

From Wilson's Outlines of History.
NAPOLEON'S RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN.

During the reverse to the French Armies in Spain, events of greater magnitude than those of the peninsular war were occupying the personal attention of Napoleon. The jealousy of Russia at his repeated encroachments in Central and Northern Europe was at its height; moreover, the commercial interests of Russia, in common with those of the other Northern Powers, had been greatly injured by the measures of Napoleon for destroying the trade of England; but the French Emperor refused to abandon his favorite policy, and the angry discussions between the cabinets of St. Petersburg and Versailles led to the assembling of vast armies on both sides, and the commencement of hostilities in the early part of the summer of 1812. Napoleon had driven Sweden to enter into an alliance with Russia and England; but he arrayed round his standard the immense forces of France, Italy, Germany, the Confederations of the Rhine, Poland, and two monarchies Prussia and Austria.

The "Grand Army" assembled in Poland for the Russian war amounted to the immense aggregate of more than 500,000 men, of whom 80,000 were cavalry; the whole supported by 1300 pieces of cannon. Nearly 20,000 chariots or carts of all descriptions followed the army, while the whole number of horses amounted to 187,000. To oppose this vast army, the Russians had collected, at the beginning of the contest, nearly 300,000 men; but as the war was carried into the interior, their forces increased in numbers until the armies on both sides were nearly equal.

On the 24th of June, 1812, Napoleon crossed Niemen, at the head of the "Grand Army," and entered upon his ever-memorable Russian campaign. As the enormous superiority of his forces rendered it hopeless for the Russians to attempt any immediate resistance, they gradually fell back before the invaders, wasting the country as they retreated. The wisdom of this course soon became apparent. A terrible tempest soon set in, and the hordes in the French army perished by thousands from the combined effects of incessant rain and scanty forage. The soldiers sickened in great numbers; and before a single shot had been fired, 25,000 sick and dying men filled the hospitals; 10,000 dead horses strewed the road to Wilna, and 120 pieces of cannon were abandoned for the want of the means of transport.

Still Napoleon pressed onward in several divisions, frequently skirmishing with the enemy, and driving them before him, until he arrived within the fortified walls of Smolensko, where thirty thousand Russians made a stand to oppose him. A hundred and fifty cannon were brought up to batter the walls, but without effect, for the thickness of the ramparts defied the efforts of the artillery. But the French howitzers set fire to some houses near the ramparts; the flame spread with wonderful rapidity, and during the night which followed the battle a lurid light from the burning city was cast over the French bivouacs, grouped in dense masses for several miles in circumference. At three in the morning a solitary French soldier scaled the wall, and penetrated into the interior; but he found neither inhabitants nor opponents. The work of destruction had been completed by the voluntary sacrifice of the inhabitants, who had withdrawn with the army, leaving a ruined city, naked walls, and the cannon which mounted them, as the only trophy to the conqueror.

The division of the army led by Napoleon followed the Russians on the road to Moscow, engaging in frequent but indecisive encounters with the rear guard. When the retreating forces had reached the small village of Borodino, their commander, General Kutusoff, resolved to risk a battle in the hope of saving Moscow. On the evening of the 6th of September the two vast armies took their positions facing each other—each numbering more than one hundred and thirty thousand men—the Russians having six hundred and forty pieces of cannon, and the French five hundred and ninety. Napoleon sought to stimulate the enthusiasm of his soldiers by recounting to them the glories of Marengo, of Jena, and of Austerlitz; while a procession of dignified clergy passed through the Russian ranks, bestowing their blessings upon the kneeling soldiers, and invoking the aid of the god of battles to drive the invaders from the land.

At six o'clock on the morning of the 7th, a gun fired from the French lines, announced the commencement of the battle; the roar of more than a thousand cannon shook the earth; vast clouds of smoke, shutting out the light of the sun, arose in awful sublimity over the scene; and two hundred and fifty thousand combatants, led on in the gathering gloom by the light of cannon and musketry, engaged in the work of death. The battle raged with desolating fury until night put an end to its horrors. The slaughter was immense. The loss on both sides was nearly equal, amounting, in the aggregate, to ninety thousand in killed and wounded. The Russian position was eventually carried, but neither side gained a decisive victory.

