

Pension Application for Jacob Fester

R.3520

Schoharie County

State of New York, SS.

Jacob Fester aged 83 years being duly sworn deposeth and saith that he was in the service in the War of the Revolution under Capt. Brown (1) in Cobleskill in said County.

Declarant deposeth and saith that he served under Capt. Brown in the summer of 1781 and in the winter of 1782 at the fort (2) in said Cobleskill was guarding the fort and volunteered from Cobleskill to Schoharie in the spring of 1782 and served one year under Capt George Richtmyer. (3) John Bellinger was an officer under said Capt. Richtmyer and commanded the company the greatest part of the time. Declarant was out on scouts and assisted in taking some prisoners. Declarant says he was placed stationary at the Middle Fort (4) so called in said Schoharie and when declarant was sent out scouts he was under different officers. Such officers as they saw fit to order out. Declarant forgets the names of said captains who ordered him on his scouts. Sometimes a party was sent out and a soldier was set over them as a Capt. to order—Capt. Richtmyer did not serve but a very small part of the time at the fort in said year that this declarant served although he was placed under him he was there occasionally other officers acted as captain as above stated. After declarant took his discharge in spring of 1783, declarant returned again to Cobleskill to his father's family. (5)

Declarant's father was taken prisoner at Cobleskill by the Indians in said war and dragged off to Canada and had two brothers killed by the Indians and Tories when Cobleskill was burnt the first time. When Capt. Patrick was killed in 1779 (6) one of his brothers (7) was killed and mangled; it was said this brother was caught by the dogs that of Tories had & that mangled and scalped and the other brother was in the house and fought the Indians and Tories & the house was set on first by the Indians and his brother and those that were in the house was burnt up with the house.

Declarant says he was young but felt to satisfy his mind to enter the service young and do all he could in taking revenge for the loss of his brothers. His father was prisoner upwards of a year before he was sent home and exchanged. Declarant's case has been taken up & sent to Washington by John Westover Esq. nearly 2 years or over & sent to Washington and no returns received. Declarant thinks some defects may be in the declaration not specifying his services and now makes oath and sends this to correct it with his former declaration & said declarant hereby appoints and authorizes fully. Jacob Thryaland of Cobleskill and Joseph W. Haddock Esqrs. of Albany to act as his lawful agents in obtaining said pension from the United States. Dated at Sharon this 17th day of December 1845. (Signed) Jacob Fester

Subscribed and sworn before me this 17th day of December 1845. John Osterhout, Justice of the Peace.

Schoharie County

State of New York, SS

Elias Hillsinger being duly sworn deposeth & saith he is 87 years old and did service principally himself among the militia in Schoharie in the War of the Revolution almost during said war this deponent says he knew Jacob Fester who resided in Cobleskill in said county in said war and deponent says he knew said Fester before the war and after the War of the Revolution & knows him now he now resides in the Town of Sharon in said county and knew him in the service in said War of the Revolution as a volunteer in the Militia under Capt. Richtmyer & other officers. Deponent says he forgets their names. Deponent says that said Fester served at least one year or more as he recollects well of seeing said Jacob Fester at many different times through the seasons of summer & fall, spring & winter and conversed with Fester in said period at many different times and from the seasons and times deponent says he knows that said Jacob Fester served at least one year or more regular and steady under Captain Richtmyer and other officers. Deponent says he cannot be mistaken as to said Jacob Fester's Revolutionary services in said war & says he served one year or more as he this deponent was witness in seeing him almost continually in the service during this time this year's service was done by said Fester near the close of the war of the Revolution and further this deponent said not. (Signed with his mark) Elias Hillsinger

Subscribed and sworn before me this 16th day of December 1845 and I certify that said Elias Hillsinger is a man of sound mind for a man of his age and is a credible witness and his testimony is credible and indisputable and this was read to him before execution. (Signed) John Osterhout, Justice of the Peace

Schoharie County
State of New York SS

Christina Norman being aged but thanks to God, her creator for life and the blessings of a sound mind and good memory she says in her old age being duly sworn deposeth and saith that she was well acquainted with Jacob Fester who resided in Cobleskill in said County in the War of the Revolution. Deponent's father resided in the Lower Fort in said Schoharie in the time of said war. Deponent says that said Jacob Fester was in the service in said war at the Middle Fort in said Schoharie towards the close of the war for some length of time. Deponent says she cannot state how long said Jacob Fester was in the service but from her own knowledge she says it was at least one year that said Jacob Fester served steady as a volunteer and deponent says she was well acquainted with his father's family & that she never can forget the dreadful massacre at said Fester's father's house in said war when Cobleskill was burnt when Capt. Patrick and his men was butchered of by the Tories and Indians. Deponent says her father Mr. Henry Hitchman (8) was one of the party sent after those Indians from the Lower Fort as above stated and at his return he stated that said Fester's house was burnt and one of his sons and others who defended themselves in the house was burnt up in it and one other son was butchered and mangled and his inwards taken out and wound around a stump and others of the family butchered also and mangled in the same manner & her said father stated he gathered the remains of those dead bodies & took their inwards from the stumps & buried them & from those impressions she can never forget the unfortunate family & the Tories and Indians took old Mr. Fester prisoner to Canada

