

Pension Application for Benjamin Dickson (Dickinson, Dixon)

S.22210

Declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7, 1832 by Benjamin Dickson

State of Pennsylvania

County of Crawford

On this [blank] day of August one thousand eight hundred and thirty two personally appeared in open court before Henry Shippen, President and Stephen Barlow and John H. Marks Esqr. Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Crawford County now sitting – Benjamin Dickson a resident of Vernon township in the county and state aforesaid who being first duly sworn according to law doth, on his oath, make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of 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 viz—

That in the month of February 1776 he went as a militia man in the company of Captain Samuel Clyde (1) of Cherry Valley Montgomery County, (2) New York to Johnstown distant about 30 miles, to suppress some Tories, who, it was said, had collected there at the time under Sir John Johnston [Johnson] and were threatening the peace and safety of the inhabitants and after accomplishing this object of their march, the company returned after an absence of one week.

That about ten days after he went with a detachment of men under the command of Ensign James Cannon (3), of Capt. S. Clyde's Company to Butternut (4) and Otego Creek between 30 & 40 miles from Cherry Valley to bring in a number of Tories who were harboring some hostile Indians and which they accordingly did; one of the Tories, John Hicks died on the way of a fit of apoplexy. The detachment was out about 7 or 8 days.

That in January or February 1777 he was drafted as a militia man into Capt. Dievendorf's (5) company attached to Colonel Ebenezer Cox's regiment of New York & marched with the regiment to reinforce Gen'l Anthony Wayne (6) at Ticonderoga who was threatened with an attack by the British forces after being absent two months & thereabouts the regiment was discharged and the men returned home.

That a few days after his return, in April he went with a detachment of some 25 or 30 men under Ensign James Cannon to a place near the Delaware River, 30 miles from Cherry Valley to quell a number of Scotch Tories living in the neighborhood of the place, and after dispersing them, and taking two of them as hostages, who were sent to prison at Albany, the detachment returned after an absence of about 7 days.

That in May following he went several times in the company of Captain T. Whitaker (7), successor to Captain Clyde, with most of the Militia of Cherry Valley to the German Flats in the Mohawk River, to protect the inhabitants from the ravages of the enemy.

That in June following Capt. Whitaker's company marched with the regiment of Colo. Cox, with some other men commanded by Brig. Genl Herkimer to the mouth of the Unadilla (8) on the Susquehanna River distant 70 miles from Cherry Valley to make battle or treat, with one Brandt (9) an Indian educated by Sir William Johnston [Johnson] who had collected about 200 Indians and Tories 28 miles lower down the river and from where dangers were apprehended—A treaty therein was made and in about 20 days the men returned home—

That in the latter part of July, same year he again met in Capt. Whitakers company with a body of men under Genl Herkimer to the German Flatts and thence to within 4 miles of Fort Stanwix at that time besieged by the British forces under Genl St. Leger. (10) The engagement took place between the two armies in which the Americans lost 346 men killed and prisoners, Capt. Whitaker's company however did not reach the ground until after the engagement when his men assisted in taking care of the wounded &c the time of absence was about 15 days.

That in September following he was drafted for a tour of one month and marched under Major Sam'l Clyde to reinforce Genl Gates (11) at Saratoga. He was in several skirmishes with Genl Burgoyne's (12) men, not at the time of his surrender to Genl Gates, the time of month served had expired and he returned home.

That in the month of March or beginning of April 1778 he was appointed a first Lieutenant in Captain Garret Putman's Company, New York Militia, and was drafted into what was called the "Rangers Service" for a tour of nine months active duty, which time of service he fully completed, and for the greater part of the time acted as and did the duties of captain of the Company. Capt. Putman being sick, and unfit for duty. The company during the time was stationed at Fort Herkimer by the Mohawk River and as he recollects & believes was the only company regularly stationed there at the time, several skirmishes, took place between the men of the fort and the Indians about & at some distance from the fort in two of which he received slight flesh wounds, but not sizable, one the right leg by a buck shot, and the other on the left leg by an Indians spear, at the expiration of the nine months service he with the rest of the company was regularly discharged and returned home. He recollects of Major Copeman (15) of the New York Militia being at the fort several times while he was stationed there, but he has no recollection of his having any particular command of the station.

That he [?] no actual service of any account until the spring of 1780 when he with the militia of Montgomery County were called out to repel the British forces under Sir J. Johnston (14) who at that time was committing much injury to the settlements in the Cochnawaga [Caughnawaga] 20 miles above Schenectady N. York.

That he was acquainted with Genl Gates, Wayne & Herkimer and Colo. Ebenezer Cox of the New York Militia, Colo. Samuel Campbell who was an uncle of his (applicant), Major Isenlord (16) of Colo. Cox's Regiment & Major Copeman, all these persons he knew well—

That he has no documentary evidence whereby to establish the foregoing facts. That what he might have had he has lost, particularly a small journal in which he had noted several incidents which if recollected at present might be satisfactory. In Nov 1777, while stationed at Fort Herkimer he had house with its contents burnt by the Indians as he was afterwards informed & verily believes & what papers he had prior to that time of his service must have then destroyed.

He states that he was born the 26th December 1753 at Cherry Valley N. York where he resided until 1789 when he moved to Owego N. York, thence to Ontario County N.Y. then to North East Erie County Penn in 1815 and thence to Vernon Township Crawford County Penn about 5 years since where he has and continues to reside with his son James M. Dickson. The record of his age is contained in the family bible of his father of whose sons he is the eldest and that the bible is in his possession and produces in court.

He has procured the testimony of his brother James Dickson of Erie County taken the 5th of August inst. before the Hon. Henry Shippen aforesaid and which is hereto annexed, to prove many or all of the foregoing facts.

