

Pension Application for William Feeter or Vetter
(Transcribed and end noted by Wayne Lenig)

S.13013

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

State of New York

Herkimer County

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On this 11h day of [~~October personally~~] February in the year 1833 personally appeared in open court, before the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas, now sitting, William Feeter, a resident of the Town of Little Falls in the County of Herkimer & State of New York aged seventy-six 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 7, 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers, & served as herein stated.

That deponent was born at the place called Stone Arabia in the (now) Town of Palatine in the County of Montgomery & State of New York, the second day of February in the year 1756. Deponent has been informed, there was a record of his age made by the clergyman of the Dutch Reformed Church at Stone Arabia, but deponent never saw it, & does not know where said record is. Deponent's father also had a record of the ages of his children which has been destroyed, & these are the only records of his age of which he has any knowledge that at the time deponent entered into the service he lived at the (now) town of Amsterdam in said County of Montgomery in said State of New York with his father, & since the Revolutionary War, deponent has resided in the said Town of Little Falls, where he still resides.

Deponent was enrolled in a company of militia at Amsterdam aforesaid in a company Commanded by [~~David~~] Emmanuel Degraff Capt. The other officers of the company deponent does not now recollect, in the spring of the year 1776. During this year deponent was out several times with his company on scouting parties, & went to Johnstown, Caghnawaga & Sockandaga - all now in the said County of Montgomery. Deponent was out several days each time, in pursuit of Indians & Tories who infested the county. Deponent does not recollect of being out in service at any time during the succeeding winter.

The spring following - the year 1777, deponent was out several time on scouting parties in pursuit of Indians & Tories. The last of June or first of July deponent was drafted to go with the militia to Fort Stanwix to shut up Wood Creek that empties into Oneida Lake, Deponent went in a company commanded by Abraham Yates Captain. The other officers deponent does not now recollect. The company went to Fort Stanwix from which place a guard was sent to

protect the militia while they fell trees into the creek to prevent the British from ascending it with boats. Deponent does not recollect how long they were engaged there, but when they returned to Amsterdam deponent thinks the militia had been out three or four weeks. That at the time deponent returned from Fort Stanwix as above stated, the county was all in commotion, it was known that St. Leger was on his way from Oswego to attack Fort Stanwix, Burgoyne was advancing from the north & Howe triumphant at New York, the Tories held up their heads & were confident, their cause would succeed. Most of the inhabitants at Amsterdam were Tories, as were the father & brothers of deponent - who a few days after the Battle at Oriskany, which was on the 6th of August - turned deponent out of doors because he was a friend to his county, & deponent went immediately to Stone Arabia where he was born, & where most of the inhabitants were Whigs. Deponent went to the house of his uncle, George Steers, who in a few days went with deponent to a family of Grays, & they gave deponent a musket & the necessary equipage. Deponent was then enrolled in a Company of Militia Commanded by Sufrinus Cook Capt, Nicholas Coppernol Lieutenant, & Peter Greimes [Gremps] Junior Ensign.

This was soon after the Battle at Oriskany, & the Indians & Tories infested the county & deponent with this company was almost constantly engaged in pursuit of them. Stone Arabia is a high range of land from which could be seen the surrounding country for a great many miles, & the militia were told that where a large smoke was seen to rise in any part of the county, [they were ordered – crossed out] to turn out immediately, & deponent was out several times this summer in pursuit of the enemy from this same sign. The company to which deponent belonged was attached to a regiment commanded by Jacob Klock Col & Peter Waggoner was Lieutenant Col, the other officers deponent does not now recollect. The next spring deponent was drafted to go to Unadilla, the Indians & Tories as it was reported had collected therein. Deponent went in a company Commanded by Samuel Gray, Captain, the other officers deponent does not now recollect. The militia rendezvoused at Fort Herkimer. The day before deponent went to Fort Herkimer an Indian spy was taken prisoner in the Mohawk River & was bro[ugh]t to the fort. The same day deponent arrived at Fort Herkimer, he & one Jacob Sant was sent with the Indian spy to Jacob Klock's, the Colonel of the Regiment at Stone Arabia, who was directed to send the Indian to Albany. Deponent & said Sant returned immediately to Fort Herkimer. A few days after a party of Indians & Tories amounting to eight or nine hundred made their appearance in the vicinity of the fort. The Indian spy above mentioned was, as was supposed, sent out by this party to scout the country & gain intelligence. The inhabitants had information of the approach of the enemy & had moved into Fort Herkimer & Dayton. A scouting party had been sent from the fort down the Unadilla River to ascertain the situation & strength of the enemy. This party was attacked by the Indians & most of them killed. One or two returned to the fort & informed the inhabitants of the approach of the enemy. About all the buildings & property were burnt & destroyed along the