On the day after the battle the Russians retired, in perfect order, on the great road to Moscow. Preparations were immediately made by the inhabitants for abandoning that city, long revered as the cradle of the empire; and when, on the 14th, Napoleon entered it, no deputation of citizens awaited him to deprecate his hostility, but the dwellings of three hundred thousand persons were as silent as the wildernesses. It seemed like a city of the dead. Napoleon took up his residence in the Kremlin, the ancient palace of the Czars; but the authorities had determined that their beloved city should not afford a shelter to the invaders. At midnight, on the 15th, a vast light was seen to illuminate the most distant parts of the city; fires broke out in all directions; and Moscow soon exhibited a huge ocean of flame agitated by the wind. Nine-tenths of the city were consumed, and Napoleon was driven to seek a temporary refuge for his army in the country; but afterwards returning to the Kremlin, which had escaped the ravages of the fire, he remained there until the 18th of Octo-

ber, when all his proposals of peace being rejected, he was compelled to order a retreat.

The horrors of that retreat, which, during fifty-five days that intervened, until the recrossing of the Niemen, was almost one continual battle, exceeded anything before known in the annals of war. The exasperated Russians intercepted the retreating army whenever opportunity offered; and a cloud of Cossacks, hovering incessantly around the wearied columns, gradually wore away their numbers. But the severities of the Russian winter, which set in on the 6th of November, were far more destructive of life than the sword or the enemy. The weather, before mild, suddenly changed to intense cold; the wind howled frightfully through the forests, or swept over the plains with resistless fury; and the snow fell in thick and continued showers, soon confounding all objects, and leaving the army to wander without landmarks through an icy desert. Thousands of the soldiers falling, benumbed with cold and exhausted, perished miserably in sight of their companions; and the route of the rear guard of the army was literally choked up by the icy mound of the dead. In their nightly bivouac crowds of starving men prepared, around their scanty fire, a miserable meal of rye mixed with snow water and horseflesh; but numbers never awoke from the slumbers that followed; and the sites of the night-fires were marked by circles of dead bodies, with their feet still resting on the extinguished piles. Clouds of ravens, issuing from the forests, hovered over the dying remains of the soldiers; while troops of famished dogs, which had followed the army from Moscow, howled in the rear, and often fell on their victims before life was extinct. The ambition of Napoleon had led the pride and chivalry of Europe to perish amid the snows of a Russian winter, and he bitterly felt the taunt of the enemy, "Could the French find no graves in their own land?"

Napoleon had first thought of remaining in winter quarters at Smolensko; but the exhausted state of his magazines, and the concentrating around him of vast forces of the enemy, which threatened soon to overwhelm him, convinced him that a protracted stay was impossible, and on the 14th of November the retreat was renewed, Napoleon still in the midst of his faithful guards, leading the advance, and the heroic Ney bringing up the rear. But the enemy harassed them at every step. During the 16th, 17th, and 18th, in the battles of Krasnoi, Napoleon lost ten thousand killed; twenty thousand were taken prisoners, and more than a hundred pieces of cannon fell into the hands of the enemy. The terrible passage of the Beresina which was purchased by the loss of sixteen thousand prisoners, and twenty thousand killed or drowned in the stream, completed the ruin of the Grand Army.

All subordination now ceased, and it was with difficulty that Marshal Ney could collect three thousand men on foot to form the rear guard and protect the helpless multitude from the indefatigable Cossacks; and when at length the few remaining fugitives reached the passage of the Niemen, the rear guard was reduced to thirty men. The veteran marshal bearing the musket, and still facing the enemy, was the last of the Grand Army who left the Russian Territory. Napoleon had already abandoned the remnant of his forces, and setting out in a sledge for Paris, he arrived there at midnight on the 18th of December, even before the news of his terrible reverses had reached the capital.

It has been estimated that, in this Russian campaign, one hundred and twenty-five thousand men of the army of Napoleon perished in the battle; and one hundred and thirty-two thousand died of fatigue, hunger, and cold; and that nearly two hundred thousand were taken prisoner.

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BOUNTY LANDS.

[Letter from the Commissioner of Pensions.]

Pension Office, March 5, 1855.

The act entitled "An act in addition to certain acts granting bounty land to certain officers and soldiers, who have been engaged in the military service of the United States," approved March 3, 1855, entitles each of the surviving persons in the following classes to a certificate or warrant for such quantity of land as shall make, in the whole, with what he may have heretofore received, one hundred and sixty acres, provided he shall have served a period of not less than fourteen days, and shall establish said service by record evidence, to wit:

1. Commissioned and non-commissioned officers, musicians and privates, whether of the regulars, volunteers, rangers or militia, who were regularly mustered into the service of the United States in any of the wars in which the country has been engaged since 1790.
2. Commissioned and non-commissioned officers, seamen, ordinary seamen, marines, clerks and landmen in the navy of said wars.
3. Militia, volunteers and state troops of any state or territory called into military service, and regularly mustered therein, and whose services have been paid by the United States.
4. Wagon masters and teamsters who have been employed, under the direction of competent authority, in time of war, in the transportation of military stores and supplies.
5. Officers and soldiers of the revolutionary war.
6. Chaplains who served with the army in the several wars of this country.
7. Plottilla men who served in the war of 1812.

