

Pension Application for Robert Ayres, Ayrs or Eyrs

W.20648 (Widow: Sarah. Married Robert Ayres on the first day of March 1785, he died the thirtieth day of April 1833.)

Pension awarded Widow \$70.88 per annum

New York

Saratoga SS.

On this 25th day of December 1832 personally appeared in open court before the Court of Common Pleas held in and for the county of Saratoga now sitting Robert Ayrs of the Town of Saratoga Springs, County & State aforesaid aged sixty seven 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 Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832, that he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as stated.—

On being asked where & in what year were you Born? He answers & says that he was born April 12th 1765 near the present Town of Stillwater in the (then) County of Albany now County of Saratoga—

On being asked have you any record of your age & if so where is it? He answers & says that he has a record of his age in his family Bible at his present residence—

On being asked where were you living when called into service, where have you lived since the revolutionary war & where do you now live? He answers & says that he was living at Stillwater in the County of Saratoga when called into Service, since the Revolutionary War he has lived in the county of Saratoga, part of the time in Stillwater & part in Saratoga Springs where he now resides.—

On being asked how were you called into service; where you drafted, did you volunteer or were you a substitute? And if a substitute for whom? He answers & says he was called into service by Enlisting & served for three years.

On being asked To state the names of some of the Regular Officers who were with the Troops where you Served, such continental & militia regiments as you can recollect & the general circumstances of your service—he answers & says that about the 1st day of April 1782 at Stillwater aforesaid he enlisted in the New York State Troops for the term of three years in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Marinus Willett under Capt. Job Wright (1) who was then recruiting in said town. From which place he was marched to Ballston in said County to protect the Inhabitants & there remained until about the 15th Day of July thereafter—he was then marched to Stone Arabia near Johnstown on the Mohawk River to guard the Inhabitants while they were engaged in harvesting—from thence he marched to Fort Plains, on the Mohawk River & there worked on the fortifications & did garrison duty until the Winter when we went to Fort Herkimer & remained about a month & then went on an expedition against the Enemy at Fort Oswego (2) near the mouth of the Oswego, then returned to Fort Herkimer and said Mohawk River & there remained on garrison duty until the next Fall, was then marched to Schenectady on the Mohawk & was there discharged in consequence after Peace, about the 8th January 1784 (3) The said Regiment being discharged in small parties at Intervals—at the time of his discharge he belonged to the company of Capt. Peter. B. Tearse (4) who granted his discharge according to the best of his recollection—which discharge is lost—That he was discharged in common with the rest of the Regiment as having served the full Term of their Enlistment he enlisted as a private & was when discharged a non commissioned officer—He has no documentary evidence of his service & knows of a person by the name of Samuel Ashman living in Champlain near the Canada line & Albert Baker now living in Queensbury, County of Warren who entered & served in the same company with Deponent, Besides these deponent knows of no one whose testimony he could procure to prove his service—and deponent intends to present the Testimony of the said Albert Baker (whom deponent has long known & who is a person of much Respectability & a credible Person) But deponent is not able to defray the expense of procuring the evidence of the said Ashman—

On being asked Did you receive a discharge from the service & if so by whom was it given & what has become of it? He answers & says he has already answered as hereinbefore stated—

On being asked to state the names of Persons to whom he is known in his present neighborhood & who can testify as to his character, for veracity & their belief of his services as a soldier of the Revolution—he answers & states the names of Hon'l Esch Cowen, Hon'l John H. Steel a Judge of this Court, Hon'l James Thompson, First Judge of this Court. Wm. L F. Warren Esquire, Ransom Cook Esqr, Thomas J. Marvin Esqr & others.

