conflict of substance; recorded so the variant numbers are not mistaken for another veteran's file.

Sworn Long After the Fact

These statements were sworn honestly, but decades after the events they describe. The oath makes them testimony, not a guarantee of accuracy - details here are a person's memory, and are weighed as such.

- **Page 2** - a late recollection (All battle and unit narrative rests solely on Berry's declarations sworn in 1845, nearly 70 years after the events; no corroborating record is in the file (Delaware certification confirms only a 1776 pay-roll entry)). Honest testimony, recorded as the deponent remembered it; corroborating records, where they exist, are the check.

What the File Does Not Establish

The file is silent on these points. No document states them, so the report says so rather than filling them in.

- **Page 19** - the file does not answer this (The 1849 letter is written on behalf of 'Jas. Berry's heirs,' implying he had died by then, but no ledger, probate, or death record in the file states a date. There is no 'dropped from rolls' notice in this record group). The Research Gaps section points to the records that might.

Also Flagged

Noted plainly for your attention.

- **Page 11** - The jacket is a re-used printed form citing Civil War acts (1862, 1873); the 'INVALID' is an 1870-arrangement shelf label, and the 'REJECTED' stamp is unaccompanied by any document stating a ground of rejection. The number under 'No.' is smudged and not legible.
- **Page 18** - Page 18 (with wrapper p.17) is a 5 April 1845 letter from James W. Stone of Taylorsville, KY, transmitting the declaration of James Mills — a different applicant. It appears bundled into this file in error.

About this report: it was produced from the file provided, read page by page. It does not search records beyond that file - the Research Gaps section points to the outside records that could carry the story further.