

Object ID: MG0828_SeriesB_F03
Document: Certificate for Pension

Transcript:

Certificate for Pension

I Hereby Certify, That Thomas Welsh a Private of Company (E) 2nd Reg^t of Ky. Volunteer Inf. was injured and disabled while actually in service and in the line of his duty, under the following circumstances, and at the time and place herein specified

To Wit. on the 23rd day of Feb^r, 1847 on the Battle field of Buena Vista was wounded by a musket ball in the right Leg, fracturing the bones of the Leg in such a manner as to deprive him allmost [sic] entirely of the use of that limb.

The said Thomas Welsh was enlisted by Capt. Cutter, of the 2nd Reg^t Ky. Vol. Inf. on the 9th day of June 1846 at Louisville Ky. for the term of one year; he is six feet high, 23 years of age, and by profession a Carpenter

G. W. Cutter. commanding Company (E) 2nd Reg^t Ky. Vol. Inf.

I Hereby Certify That by satisfactory evidence and accurate examination, it appears that on the 23rd day of Feb^r 1847, the above named Thomas Welsh of Capt. G. W. Cutter's Company (E) 2nd Reg^t Ky. Vol^s, at or near a place called Buena Vista in Mexico, while actually in the service, and in the line of his duty, received a musket Ball wound "to Wit," was wounded in the right Leg by a musket ball, fracturing and shattering the Bones considerably and depriving him allmost [sic] entirely of its use, and he is, therefore, in the opinion of the undersigned, Entirely

Analysis: Wiggin

This is not an official pension application, but appears to be either an exercise in drafting his pension application or a handwritten copy of the application he submitted. It is undated, and the final words with (presumably) a doctor's signature are missing.

The handwriting is all in one hand, apparently Thomas Welsh's hand. The wording is strongly suggestive of his having been working from a pre-printed pension application form. In addition, in a number of places, he has embellished with flourishes and faux calligraphy, as if imitating a real or imagined form. It is apparent from the different "type faces" that he had fun with this document. There are also two ink blotches, and a small scribble (possibly an imitation scroll?) to complete the look of a private draft or record document intended for no one else's eyes.



It is interesting to note that his rank is given as Private. His Military Service Records from the National Archives indicate that he enlisted on June 9, 1846 as a 3rd Sergeant, and was promoted to 1st Sergeant on August 14, 1846. However, on September 5, 1846 he appears to have been demoted to Private, by order of Col. McKee. No explanation is given, but the facts suggest serious disciplinary action. He remains a Private until his discharge on June 10, 1847. The Military Service Records also indicate that his name was "omitted by mistake" from the pay roll for Sept. and Oct. 1846 (and perhaps through February 1847). One is left to wonder if this could have been related to Col. McKee's wrath over the apparent misconduct (or perhaps a prank gone bad?). One is also left to speculate if the demotion may have given Welsh something to prove at Buena Vista, perhaps motivating behavior that put him at greater risk than normal, and prompting his injury?

Scope and Content

Handwritten draft or copy of a pension application for the disability of his leg wound. Written by Thomas Welsh in longhand describing in detail the leg wound he received at Buena Vista. Undated and unsigned, but evidently written in the spring of 1847. Narrative includes date of June 9, 1846 and February 23, 1847.

