

Morrison's Pensions

Pension Application for Cornelius Eckerson

Declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

W16971

State of New York

Montgomery County

On this 7th day of August one thousand eight hundred thirty three personally appeared before me David Spraker one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas in and for the County of Montgomery aforesaid being a court of record. Cornelius Eckerson of Canajoharie & County aforesaid, and State of New York aged 77 years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions made by the Act of Congress passed June 7, 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated to wit: the applicant was born in the Town of Schoharie in the County of Schoharie and State of New York & at the commencement & during the Revolutionary War he was a resident of Schoharie in the County and State aforesaid. He served as a regularly enrolled soldier in the militia company commanded by Capt George Mann, Lieut. Steubrah in Col. Vrooman's Regt., Major Becker. (1) The place of his residence was near what was then the frontier settlement near a stone church which was afterwards called the Lower Fort.

Had 2 brothers in the same company older than himself by the names of Thomas and John__ [____] vicinity of the inhabitants vicinity favored the cause of the colonies—But as early as the Spring of 1778--& In [pur?-] &__ann[?] of the advice of the committee of Safety. The Militia Company was divided into classes of 12 Soldiers each—Each class in rotation to stand sentry & on guard night & day at the low[er] church. In consequence of an occonal [occasional[?]] depredations of Indians whose incursions secured [?] when favored by a small portion of the inhabitants [____?] & then were also with the Indians on ____ing? tories from neighboring towns – great uneasiness & alarm was felt—The applicant & his two brothers were in separate classes—The applicant volunteered to supply his own tour in this service--& also that of each of his brothers—On or about the first of April 1776--And continued such [____?] from that time until the spring of 1777--under the command of the said Capt. Mann, Lieut. Steubrah in Col. Vrooman's Regt. Indians were confined at the Fort of Stone Church (2) which was not palisaded & picketed as the thinks until 1777.--They have at said Fort called the Lower For--Either then Captain, Lieut. or Ensign by the name of Dietz (3) or a Sergeant at the time but seldom more than one at a time.--The duty of the applicant was as a private, standing sentry at the fort on guard on scouts & excursions of observation and on drill all the time--& his tours by rotation for himself and his brothers, a portion of the time 3 weeks in from 2 a part of the time, 3 weeks in 5--From April 1776 to March 1777 when he came to serve for his brothers as he believes, the time in all from April 1776 to March 1777 as he believes—[____?] time in All from April 1776 to 1 March 1777—as deponent believes at least seven months. In that time he performed no civil business deponent saith. That the same system of precaution and defense was kept up during the months of March & April 1777--In which the deponent served at Low[er] Fort two tours of one week each under the same officers.--When about the last of May as near as this Deponent can recollect there was a call for a Militia Service on the Mohawk--The whole company under Capt. George Mann & Lieut. Steubragh & Col. Vroman with other militiamen were marched to the Mohawk & spent some time at the little forts on that river. When then marched through Saratoga to Ford Edward a distance from home as he believes of abut 80 miles where a portion of the Northern Army were garrisoned. When this deponent had been then about eight days in as he believes there was draft made from his company for three months of 7 privates and this deponent was one of those who was drafted for that time & staid & served his time at said Fort until it was evacuated by Gen'l Schuyler (4) as he believe.--The Col. Vroman and this deponent's Capt returned after a few days --& of the officers of his company only Lieut Steubragh remained during the 3 months—The deponent followed the retreat of the Northern Army until it reached Stillwater—And the deponent believes about the first of Sept. his time expired and was discharged at Stillwater & returned home by way of Schenectady & Duanesbush (5) after an absence in with at so____? & going—returning of at least four months—This deponent saith he was marched during this period to the vicinity of Fort Stanwix (6) when Col. Gansevoort (7) commanded there--but on account of loss of memory he cannot be satisfied whether it was before or after going to Fort Edward but is confident it was in the time above specified.--

Deponent further saith that after his return to Schoharie, there was an alarm that Burgoyne (8) was coming on to Albany & Col. Vrooman called out the militia of his Reg't when this deponent volunteered. This deponent thinks about the last of Sept 1777 under his before mentioned Capt. and Lieut. & they were marched from Schoharie through Duanesbush—Schenectady (9) towards Still Water and met other troops stationed along to prevent the enemy from coming down before they reached Still Water. They were informed of the defeat & surrender of Burgoyne, (10) were dismissed--returned to Schoharie again—absent from home 2 weeks it ____? deponent thinks.