Each of the surviving persons in the following classes are entitled to a like certificate for a like quantity of land, without regard to the length of service, provided he was regularly mustered into service, and shall establish the same by record evidence, to wit:

1. Officers and soldiers who have been actually engaged in any battle in any of the wars in which this country has been engaged.
2. Those volunteers who served at the invasion of Plattsburgh, in September, 1814.
3. The volunteers who served at the battle of King's Mountain, in the revolutionary war.
4. The volunteers who served at the battle of Nickajack against the confederated savages of the south.
5. The volunteers who served at the attack on Lewiston, in Delaware, by the British fleet, in the war of 1812.

In addition to these classes, this act also extends to all Indians who have served the United States in any of their wars the provisions of this and all the bounty land laws heretofore passed, in the same manner and to the same extent, as if said Indians had been white men.

Where the service has been rendered by a substitute, he is the person entitled to the benefit of this act, and not his employer.

In the event of the death of any person who, if living, would be entitled to a certificate or warrant as aforesaid,

leaving a widow, or, if no widow, a minor child or children, such widow, or, if no widow, such minor child or children, is entitled to a certificate or warrant for the same quantity of land such deceased persons would be entitled to receive under the provisions of said act, if now living.

A subsequent marriage will not impair the right of any such widow to such warrant, if she be a widow at the time of her application. Persons within the age of twenty-one years on the 3rd day of March, 1855, are deemed minors within the intent and meaning of said act.

To obtain the benefits of this act, the claimant must make a declaration, under oath, substantially according to the forms hereto annexed. The signature of the applicant must be attested, and his or her personal identity established by the affidavits of two witnesses, whose residences must be given, and whose credibility must be sustained by the certificate of the magistrate before whom the application is verified.

No certificate will be deemed sufficient in any case, unless the facts are certified to be within the personal knowledge of the magistrate or other officer who shall sign the certificate, or the names and places of residence of the witnesses by whom the facts are established be given, or their affidavits, properly authenticated, be appended to the certificate.

The official character and signature of the magistrate who may administer the oath must be certified by the clerk of the proper court of record of his county, under the seal of the court. Whenever the certificate of the officer who authenticates the signature of the magistrate is not written on the same sheet of paper which contains the signature to be authenticated, the certificate must be attached to said paper by a piece of tape or ribbon, the ends of which must pass under the official seal, so as to prevent any paper from being improperly attached to the certificate.

Applications in behalf of minors should be made in their names by their guardian or next friend. Where there are several minors entitled to the same gratuity, one may make the declaration. The warrant will be issued to all jointly. In addition to proof of service, as in other cases, the minor must prove the death of his father, that no widow survives him, and that he and those he represents are the only minor children of the deceased.

If the party die before the issue of a warrant to which he would be entitled if living, the right to said warrant dies with him. In such case, the warrant becomes void, and should be cancelled, and the party next entitled in right of the service claimed should make an application; and if there be no such party, the grant lapses under the limitation of the beneficiaries to the bounty. If the claimant die after the issue of the warrant, the title thereto vests in his heirs-at-law in the same manner as real estate in the place of the domicile of the deceased, and can only be assigned or located by said heirs.

Applications made by Indians must be authenticated according to the regulations to be prescribed by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. L. P. WALDO, Commissioner of Pensions.

FORM OF A DECLARATION to be made by a person who has never before had a land warrant, or made a declaration therefor.

State of _____, ss.

On this _____ day of _____, A.D. one thousand eight hundred and _____, personally appeared before me, a justice of the peace (or other officer authorized to administer oaths for general purposes,) within and for the county and state aforesaid, _____, aged _____ years, a resident of _____, in the state of _____, who, being duly sworn according to law, declares that he is the identical _____, who was a _____ in the company commanded by Captain _____, in the regiment of _____, commanded by _____, in the war with Great Britain, declared by the United States on the _____ day of June, 1812, (or other war embraced in said act, describing what war,) that he enlisted (or volunteered or was drafted) at _____, on or about the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____, for the term of _____ days, and was honorably discharged at _____, on the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____.