He is acquainted with David Brackenrige Esqr and John H. Work, Judge of this Court (that the clergyman of the neighborhood are not acquainted with his reputation as a soldier of the Revolution) who can testify as to his character for veracity and their belief of his services as a soldier of the revolution.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present, and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state.

Says he had a warrant or commission from a committee in New York which has been lost for several years. (Signed) Benjamin Dickson

Sworn & subscribed the day and year aforesaid, August 16, 1832. Henry Shippen.
Letter replying to inquiry dated January 15, 1935.

Reference is made to your request for data in regard to Benjamin Dickson, soldier of the War of the Revolution, served in the New York militia and died in Crawford County, Pennsylvania.

The Revolutionary War record of Benjamin Dickson which follows was obtained from the papers on file in pension claim, S. 22210, based upon his service in that war.

Benjamin Dickson was born December 26, 1753 in Cherry Valley, Montgomery County, New York; he was the son of William Dickson, and was the eldest of six sons, the name of his mother not given.

While a resident of Cherry Valley, New York he served in the New York troops on various tours as follows: in February, 1776, one week as private in Captain Samuel Clyde's company, and about ten days later, seven or eight days in same company; from sometime in February, 1777, two months in Captain Diefendorf's company, Colonel Ebenezer Cox's regiment; in April 1777, seven days under Ensign James Cannon; in May 1777, several alarms in Captain Thomas Whitaker's company, and in June 1777, twenty days in same company; in July 1777 fifteen says as sergeant in Captain Thomas Whitaker's company; from; sometime in September, 1777, one month under Major Samuel Clyde, during which he was in several skirmishes; in November 1777, sometime at Fort Herkimer, officers not named. Subsequently, he was appointed 1st Lieutenant and from April 1, 1778, served nine months in Captain Garret Putnam's company, during which period he was in several skirmishes, and received a flesh wound by a buckshot in his right leg and a flesh wound in his left leg by an Indian's spear. He was called out in September, 1780 (17) to protect the settlements about twenty miles above Schenectady.

Benjamin Dickson resided in Cherry Valley, New York, until 1789, then moved to Oswego, New York; then to Ontario County, New York, and from there in 1815 to Erie County, Pennsylvania.

He was allowed pension on his application executed August 16, 1832, at which time he was residing with his son, James M. Dickson, in Vernon Township, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, where he had lived about five years. The name of the soldier's wife is not shown.

James Dickson, soldier's brother, was born February 3, 1756, was living in 1832 in Erie County, Pennsylvania.

End Notes – S.22210—Benjamin Dickson

1. Samuel Clyde was the Captain of the First Company, appointed on August 26, 1775, in Colonel Nicholas Herkimer's First Regiment of Tryon County Militia.
2. This county was known as Tryon County from 1772 to 1784. This part of Montgomery County became Otsego County in 1791.
3. James Cannon was the Second Lieutenant in Captain Clyde's Company.

4. The Butternuts and Unadilla were loyalists settlements and frequently aided raiding parties.
5. Captain Henry Diefendorf of the Fifth Company in Colonel Ebenezer Cox's First Regiment of Tryon County Militia. Herkimer was promoted to Brigadier General on September 5, 1776.
6. Colonel Anthony Wayne of the Fourth Pennsylvania Continental Regiment. Wayne was appointed Brigadier General on February 21, 1777. A draft of the Tryon County Militia was made in January and February 1777 and the detachment under Colonel Cox went to Ticonderoga and Mount Independence. They helped build and repair fortifications and build the floating bridge across Lake Champlain from Fort Ticonderoga on the New York side and Mount Independence on the Vermont side.
7. Thomas Whitaker was appointed captain as Samuel Clyde had been promoted to Second Major. At this time James Cannon was appointed Adjutant of Cox's Regiment. The other officers under Whitaker were as follows: First Lieutenant John Campbell, Second Lieutenant Samuel Campbell and Ensign Samuel Whorfield.
8. This meeting took place on June 27, 1777.
9. Captain Joseph Brant. He did have a regiment called Brant's Volunteers which was a mix of Natives and Loyalists.
10. Barry St. Leger was a Lieutenant-Colonel in the 34th Regiment but for this expedition he was appointed a Brigadier General to stop any problems arising from the seniority of rank. The Battle of Oriskany was fought on August 6, 1777.
11. Major General Horatio Gates of the Continental Northern Army.
12. Lieutenant General John Burgoyne surrendered his British forces on October 17, 1777.
13. Two companies of Rangers of sixty men each were to be raised by the order of Marquis Marie Jean de Lafayette in March of 1778 after holding a conference with the native tribes at Johnstown. On April 6th a meeting of the field officers, also known as Regimental Officers, submitted the following names to be approved: Captain John Bradpick or Breadbake, Lieutenants Adam Helmer and John Smith, Captain Garret Putman and Lieutenants Victor Putman and Benjamin Dickson. FROM: Public Papers of George Clinton, First Governor of the State of New York, Vol. 3, pp 251-252.
14. He is referring to the raid of May 22, 1780. Johnson's forces burned Tribes or Tripes Hill and Caughnawaga which is the present day village of Fonda in the Town of Mohawk now called Montgomery County.
15. Abraham Copeman, Captain of the Sixth Company in Colonel Samuel Campbell's First Regiment of Tryon County Militia. Colonel Cox was killed at the Battle of Oriskany on August 6, 1777.
16. John Eisenlord was the Second Major in Colonel Peter Bellingher's Fourth Regiment of Tryon County Militia.
17. Benjamin's application says the spring of 1780 as well as his brother James' supporting testimony.