Mohawk River by the enemy in the vicinity of the forts. A party of Indians kept at a short distance from Fort Herkimer which contained only about 100 militia. The Indians set a house on fire a short distance from the fort. Deponent & several others climbed over the pickets of the fort & ran & put the fire out & saved the house. The enemy stayed but one day in the neighborhood. The militia did not go to Unadilla. Deponent remained at Fort Herkimer some time, cannot tell how long. The militia were ordered to go from Fort Herkimer to Glaisburgh [Klauberg] in the (now) Town of Minden in the County of Montgomery about two miles west of Fort Plain. The militia at that place were under the command of Colonel Jacob Klock. They lay at the latter place till the massacre & destruction of Cherry Valley in the now County of Otsego, that joins Montgomery County on the southwest. The first of November the news spread through the country, & the militia at Glaisburgh went in pursuit of the enemy. They arrived within a few miles of Cherry Valley & encamped at a small house for the night; Deponent & one George Waffle were sent to scout the woods in the vicinity of the house when they encamped to ascertain if the enemy were in the vicinity. The next morning the militia marched to Cherry Valley & the garrison were collecting the dead into the fort. The militia under the command of Col. Jacob Klock returned to the (now) Town of Minden near Fort Plain & lay at the house of one Mr. Seeber. Deponent thinks soon after this he returned to Stone Arabia. The last of November or the first of December the Indians made their appearance in the north part of Stone Arabia. The militia were called out & deponent went with them to scout the county in pursuit of the Indians & were out a day or two. A few days after this the Indians again appeared in the same part of Stone Arabia & took a few prisoners & deponent & the militia went again in pursuit.

The next March in the year 1779, the Indians & Tories, as it was reported had collected in the north part of Stone Arabia in a settlement called Tilloborough. The militia were called out & deponent went in a company commanded by Samuel Gray. The militia collected at the house of Capt. Christian Getman, which was picketed & where at times regular troops lay, & where a guard was kept. The militia was out a few days. Deponent & one Peter Getman were sent out to scout the country, went on show shoes could find no Indians & returned to Stone Arabia. In February preceding a company was enlisted at Stone Arabia under Capt. Samuel Gray for the purpose of carrying provisions & ammunition from Schenectady to Fort Stanwix in boats, & to the other forts between, located near the Mohawk River. The company mustered at Albany in February & was then sent home till the river opened in the spring. In April as deponent believes, the company again mustered at Albany, & then went to Schenectady to load the boats & proceed up the river to Fort Stanwix. Colonel VanSchaick commanded a regiment of troops that went in company with the boats; from Fort Stanwix Col VanSchaick Regiment & Captain Grays Company went to Fort Bruewington [Brewerton] at the outlet of Oneida Lake, where this Captain Grays Company & a small guard remained, & the regiment

proceeded to destroy Oneida Castle.¹ The troops returned in a few days & brot with them about thirty Indians prisoners, who were put on board the boat & taken to Schenectady. The boatmen, being Capt. Gray's company, went twice after this to Fort Stanwix, as deponent believes. In June deponent thinks, the boatmen had permission to volunteer & go with the troops under the Command of General Clinton, who had passed up the Mohawk River early in the Spring to Canajoharie & from there had proceeded to Cooperstown at the foot of Otsego Lake, in the now County of Otsego. Deponent with several others of the boatmen joined the troops & Genl. Clinton at Cooperstown. They remained there a few weeks & then Genl. Clinton proceeded down the river & joined Genl. Sullivan at Tioga about the middle of August as deponent believes. The army under the Command of Genl. Sullivan marched soon after to Chemung about twelves miles as deponent believes. The next day the army met the whole force of the Indians & Tories at Newtown. A battle was fought the enemy was soon driven from the position & retreated. Deponent was solicited to help man boats to convey the wounded to Tioga & from there to Wyoming about one hundred miles below Tioga on the Susquehannah River. From the latter place deponent returned with the boats to carry provisions to the fort at Tioga, at which deponent remained till Genl. Sullivan returned from his expedition in the Indian County. Deponent went with the army to Wyoming & from there to Easton about sixty five miles situated on the Delaware River. The army lay at Easton a few days & then permission was given to the company to which deponent belonged commanded by Capt. Samuel Gray to proceed to Schenectady in the State of New York as fast as they pleased. The company crossed the Delaware at Easton & proceeded through the State of New Jersey to New Windsor situated on the North River a short distance above the highlands in the State of New York. They stayed at this place a few days & then proceeded home to Stone Arabia where they arrived late in the fall.