and that said Jacob Fester was young and went into the service very young with great courage he wanted revenge or die with his unfortunate brothers. Deponent says that said Fester served under Capt. George Richtmyer & she was well acquainted with Capt. Richtmyer she saw said Fester very often in scouts & other times they came to the Lower Fort and she was very often at the Middle Fort and the soldiers some times was shifted and got together in the service. Deponent says said Jacob Fester served at least a year under Capt. Richtmyer and the officer at the Middle Fort.

(Signed with her mark) Christiana Norman

Subscribed and sworn before me this 19th day of December 1845 and I certify that the that the old lady the witness above is still possessed of a great memory and sound mind and is a credible witness and the above was taken carefully and read to her before execution. (Signed) John Osterhout, Justice of the Peace

Schoharie County
State of New York, SS

Catharine Bassett of said town and county aged 94 years deposeseth and says that she was acquainted with Jacob Fester from Cobleskill in said County in the war of the Revolution as her father resided in the Lower Fort in said Schoharie. She this deponent says she saw said Jacob Fester at different times near the close of the war and was under Capt. Richtmyer this deponent says she was well acquainted with said Capt. George Richtmyer and that said Jacob Fester was under him in the latter part of the war and says that two of said Jacob Fester's brothers was killed by the Indians and Tories and one of them burnt up in the house and the old Mr. Fester was taken prisoner by the Indians and Tories and said Jacob Fester did service as a volunteer so then said for one year under said Capt. Richtmyer near the close of the war at the Middle Fort but was frequently at the Lower fort when they were out on scouts and this deponent saw him a great many times during said year in the service and recollects distinctly of said Jacob Fester service to have been the period of one year and recollects it from winter & summer & the seasons been as there a year as was stated then in the time he served he was a volunteer and said Fester had a good name for his bravery after the Indians and further this deponent saith not.

(Signed with her mark) Catharine Bassett

Subscribed and sworn before me the 19 day of December 1845 & I certify that Mrs. Bassett has a remarkable mind & sound memory for her age & is a credible witness and this affidavit was read to her before execution. (Signed) John Osterhout, Justice of the Peace.

The next letter is dated February 1, 1869 from one of his daughters. She explained her father died December 2, 1851 without ever receiving a pension or any part of it. In some cases, the children were granted what was owed.

End Notes

1. Capt. Christian Brown, 15th Regt of Albany County Militia under Col. Peter Vrooman.
2. A blockhouse built by the 5th Continental Regt in the fall and winter of 1778 and winter of 1779. It was named Fort DuBois in honor of their Col. Lewis

DuBois. There is a state marker to mark the spot on Route 7, Village of Cobleskill.

Martinus Fester and John Freemire killed in the house.

Father George Captured Sept 2, 1781.

3. Capt. George Richtmyer, 3rd Company in Col. Vrooman's Regt. John L. Bellinger was the Ensign and later a lieutenant in said company.
4. Middle Fort stood near Route 30 near the Village of Middleburg.
5. Jacob's father was George and served also in Capt. Brown's Co. He was captured on August 26, 1781 and exchanged in November 1782. The last name was written then as Ferster or Forster.
6. This actually happened on May 30, 1778. Capt. William Patrick and his men were from the 6th Massachusetts Continental Regiment. They were stationed at Cherry Valley and suffered greatly there on Nov. 11, 1778 when Cherry Valley was destroyed by Capt. Walter Butler and Capt. Joseph Brant.
7. Jacob's brothers were Martines and John, and they also served in Capt. Brown's Company. Martines and John Freemire [Freemoyer] are 2 of the 3 men known to be burnt in the house. John Forster was the brother that was mangled.
8. Henry Hitzman served as a private in Capt. Derck Miller's Company in Col. Vrooman's Regt. Also he served as a Corporal in Captain Christian Stubrach's Co. in Col. Vrooman's Regt.
9. The Lower Fort which was the Schoharie Dutch Reformed Church. This church was stockaded and had block houses. Inside were huts for the people to live in times of danger. This church still stands and is known as the Old Stone Fort Museum, Schoharie.

This fort as was the Middle Fort and Upper Fort were attacked on Oct. 17, 1780 by Lt-Col. Sir John Johnson. Some of my ancestors, Lt. and Adjutant Lawrence Schoolcraft and sons helped defend the Lower Fort during this attack