

JOHN OBLINGER  
a Revolutionary War Soldier

This John Oblinger was the grandson of our forefather, Claus Oblinger, and the son of Claus' son, Christian. Claus died in 1730, shortly after emigrating and settling his family in Philadelphia County (now Montgomery County) PA. In 1748, his younger son, Christian, then about the age of 27, married and moved to Warwick Township in Lancaster County. His new bride was Barbara Forney, the daughter of a Mennonite family formerly from Steffisburg, Switzerland. Christian and Barbara had four children, John (born on 12 June 1756) and three daughters – Susanna, Anna, and Barbara.

In the early fall of 1776 at the age of 20, John enlisted in the Continental Army. He was assigned to the company of his own brother-in-law, George Feder (or Fetter), the husband of John's sister Susanna. This company was part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment led by Col. Robert Elder. A few months after his enlistment, John faced active combat as part of George Washington's troops, participating in both the historic battles of Trenton in December, 1776 and Princeton in January, 1777.

John was then wounded slightly at Chestnut Hill, PA and had to be carried from the field. He spent the winter of 1777-1778 camped at Valley Forge with the rest of Washington's troops. The bitter cold and severe hardships that these men faced during that winter have become legendary. John became quite ill there, to the point of becoming invalided. In the spring, his father came to take him home. It is unknown if he ever returned to service. He had originally enlisted for three years, but his pension papers credit him with only 19 months of service, with a few leaves of absence "due to suffering and sickness."

This information on John is taken from Wm. H. Rinkenbach's book, "History of the Oblinger–Oplinger–Uplinger Family" and from the records pertaining to John's application for a pension. These papers are part of the permanent collection housed in the National Archives Museum in Washington, DC. In a bill enacted by Congress on June 7, 1832, pensions were authorized for all who had served for at least six months in any of the military forces during the Revolutionary War. They verify that John was qualified to receive a pension of \$63.33 per year commencing on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of March, 1831, with arrears of \$236.33 being paid to him on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1833 while he was living in Montgomery County, Ohio. The Pension was for life so it must have been viable until John's death in December, 1846.

The following is one page from those at the National Archives which verify that John testified in an open court to the fact that he participated in the battles of Trenton and Princeton, and at Chestnut Hill.

John's pension records are accessible online at [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com) to subscribers.

**BRIEF in the case of** *John Obinger*  
**of** *Montgomery* **in the State of** *Ohio*  
 (Act 7th June, 1832.)

1. Was the declaration made before a Court or a Judge? *Open Court*
2. If before a Judge, does it appear that the applicant is disabled by bodily infirmity?
3. How old is he? *45*
4. State his service, as directed in the form annexed.

Period.	Duration of Service.			Rank.	Names of General and Field Officers under whom he served.
	Years.	Months.	Days.	As a	Gen.
<i>tail</i> In 1796 <i>entered</i> <i>was actually engaged</i> <i>in service. partly</i>	<i>2</i>			<i>Serjeant</i>	<i>Capt. Fetter Col. P.</i>

5. In what battles was he engaged? *Battles of Tippecanoe and Princeton*  
*the out Hill*
  6. Where did he reside when he entered the service? *Lancaster Co., Pennsylvania*
  7. Is his statement supported by living witnesses, by documentary proof, by traditionary evidence, by incidental evidence, or by the rolls? *traditionary*
  8. Are the papers defective as to form or authentication? and if so, in what respect? *not attached a receipt to the regulations*  
*not in the form of a receipt exactly given*
- I Certify that the foregoing statement and the answers agree with the evidence in the case above mentioned.

*he entered for 8 years*  
*but on account of suffering*  
*and sickness was obliged occasionally to*  
*get leave of absence*

*John Obinger*  
 Examining Clerk.

After returning home, John apparently regained his health and was eventually able to pursue farming to support his family. He married twice, with nine children from his first wife named "Nealy" and just one from his second wife, Susanna Carroll. In order of birth, the children were:

1. Barbara — b. 22 Oct 1779
2. Elena (or Helen) — b. 9 Sep 1781
3. Amos — b. 21 Jan 1783; m. Elizabeth Mason
4. Hannah — b. 3 Mar 1788; m. Samuel Wotten
5. Christian — b. 1791/2
6. John (Jr.) — b. 1794, d. 1886; m. Mary Henry
7. David — b. 1798; m. Catharine Nicholas
8. Gabriel — b. 1800; m. Sarah Haines
9. Susanna
10. Joshua — b. 1826

John's father, Christian, died in 1798, leaving the farm to John, his only son. In December 1807, John's daughter, Hannah, was married to Samuel Wotten (or Watton) I Montgomery County, Ohio. Perhaps John and some of his other children had already moved there before Hannah's marriage, but at some point John's whole family moved from Lancaster to Ohio.

On 7 April 1824 John, then in his late 60's, married Susanna Carroll in Montgomery County, Ohio, which is where his tenth child, son Joshua was born in 1826.

According to Rinkenbach, in 1841 at age 85, John, Susanna, and Joshua were living with his son Amos in Miami County, Ohio and John died there at West Milton on 22 Dec 1846 at age 90!

In 1953 Susanna was living with her son Joshua in Dayton, Montgomery County when on February 3 of that year Congress passed the first act that made all widows of Revolutionary War veterans, regardless of their date of marriage, eligible for a pension. By then Susanna was infirm and unable to make her case for qualifying for a pension, but her son testified for her successfully. It seems she might have received a little more than \$12 yearly.

John Oblinger's Service as a Revolutionary War soldier should be more well known and commemorated. We owe our independence to those who fought for our freedom to become the democracy we enjoy today.

#### END NOTE

John's cousin, Nicholas Oblinger III, son of Christian's brother, Nicholas Oblinger II, was also an enlisted soldier in the Revolutionary War but there is no record of participation in active combat. He died in 1814 before pensions were granted in the 1832 bill. Nor is there any record of John's two other cousins, Isaac and Samuel, ever being a soldier in the war, although they may have belonged to state militia.