

Pension Application for Michael J. [or I.] Keyser (Cayser, Kaiser, Syser)

R.5900

State of Michigan

County of Lenawee SS

In the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty, personally appeared me William H. Horg, [or Haig?] an associate judge of Circuit Court in and for said County of Lenawee at my office in the Village of Tecumseh in said county Michael Keyser a resident of Tecumseh aforesaid aged seventy-nine years and six months, 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 seventh in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty two.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers, and served as herein stated: viz:

That in the years 1776, 1777 and 1778 he served in a company of militia commanded by Captain John Keyser (1) except four months which he served under Captain Michael Moyer, a nine months officer in the year 1776, as a substitute for his brother John Keyser Junior who was at that time in poor health and took his place which was nearer home and also one month in the year 1777 when he was lent to a picket fort under the command of Captain Henry Hoover, (2) all said companies being the Regiment Commanded by Colonel Peter Bellinger, in the County of Tryon (now Herkimer) in the colony (now state) of New York.

That he entered into the service on or about the first day of May 1776 and that he remained in the service until on or about the twentieth day of March 1778, (3) at which time last mentioned he was taken prisoner by the common enemy called the Tories and Indians, and was taken by them to Canada where he was kept a prisoner of war until the close of the Revolutionary War in the fall of the year 1782 quite late.

That while he was in the service he had often times to go on scouting parties, was often out one day and sometimes longer, that he and his companions were often put on duty at different posts, to keep a look out and to give notice when they discovered the enemy. That he was in the employ at different times in the year 1776 & 1777. That he was warned to serve as a militia man that during all the time he served as a private under the command of the said Captains; that he bring Situate on the frontier. The service was on scouting parties, building picket forts, and defending the settlers and their houses and property.

That all the service which he performed was in the said county of Tryon; that he was not engaged in any regular engagement, that embodied corps with which he served was called into service as he understood by Colonel Peter Bellinger, that in the year 1777 he assisted in building two log houses and picket forts at the house of Melchert Ocks (4) in the said County of Tryon for the purpose of defending the soldiers & people and in the year 1778 he assisted in building a picket fort around the house of Henry Remensnyder (5) for a place of retreat and defence.

That several times they were driven from their houses & shelters by the enemy and took shelter in a stone mill at Little Falls on the Mohawk River; that at the time he was taken prisoner the whole town was [?] by the enemy and that many were taken prisoners among whom were Captain John Keyser, John Keyser Junior, Henry Clack, & Henry Shaver, that for the whole time during which the service was performed by him and during his imprisonment, he was not employed in any civil pursuit [rest of line cut off] said county of Tryon in Stonerobby in December of the year 1760 where he resided with his father until he entered the service. That his Father then had a record of his age which he had kept in the family Bible, that said Bible was burned together with the house of his Father in the time of the war and that since that time he has not had any documentary evidence of his age on day of birth and cannot speak positive as to the day of his birth. That he resided in said County of Tryon after returning from Canada, after the war until in the month of February AD 1813 when he removed to the Town of LeMay in the County of Jefferson in the State of New York, where he resided until the fifth day of July AD 1839 when he removed to the town of Techumseh in the said County of Lenawee where he now resides with his son Henry Keyser: 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.

(Signed) M. Keyser

Sworn and Subscribed before me the day and year aforesaid.

Wm. H. Horg, Associate Judge Lenawee County

Interrogatories to be answered by Michael Keyser, claimant for a pension.

1. Where and in what year were you born? *I was born at Stonerobby [Stone Arabia] in the county of Tryon (now Herkimer [Montgomery]) in the colony (now state of New York).*