During the summer or fall of 1777, the 3 forts called the upper, middle and lower forts were put in repair & picketing around--and a company of Continental Troops were stationed at them together with a portion of the militia.--

In the spring of 1778 as early as the middle of March deponent thinks--He took his tours before according to the old classification of Capt. Mann's Company--doing duty in the Lower Fort every fourth week--in standing sentry--on guard & was occasionally sent out on scouts by the commander of the fort--He was then under Capt. Mann--Lieut. Steubragh & Ensign Diets one of whom were at the fort as deponent thinks all the time-- There was also a few regular troops at said fort--The

Capt. of the Continental troops was at this time either at the upper or middle fort. This deponent continued serving in this way as near as he can recollect until the middle of July when it was required to man the upper fort more [thorough?]--& this deponent volunteered, entered the militia service at the upper fort about the middle of August continued then serving under Capt. Hagar (11) of the militia In Col. Vrooman's Regt., Major Thomas Eckerson in standing sentry,--keeping guard & in scouts until about the middle of October of 1778 when he was discharged at the upper fort & returned home--having served at the two forts at least from the middle of March, Three months & one week.

The deponent saith that during this season the inhabitants were greatly alarmed and distressed--Property was destroyed,--buildings burnt, & lives taken by the Tories and Indians in every direction.--In the day time--the families could only work in constant fear & at night would resort to the forts for protection.--Settlements were destroyed all around us--The whites were hunted like game in the forest & in like manner we hunted the enemy in turn. During this year a Capt. McDonald (12) a notorious Tory has collected 300 or more Indians & Tories--They were too weak to afford relief far abroad--When Col. Harper (13) came to Schoharie on his way to Albany for a company of horse (14) This deponent conducted the Col. through enemies,-- guards & patrolling grounds & in a short time he returned with some light horse from Col. Gansevoort (15) & dispersed the enemy for a time from the Schoharie Valley.--At this time it was that Capt Mann (16) was disaffected to afford aid & succor to the enemy--broke off his commission & he put in jail-- Lieut. Steubragh was made Capt. of this deponent's company.--Ensign Dietz was made Lieut.--Col. Harper took Capt. Mann new coat from him--& offered it to this deponent & he refused to wear it or accept it. All the militia service rendered by the deponent after that period was under the last officers above named until the close of the war.

Then forts were more or less garrisoned during the subsequent years of 79-80-81,--both summer and winter as deponent believes & the above militia company being formed soldiers nearest the vicinity of the Lower Fort.--This deponent believes there was no time but there were some of Capt. Steubragh's Company either as drafts or as volunteers in the Lower Fort.--This deponent served no more for his said brothers after the year 78, who are now both dead.--Deponent's fathers grain & barns were all destroyed & burned by the Indians.--He had a sister & brother-in-law inhumanely butchered by them & he was left with little or no inducements or desires but to follow the fate of the war.--This deponent saith also that he continued serving his periodical times of every fourth week from the middle of Oct 1778 until the beginning of the winter of 1781 at the Lower Fort--under Capt. Steubach and Lieut. Diets--doing duty as before stated-- With regular sotime[?] of duty was only interrupted by the incursions of the Onondaga Indians into Schoharie in 1779 by devastation of Sir John Johnson with 800 Indians & Tories in 1780 who besieged the fort & laid waste the whole settlement--although the forts were maintained against fearful odds --for we had Col. Harper (17) and Tim Murphy (18) on the ground--and in 1781 when the "notorious" Tory Dockstader (19) came into the county with his Indians & Tories under him and on these occasions. The garrisons being more closely pressed parties being required for scouts & for offensive operations.--This deponent's term was extended from 1 week to 3 weeks on these occasions as near as this deponent can by any means ascertain or remember.--And this deponent cannot estimate his services as above described for the last 3 years to wit in the years of 1779-80 & 81 at said fort under command of the officers last above mentioned including the excursions & scouts made under their orders, & command not less than ten months and a half.--

