

# Lemuel Cook was the oldest person to have lived in Orleans County

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Lemuel Cook was the oldest resident ever to have lived in Orleans County. During his last years he was the last full pensioner on the rolls of his country's Revolutionary War veterans.

As his tombstone states: "Lemuel Cook, born, Northbury, CT, Sept. 10, 1759; died May 20th, 1866: Aged 107 years; A soldier of the Revolution. Entered the army 1775 and served the entire war."

His grave is in the old Cook Cemetery on the Munger Road, Town of Clarendon. He is considered by many the "last survivor" of the American Revolution.

was also in command of Gen. Washington's secret service.

Among the battles and engagements Lemuel is known to have participated in are Valentine's Hill during the Battle of Long Island and the retreat from New York City, and the 1777 Battle of Brandywine, when Washington's army was trying vainly to prevent the British from occupying Philadelphia.

It seems probable that Lemuel was also at Valley Forge and at the final defeat and surrender of the British at Yorktown, as he himself stated.

He was discharged from

service June 5, 1783, at Danbury, Conn., his discharge being presented to him by his commanding general.

It may be noted that Lemuel's two older brothers, Selah and Trueworthy Cook, were also soldiers in the Revolution. The Cooks were cousins of Lyman Hall, signer of the Declaration of Independence.

After the war, Lemuel married Hannah Curtis, daughter of Thomas and Esther (Benham) Curtis, who was to give him seven sons and three daughters. In 1788, the two brothers, their families and their widowed mother, emigrated with a group calling themselves

"the Northbury Society" to Clinton, Oneida County, being the first settlers at Clinton.

After a few years, Selah and True Cook moved farther west, to Onondaga County, in 1791. Lemuel, however, returned to Connecticut, where in 1795 he was an incorporator of the Village of Plymouth. His grandfather had been a first settler of the town in 1725.

In 1808, Lemuel also emigrated to Onondaga County, settling at Pompey, where the family remained until 1821. Then he came into Western New York, to North Bergen, with three sons: Miles, Trueworthy, and

Selah. A fourth son, Lemuel Jr., was the first member of the family to live at Clarendon in 1821. Signor shows his receiving deeds to parts of Lot 53 in August 1833 and January 1838.

About 1829, Lemuel Sr. moved for the last time to Clarendon, and lived out his years there. By 1840 all of his children and their families were also living at Clarendon.

Lemuel's first wife, Hannah, died in 1832. His second wife, Ruth Cooper, gave him no children. She died before he did, in 1860. Lemuel died in Clarendon on May 20, 1966, at 107 years of age.