

In His Words

“I was then grown to full manhood, in the full vigor and strength of life...heard much about the cruel and arbitrary things done by the British, Their ships lay within a few miles of my Masters house which stood near the shore and I was confident my Master traded with them, and I suffered much from fear that I should be sent aboard a ship of war, this I disliked. But when I saw liberty poles and the people all engaged for the support of freedom, I could not but like and be pleased with such thing (God forgive me if I sinned in so feeling). And living on the borders of Rhode Island, where whole companies of colored people enlisted, it added to my fears and dread of being sold to the British. These considerations induced me to enlist into the American army, where I served faithful about ten months, when my master found and took me home. Had I been taught to read or understand the precepts of Gospel, “Servants, obey your masters,” I might have done otherwise, notwithstanding the songs of liberty that saluted my ear, thrilled through my heart.”

Jehu Grant, 1836

The above words were said by Jehu Grant. Like *Finding Freedom's* Andrew, Grant was a veteran of the Revolutionary War, but Grant served for a Connecticut regiment. The United States government promised pensions — financial support — to former soldiers or their widows after the war in recognition of their military service. Grant applied, but was rejected, and made this statement as part of an appeal to get the government to change its decision.

What are two reasons Grant gives for choosing to fight with the American Army (the Revolutionaries)?

Grant says that he believes his owner was supporting the British. Based on his words above, would this have been viewed positively in their community? Why or why not?

Grant appears to have been a religious man. What was the relationship between his sense of religious duty and his feelings about the American Revolution?

How did Grant's participation in the war come to an end? In the end, do you think Grant believed he made the right decision to side with the Revolutionaries?