This deponent had many services in battles with Tories and Indians to wit: at Durlock,(20) at Cobleskill--at Schoharie, at Johnstown and at the places in the border war.--The deponent saith further that in 1778-79-80 & 81 the deponent was as he believes at least 2/3 of the time on scouts and excursions after Tories and Indians--in the spring, summer and fall months besides the ten and a half months above specified he cannot say that except the time above specified he was or could be considered as acting in "an organized corps" except as to the above specified he is described--He is confident that from 1776 to the spring of 1782 he was not able to attend to his own private and civil pursuit equal to one fourth of the time--He was often on scouts after Tories and Indians--on the Mohawk down the Delewear and Susquehannah to the beaver dam & other places a way more than thirty scouts with the famous Indian hunter Murphy--with his double barreled rifle.--Was once at West Canada Creek after Sir John Johnson's army when Gen'l Van Rensselaer (21) pursued him--Knew the Harpers--Gen'l Van Rensselaer, has seen Gen'l Gates, & Col. Willett, (22) Capt. Patrick, Major McKean & Gen'l Herkimer --but does not recollect the name of the Captain who commanded the Continentals at the fort unless it was Capt. Patrick. (23)

The deponent saith that by reason of age & the consequent loss of memory he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his service--but according to the best of his recollection he served in the periods above specifically detailed--in an organized corps commanded by competent authority as a private not less than two years and one month & two weeks for which he claims a pension.--Does not recollect being stationed with regular troops except those mentioned above nor does he recollect the names of any other officers in the Continental service with whom he was acquainted except those named above.--That he served in the above specified time either in the garrison in the field or marching under orders in organized corps commanded by competent authority--and that during all said times he was employed in civil pursuits.

Deponent had no documentary evidence and knows of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to the services except those whose affidavit will be hereto attached. He hereby relinquishes every claim for a pension or annuity except the present & declares that his name is not on the pension roll of any agency of any state.

(Signed) Cornelius Eckerson

Sworn & subscribed third day & year ___? Above written. Before me, David Spraker a Judge of Montgomery County.

State of New York
Schoharie County SS

On this twentieth day of March 1838 personally appeared before me William Beekman Serior Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of the County of Schoharie aforesaid, Catherine Eckerson, a resident of the Town of Sharon County of Schoharie and State aforesaid in the Eightieth year of her age, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on her oath,

make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the Act of Congress, passed July fourth 1836. That she is the widow of Cornelius Eckerson, deceased who was a revolutionary pensioner of the United States at the time of his death, of about \$55.55 per annum. That he was in the revolutionary service after their marriage and she thinks, in Capt. Stubrachs Company in Col. Vrooman's regiment.

She further declares that she was married to the said Cornelius Eckerson on the sixteenth day of January 1781. That her husband, the aforesaid Cornelius Eckerson died on the 30th day of August, 1837 and she has remained a widow ever since that period, as will more fully appear by reference to the proof hereto annexed. That she drew the balance of his pension up to the time of his death, and the pension certificate was sent with the power of attorney the time she drew the balance of the pension.

N.B. the word "marriage" interlined in 10th line above before executed.

(Signed with her mark) Catherine Eckerson

Witness to Catherine Eckerson make at the time she maid it. Christian Otman

Sworn to and Subscribed on the day and year above written before me. William Beekman, first Judge of Schoharie County.

I certify that the applicant cannot, from bodily infirmity, attend the court.

William Beekman, First Judge of Schoharie Co.

State of New York

Schoharie County SS

George A. Lintner, Pastor of St. Pauls Lutheran Church of the town and county of Schoharie and State aforesaid being duly sworn, saith that he has examined the ancient records of said church, kept in the German Language, and which have been in his possession for more than eighteen years past, and that he finds therein records, under the head of marriages, the marriage of Cornelius Ecker to Catherine Hillsinger, in these words, "Den Sixteenth January. Anno, seventeen hundred and eighty one, Cornelius Ecker Johannes sohn und Chatrina Helzinger". And further that the above extract is a true copy of the Record with the exception of the date which is expressed On the Record in fair legible figures as follows "Den 16th January Anno 1781" N.B. in the 3rd line above part of the word "Chatrina" was written over a blue.

G. A. Lintner

Subscribed and sworn this 29th day of September 1838 before me. Oliver Miles, Justice of the Peace.