In January following, the year 1780, deponent again enlisted to carry provisions to Fort Stanwix & other forts west of Schenectady as before stated & went to Albany in February to muster, & was then sent home to remain till the river opened in the spring, at which time deponent went to Schenectady & commenced boating, & continued in the same service most of the time till late in the fall. Samuel Gray was Captain or had command & direction of the boats, & each boat was manned by three men. During the summer the boats, three in number, as deponent believes, were on their way to Fort Stanwix & had proceeded as far as old Fort Schuyler where the City of Utica in the County of Oneida is now situated, when they were informed by a friendly Indian that Indians commanded by Brant were in ambush up the river to surprise & take the boats. The boatmen landed & picketed in a small spot of ground adjoining the bank of the river opposite their boats, to secure themselves against the attack of the Indians. They sent an express immediately to Schenectady for relief & Genl. Van Rensselaer came up the

Mohawk River, collected the militia on his way & relieved them after they had been there eleven or twelve days, & guarded them safe to Fort Stanwix. In October of this year deponent was permitted to go home to Stone Arabia on furlough from Schenectady. While he was there the enemy burnt Schoharie & Caghawaga & proceeded up the Mohawk River. Col. Brown, who commanded a small fort at Stone Arabia received orders from Genl. Van Rensselaer who was coming up the river from Schenectady, to give the enemy battle, & he would attack them in the rear. Brown marched out of the fort & attacked the enemy. Deponent & other militia of the Stone Arabia joined Brown & were in the battle. Brown fell fighting manfully & about thirty or forty of his men were also killed & the remainder retreated. Genl. Van Rensselaer did not come to the aide of Brown as he had promised. The next day deponent joined Gen, Van Rensselaer & pursued the enemy beyond Fort Herkimer & the day after returned to Stone Arabia. Within a few days deponent went to Schenectady & continued to serve as a boatman till the river closed in the fall, when deponent returned to Stone Arabia. In the winter following Col. Willett came to Fort Plain & commanded the troops & militia on the Mohawk River till the close of the war. Deponent was frequently out on scouting parties in the spring & forepart of summer.

In June Jacob Klock who resided on the Mohawk River in the (now) Town of Oppenheim in Montgomery County, & who had been a Lieutenant in the Continental Service turned Tory & went to Canada. He took with him several of his neighbors. In four weeks [from the – crossed out] said Klock & those who left with him returned with a party of Indians & Tories & Canadians. One Philip Helmer, who went to Canada with said Klock, left the enemy & informed the inhabitants of the approach of the Indians & Tories. An express [*i.e.* messenger] was sent to Stone Arabia on Sunday & deponent & all the militia turned out. They were joined by a company of New Levies [Willett's State troops] under the command of Capt. Jacob Simmons & Lieutenant Isaac Perry & went in search of the enemy. Deponent & six others sent as an advance guard & to follow the trail of the enemy. They overtook the enemy about noon, in the woods & fired upon them & killed one Indian. The enemy were resting when they were discovered & when fired upon fled & left all their packs & many left their guns & hats. One of the party scalped the Indian that was killed & Andrew Gray carried the scalp to the fort at Stone Arabia. The enemy fled immediately from the country. Deponent was frequently out on scouting parties during the summer & the first of September as he believes a party of Indians & Tories attacked a block house occupied by Jacob Timmerman in the (now) Town of Oppenheim in the said County of Montgomery. The alarm was given & the militia [& the militia – crossed out] were called out at Stone Arabia & joined Col. Willett at the block house & went in pursuit of the enemy who had fled & taken several prisoners who resided near said blockhouse & pursued them to Jerseyfield (now) the north part of the County of Herkimer & then returned home. After this & during the fall the Indians again made their appearance on the Mohawk River & killed one Foster

& his family & burnt his buildings. The alarm was given & the militia turned out at Stone Arabia & pursued the enemy a day or two & then returned home. From this time till late in the fall there were alarms frequently given, parties of two and three Indians each were prowling about & whenever they were discovered or attacked the inhabitants of any part of the country the militia always turned out, & very often without finding the enemy. Several times during the following winter deponent was called out with the militia of Stone Arabia.