And Deponent further states that he hereby Relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present & declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state—Deponent further says that he is unacquainted with any clergyman whose attendance he can procure without a great expense—

Deponent further says that when he went to Fort Oswego as above mentioned, his regiment was joined by a Rhode Island Regiment (5) at Fort Herkimer, Both Regiments then moved on in the Month of February in Sleighs to Fort Oswego, which it was calculated to take by surprise, but the Troops did not arrived till near day light & in consequence thereof the expedition failed & was extracted, one company & Capt. James Cannon's (6) company went to Herkimer & the rest marched to Fort Plains. Major Benschoten or Van Benschoten, & Adjutant Pliny Moore- & Quarter Master Trotter & Paymaster Ten Eyck (7) accompanied the detachments to Fort Oswego—Ten Eyck was paymaster and thinks he remained at Albany then. (Signed) Robert Ayrs

Sworn & Subscribed the day & year aforesaid in Open Court Wm L. Goodrich Dep. Clerk
Letter of inquiry dated September 11, 1838, included in the pension folder.

The data which follow were obtained from papers on file in pension claim, W.20648, based upon service of Robert Ayrs in the Revolutionary War.

Robert Ayrs was born April 12, 1765, at Stillwater, Albany County (later Saratoga County), New York. Names of his parents are not shown.

While a resident of Stillwater, Saratoga County, New York, Robert Ayrs enlisted April 1, 1782, served in Captains Job Wright's and Peter B. Tearce's companies, Colonel Marinus Willett's New York Regiment, was on guard duty on the Mohawk River and garrison duty at Fort Herkimer and was on an expedition against the enemy at Fort Oswego, and was discharged at the close of the war. His service was rendered as private and non-commissioned officer.

The soldier was allowed pension on his application executed December 25, 1832, then a resident of Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County, New York.

He died April 30, 1833, at Saratoga Springs, New York.

Robert Ayrs married March 1, 1785, at Stillwater, New York, Sarah Ashton, daughter of John Ashton. She was born August 22, 1766. They were both residing in Stillwater, New York at the time of marriage. The name of Sarah's mother is not shown.

The soldier's widow, Sarah Ayrs, was allowed pension on her application executed March 18, 1840 at which time she was residing in Milton, Saratoga County, New York. In August 1843 she was residing in Saratoga Springs, New York, and in 1848 in Milton, New York.

The names of the children of Robert and Sarah Ayrs are shown as follows:

John-Born May 1, 1788

Isaac-Born May 18, 1789

Reuben-Born March 24, 1791, died July 23, 1791

Mary-Born April 27, 1792

Rebecca-Born April 21, 1793, died March 1, 1794

Sarah-Born December 2, 1796

Rachel-Born May 6, 1799

In 1840, their daughter Sarah, the wife of Elisha Rockwell, was residing in Milton, New York.

In 1840, soldier's sister, Mary, aged seventy-nine years, widow of Eleazer Millard, made a statement in Saratoga County, New York in regard to the marriage of Robert and Sarah Ayrs. In the same year one Rebeccah Morey was aged sixty-seven years and a resident of Malta, Saratoga County, New York, and stated that at the time Robert and Sarah married she was residing with the family of Sarah's father, no relationship stated.

Reference was made to one Eleazer Millard who was superintendent of a class in Colonel Van Veghten's New York regiment in 1782, no relationship to the family shown.

End Notes—W.20648—Robert Ayres

1. Captain Job Wright's Company in Colonel Marinus Willett's Regiment of New York State Levies.
2. Fort Oswego is on Lake Ontario, New York. This expedition was in February of 1783.
3. According to the "Extract from the Register of the New York State Battalion" as follows:--Robert Ayres (Discharge) January 6, 1784. FROM: Revolutionary War Rolls 1775-1783, Series M-246, Roll 78, Folder 173, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
4. Robert is listed as a Corporal in Captain Wright's Company. He served as a corporal for 10 months and transferred to Captain Peter B. Tearce's Company of Light Infantry in Colonel Willett's Regiment and served as a corporal for 2 months. FROM: Revolutionary War Rolls 1775—1783, Series M-246, roll 78, folder 173, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
5. The First Rhode Island Continental Regiment.
6. Captain James Cannon was in Colonel Willett's Regiment.
7. Major Elias VanBenschoten, Adjutant Pliney Moor, QuarterMaster Matthew Trotter and PayMaster Abrahan TenEyck were all in Willett's Regiment.