End Notes

1. George Mann, Captain of the First Company, in Colonel Peter Vrooman's Regiment of Albany County Militia [Fifteenth Regt.]. First Major Thomas Eckerson and Second Major Jost [Joseph] Becker. Christian Stubrachs served as the First Lieutenant under Captain Mann.
2. The Stone Church still stands in Schoharie. It is now called the Old Stone Fort Museum. The Stone Church was stockade [picketed, palisaded, etc.] with huts, etc.
3. Johannes Dietz [Deats, Teets, etc.] was the Second Lieutenant in Stubrachs Company in 1778 and maybe as early as mid summer in 1777.
4. Major General Philip Schuyler of Albany. His summer home was in Saratoga now Schuylerville, Saratoga County.
5. Duanesburgh, Albany County which is now Schenectady County. It is common to attach the word Bush to a settlement in the woods. Even Johns Town was referred to as "Johnsons Bush".
6. Fort Schuyler [Fort Stanwix] is in present day Rome, Oneida County, N.Y.
7. Peter Gansevoort was the Colonel of the Third New York Continental Regiment. Gansevoort was in command at Fort Schuyler from April 1777 to about April 1779. Cornelius was probably there in June or July of 1777.
8. General John Burgoyne was in command of British forces and their Allies and led an invasion force from Canada using the North River [Hudson River]. His army was encamped at Stillwater, NY [Saratoga Co.] in September and October 1777. Burgoyne was heading for Albany to capture it.
9. In 1777 there were no major roads to Saratoga—Stillwater. The militia from the Schoharie and Mohawk Valleys would go to Schenectady and Albany and go by boat up the North River to those areas.
10. General Burgoyne surrendered his forces to American Major General Horatio Gates [who replaced Gen. Schuyler] on the 17th of October 1777.
11. Captain Jacob Hager [Hagar, Heagar, etc.] of Colonel Vrooman's Regiment.
12. Captain John McDonell of the Kings Royal Regiment Grenadier's served throughout the war. John McDonell Aberchalder, former lieutenant of the Royal Highland Emigrants is the captain in Butler's. They were cousins.
13. John Harper was the Colonel of the Fifth Regiment of Tryon County Militia.
14. Harper returned with a Troop of Light Horse or Light Dragoons from the Second Continental Light Dragoons.
15. Cornelius is mistaken on some of his facts. This incident happened in August 1777 and Col. Gansevoort was besieged at Fort Schuyler by the British under General Barry St. Leger and could not have been in Albany.

16. Captain Mann was also arrested in 1777 and Lieutenant Stubrach was then made acting captain and he received his commission on 20 February 1778.
17. Cornelius is again in error of his memory. John Harper was appointed lieutenant-colonel of a regiment of New York State Levies in May of 1780. John and his brother William were living in Colonel Daniel Claus' home near present day Amsterdam, Montgomery County.
18. Timothy Murphy on the day of the invasion, which happened on the 17th day of October 1780, was serving as a private in Captain Isaac Bogert's Company in Colonel Harper's Regiment of Levies. A squad of this company was left under a sergeant as part of the Middle Fort garrison. Most of colonel Harper's Regiment had relieved the First New York Continental Regiment of New York at Fort Schuyler about the 28th of September 1780.
19. John Dockstader was from the CurryTown area in now Montgomery County. Dockstader was a lieutenant in the Indian Department. He is referring to July 9, 1781 when Dockstader attacked CurryTown and New Dorlach, which is now in the Sharon Springs area, Schoharie County.
20. The Battle of new Dorlach was on 10 July 1781; the Battle of Cobleskill was on 30 May 1778; the Battle of Schoharie was on 17 October 1780 and the Battle of Johnstown was on 25 October 1781.
21. A contingent of Albany County Militia and Levies from Schoharie caught up with Brigadier General Robert Van Rensselaer about the 20th October 1780. Van Rensselaer pursued Sir John Johnson's forces as far as Fort Herkimer and gave up the pursuit.
22. Marinus Willett was the lieutenant-colonel of the Third New York Continental Regiment and upon Colonel Lewis DuBois resigning from the Fifth Nw York continental Regiment, Willett transferred to the Fifth as Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant and now was in command of this regiment. When the New York Regiments were consolidated on the 1st of January 1781, Willett was one of many officers left without a command. On the 27th of April 1781, Willett was appointed lieutenant-colonel of a regiment of New York State Levies, which was sent to the Mohawk Valley.
23. William Patrick was a captain in the Sixth Massachusetts Continental Regiment. Patrick was killed at Cobleskill on the 30th May 1778.

[Return to opening page of Morrisons's Pensions](#)

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