2. Have you any records of your age? *I have not. My father kept a record of my age in the family Bible which was burned in the time of the Revolutionary War And since that time I have not kept any record.*
3. Where were you living when called into service; where have you lived since the revolutionary war? And where do you now live? *I lived at the Stonerobby in the then County of Tryon when I was called into service where resided until February AD 1813 where I removed to the town of LeRoy in the County of Jefferson where resided until the 5th day of July AD 1839 when I removed to this place where Henry resides.*
4. How were you called into service; were you draughted, did you volunteer or were you a substitute and if a substitute from whom? *I was draughted into service and served as a substitute for John Keyser Junior for four months during the time of my service.*
5. State the names of some of the Regular officers who were with & troops where you served such continental & militia regiments as you can recollect, and the general circumstances of your service. *I recollect Colonel Peter Bellinger Colonel of the regiment in which I served. John Keyser Captain of the company which I served most of the time, Captain Michael Moyer (6) and Captain Henry Hoover. Do not recollect any other regiments, my services were mostly on scouting parties as a [?] building picket forts and defending the neighbourhood and town.*
6. Did you every receive a discharge from the service? *I never did.*
7. State the name of persons to whom you are known in the your present neighbourhood, and who can testify as to your character for veracity and their belief of your services as a soldier of the Revolution. *I recollect and am acquainted with many in Jefferson County & I am here acquainted with Elias Scofield, Elnathan [Scofigld?], Thomas Goodrich & Ansel Winslow & in Jefferson County in the State of New York, there is William Father, Peter Wooliver, Henry Ritter, & Elisha Scofield.*

(Signed) M. Keyser

Sworn & subscribed before me this thirtieth day of June AD 1840. William Hoig [Haig?]

State of Michigan

County of Lenawee SS

Personally appeared before me the undersigned an associate Judge in & for the circuit court in said County. Michael Keyser, who being duly sworn, deposeth & saith that by reason of old age, and the consequent loss of memory he cannot swear positively as to the precise length of his services but that according to the best of his recollection, he served not less than the periods mentioned below and in the following grades. For one year & ten months & twenty days I served as a militia man was on scouting parties and some times as Indian spie: for that I had seven months was a prisoner of war in Canada where I was treated as such, and for such services I claim a pension.

(Signed) M. Keyser

Sworn & subscribed before me this thirtieth day of June AD 1840. Wm. H. Hoeg, Associate Judge Lenawee County

End Notes—R.5900—Michael Keyser

1. On the muster rolls that exist for Captain John Keyser's Company, Michael or John Keyser Jr. are not on them. Michael is listed as a Corporal in Captain Severinus Klock's Company in Colonel Jacob Klock's Second Regiment of Tryon County Militia. He was paid July 25, 1785 for a single certificate number 18838 £ 5..1..8. FROM: Revolutionary War Rolls 1775-1783, Series M-246, Roll 75, folder 121, National Archives, Washington D.C. Captain Klock was not appointed Captain until 1778 as Andrew Dillenbach had been captain of the company until he was killed at the Battle of Oriskany on August 6, 1777.
2. Henry Huber (Hoever, Hoover) served as a captain in Colonel Peter Bellinger's Fourth Regiment of Tryon County Militia. Captain Huber had been taken prisoner at the Battle of Oriskany and he was exchanged for a British prisoner held by the Americans in 1778. It was probably a detachment from both regiments and Captain Huber commanded the detachment.
3. Michael was taken prisoner on March 15, 1780. Father and sons eventually enlisted into the British service. Michael and John Keyser Jr. enlisted on April 3, 1780 as a private in the First Battalion of the King's Royal Regiment of New York which was commanded by Sir John Johnson. They served in Captain Patrick Daly's Company and served until the regiment was disbanded. In 1784 they were living in Royal Township No. 2, which is Cornwall, Canada. John Keyser, Sr., did not enlist until May 10, 1781 as a private in the Second Battalion of the King's Royal Regiment of New York. John Sr., also served until the regiment was disbanded. Obviously they were not prisoners of war the entire time while in Canada.

FROM: MG21: Non-commissioned officers, drummers, & private men 1KRRNY. Since formation, Point Clair 17th May 1781. These are lists of names with enlistments etc. There are many patriot soldiers who had been taken prisoner or deserted on this roll.

FROM: MG 21: Roll of men enlisted for 2 KRRNY Point Clair 17th May 1781. Both are found in Governor Frederick Haldiman's Papers. (Haldiman was the Governor of Canada.) They are on microfilm and are full of information of the Schoharie and Mohawk Valleys during the War of Independence.