He makes this declaration for the purpose of obtaining the bounty land to which he may be entitled under the act approved March 3, 1855. He also declares that he has not received a warrant for bounty land under this or any other act of Congress, nor made any other application therefor. (Signature of the claimant.)

We, _____ and _____, residents of _____, in the state of _____, upon our oaths, declare that the foregoing declaration was signed and acknowledged by _____ in our presence, and that we believe, from the appearance and statements of the applicant, that he is the identical person he represents himself to be. (Signatures of witnesses.)

The foregoing declaration and affidavit were sworn to and subscribed before me on the day and year above written; and I certify that I know the affiants to be credible persons; that the claimant is the person he represents himself to be, and that I have no interest in this claim. _____, J. P.

FORM OF A DECLARATION to be made where the party has had a warrant, and desires another.

State of _____, ss.

On this _____ day of _____, A.D. one thousand eight hundred and _____, personally appeared before me, a justice of the peace (or other officer authorized to administer oaths for general purposes,) within and for the county and state aforesaid, _____, aged _____ years, a resident of _____, in the state of _____, who, being duly sworn according to law, declares that he is the identical _____, who was a _____ in the company commanded by Captain _____, in the _____ regiment of _____, commanded by _____, in the war with Great Britain declared by the United States on the _____ day of June, 1812, (or other war, as the case may be,) for the term of _____, and continued in actual service in said war for _____ days; that he has heretofore made application for bounty land under the act of September 28, 1850, (or other act, as the case may be,) and received a land warrant, No. _____, for _____ acres, which he has since legally disposed of, and cannot now return.

He makes this declaration for the purpose of obtaining the additional bounty land to which he may be entitled under the act approved the 3rd day of March, 1855. He also declares that he has never applied for nor received, under this nor any other act of Congress, any bounty land warrant except the one above-mentioned. (Signature of the claimant.)

We, _____ and _____, residents of _____, in the state of _____, upon our oaths, declare that the foregoing declaration was signed and acknowledged by _____ in our presence, and that we believe, from the appearance and statements of the applicant, that he is the identical person he represents himself to be. (Signatures of witnesses.)

The foregoing declaration and affidavit were sworn to and subscribed before me on the day and year above written; and I certify that I know the affiants to be credible persons; that the claimant is the person he represents himself to be, and that I have no interest in this claim. _____, J. P.

FORM OF DECLARATION to be made by the widow of a deceased person who has had a land warrant, and desires another.

State of _____, ss.

On this _____ day of _____, A.D. one thousand eight hundred and _____, personally appeared before me, a justice of the peace (or other officer authorized to administer oaths for general purposes,) within and for the county and state aforesaid, _____, aged _____ years, a resident of _____, in the state of _____, who, being duly sworn, according to law, declares that she is the widow of _____, deceased, who was a _____ in the company commanded by Captain _____, in the _____ regiment of _____, commanded by _____, in the war with Great Britain, declared by the United States on the _____ day of June, 1812, (or other war as the case may be;) that

her said husband enlisted (or volunteered or was drafted) at _____, on or about the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____, for the term of _____, and continued in actual service in said war for the term of _____, and was honorably discharged at _____, on the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____.

She further states that she was married to the said _____, in _____, on the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____, by one _____, a _____, and that her name before her said marriage was _____; that her husband died at _____, on the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____, and that she is now a widow.

She further declares that she has heretofore made application for bounty land under the act approved September 28, 1850, (or other act, as the case may be,) and obtained a land warrant for _____ acres, No. _____, which she has legally disposed of, and it cannot now be returned.

She makes this declaration for the purpose of obtaining the bounty land to which she may be entitled under the "act approved March 3, 1855."

(Claimant's signature.)

We, _____ and _____, residents of _____, in the state of _____, upon our oaths declare that the foregoing declaration was signed and acknowledged by _____ in our presence, and that we believe, from the appearance and statements of the applicant, that she is the identical person she represents herself to be. (Signatures of witnesses.)

The foregoing declaration and affidavit were sworn to and subscribed before me on the day and year above written; and I certify that I know the affiants to be credible persons; that the claimant is the person she represents herself to be, and that I have no interest in this claim. _____, J. P.

FORM OF DECLARATION to be made by the widow of a deceased person who has not had a land warrant.

STATE OF _____, ss.

On this _____ day of _____, A.D. one thousand eight hundred and _____, personally appeared before me, a justice of the peace (or other officer authorized to administer oaths for general purposes,) within and for the county and state aforesaid, _____, aged _____ years, a resident of _____, in the state of _____, who, being duly sworn according to law, declares that she is the widow of _____, deceased, who was a _____ in the company commanded by Captain _____, in the _____ regiment of _____, commanded by _____, in the war with Great Britain, declared by the United States on the _____ day of June, 1812, (or other war, as the case may be;) and that her said husband, enlisted (or volunteered, or was drafted) at _____, on or about the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____, for the term of _____, and continued in actual service in said war for the term of _____, and was honorably discharged at _____, on the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____.

She further states that she was married to the said _____, in _____, on the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____, by one _____, a _____, and that her name before her said marriage was _____; that her said husband died at _____, on the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____, and that she is now a widow.

She makes this declaration for the purpose of obtaining the bounty land to which she may be entitled under the act approved March 3, 1855.

(Claimant's signature.)

We, _____ and _____, residents of _____, in the state of _____, upon our oaths declare that the foregoing declaration was signed and acknowledged by _____ in our presence; and that we believe, from the appearance and statements of the applicant, that she is the identical person she represents herself to be. (Signatures of witnesses.)

The foregoing declaration and affidavit were sworn to and subscribed before me on the day and year above written, and I certify that I know the affiants to be credible persons; that the claimant is the person she represents herself to be, and that I have no interest in this claim. _____, J. P.

* If the claimant was a regimental or staff officer, the declaration must be varied according to the facts of the case.

† If the claimant was discharged in consequence of disability incurred by the service, or if he was in captivity with the enemy, he must vary his declaration so as to set forth the facts of the case.

‡ This declaration must be accompanied by satisfactory proof of the marriage, of the husband's death, and the present widowhood of the claimant. If there be a public record of the marriage, a duly certified copy of it should be forwarded, if possible. If there be none but a private or family record, such family record, or a certified copy of the same, should be forwarded, with the affidavit of some disinterested persons proving the genuineness of the original and the correctness of the copy. If no public or private record of the marriage exist, or can be procured, that fact should be set forth in the declaration; and in such case, other evidence—such as the testimony of persons who knew the parties in the lifetime of the husband, and knew them to cohabit as husband and wife, and to be so reputed—will be admissible.

§ In no case, however, will the mere statement of witnesses that the claimant is the widow of the deceased, be taken as evidence of the marriage, but the witnesses must state facts and circumstances from which they derive their knowledge or opinion that she is the widow of the deceased.

¶ This declaration must be accompanied by satisfactory proof of the marriage, of the husband's death, and the present widowhood of the claimant. If there be a public record of the marriage, a duly certified copy of it should be forwarded, if possible. If there be none but a private or family record, such family record, or a certified copy of the same, should be forwarded, with the affidavit of some disinterested person, proving the genuineness of the original and the correctness of the copy. If no public or private record of the marriage exist, or can be procured, that fact should be set forth in the declaration; and in such case, other evidence—such as the testimony of persons who knew the parties in the lifetime of the husband, and knew them to cohabit as husband and wife, and to be so reputed—will be admissible.

|| In no case, however, will the mere statement of witnesses that the claimant is the widow of the deceased, be taken as evidence of the marriage, but the witnesses must state the facts and circumstances from which they derive their knowledge or opinion that she is the widow of the deceased.

NOTE.—The preceding forms may be used for applications for minors, mutatis mutandis.

PLAIN SPOKEN.—The St. Louis Intelligencer in noticing the visit of Gen. Houston to New England on a lecturing trip, talks thus pointedly:

"What singular notions our U. S. Senators have now-a-days. Pettit has been spending the winter at Indianapolis to keep the Old Liners in power there. Dixon has been staying at home, at Henderson, Ky., attending to a new wife—Atchison has been pipe-laying and wire-pulling in Kansas and Missouri; and Houston is gadding around with an Indian blanket over his shoulders, thinking himself wonderfully popular and in the straight road to the Presidency because his name is 'Sam.'" In the meantime the Abolitionists are taking Congress, and Douglas and Butler, (of S. C.) are getting drunk and blackguarding them."

¶ When Sidney Webster, the President's Secretary, had delivered the President's Message vetoing the Collins Appropriation, Mr. Benton grasped him by the hand, and delivered the following sentiment: "Sir, tell the President I thank him for this act. He deserves the thanks of the country. If I were President, I'll be damned to hell if I would not keep blank vetoes by me to defeat the bills of this Congress."—[L. H. and Cin. Gazette.]

¶ Be friendly to all—familiar with few.