During the war & in the winter a settlement (now) in the Town of Fairfield in the said County of Herkimer was attacked by the Indians. Several of the inhabitants were killed & others taken prisoner & their buildings were burnt & property destroyed. Another settlement in the (now) northeast part of the County of Herkimer was attacked by the Indians & the inhabitants were taken prisoners & their buildings & property destroyed. Deponent was out with the militia in pursuit of the enemy at both times last stated, thinks it was in the first part of the year 1782, but will not be certain.²

In the spring of the year 1782 deponent went with a part of his company under the command of Capt. Samuel Gray to Fort Plain, then commanded by Col. Willett. They stayed a few days at Fort Plain & then the troops under the command of Col. Willett went into the south part of the (now) County of Montgomery to a place called Bowmans Creek in pursuit of the Indians & Tories who had collected there. They fled at the approach of Willet & the troops after traversing the country for a few days they returned to Fort Plain. From this time till the first of October deponent was [engaged – crossed out] at Fort Plain, Fort Plank about two miles west of Fort Plain, & at Fort Herkimer & with the militia traversing the country in pursuit of small parties of Indians & Tories that infested the country. In October the British, Indians, & Tories under the Command of Major Ross & Walter Butler made their appearance on the Mohawk River in the (now) County of Montgomery. The alarm spread through the country. Deponent & two other young men started from Stone Arabia & went down the Mohawk River about twelve miles & joined Col. Willett at a place called Anthony's Nose. Willett proceeded down the south side of the river a few miles below Caghawaga where Willett met an express who informed him the enemy was on the north side of the Mohawk River & on their way to Johnstown. Willett returned up the river & crossed over to Caghawaga where he sent deponent & one William Wallace as a scout to ascertain the situation of the enemy. They proceeded to Johnstown & discovered the enemy a little distance west of Johnson Hall, they were building fires & encamping. Wallace returned to inform Col. Willett & deponent remained at the jail with six persons who were under the Command of one Capt. Lidle [Little], then keeper of the jail. Deponent & the company under Capt. Lidle, when they saw Col. Willett advancing, proceeded to the place where the enemy had built their fires & saw them retreating into the woods about half a mile to the north, towards Kingsborough. Deponent & his party pursued as fast as they could

run & came up close to the woods & halted. Col. Willett sent a party of men under the command of Major Andrew Finck to join Capt. Liddles party & enter into the woods & fire upon the enemy & then retreat & bait the enemy out into the field. They entered into the woods a short distance & were fired upon by the enemy & one or two of their party [were] killed. They returned the fire & the enemy retreated & deponent & his party pursued them about half a mile into the woods. When they came up to the main body of the enemy deponent & Major Finck were in advance of their party & were fired upon by the enemy who stood on the top of the hill above them. The balls stuck in the tree ten or fifteen feet over deponents head. Deponent fired at an Indian not more than twenty paces distant & the Indian fell. Major Fink then called out to his men to retreat as the enemy were surrounding them & they retreated into the open field & were followed by the enemy. Deponent & his party joined a company under the command of Capt. Moody, who had command of a cannon. They made a stand a short time when they saw a large party of the enemy going through the woods to surround them & cut off their retreat to the town & then deponent & his party left the cannon & retreated to the town & joined Col. Willett, who had rallied his men & had received a reinforcement of militia. Willett advanced to meet the enemy & again took the cannon & the enemy were driven from the field & retreated. During the battle several of deponents friends & companions from Stone Arabia were severely wounded & deponent was requested to go to Stone Arabia to inform their friend & bring them to Johnstown to take care of the wounded. Deponent started immediately & went [to Stone Arabia – crossed out] in the night to Stone Arabia about 12 miles & ate nothing from early in the morning till late at night when he arrived at Stone Arabia. The next morning deponent returned to Johnstown to join Col. Willett, who deponent learned had gone in pursuit of the enemy & deponent followed Willett to Fort Herkimer & stayed at the fort one night. All the militia had gone with Willett in pursuit of the enemy & deponent returned home to Stone Arabia. This battle between the enemy & Colonel Willett at Johnstown deponent verily believes was in the fall of the year 1782 as above stated, but by many of the Revolutionary soldiers it is said this battle was fought in the fall of the year 1781 which deponent thinks is incorrect.³

In the winter following many of the Tories that had joined Ross & Butler at Johnstown returned home to the (now) County of Montgomery. The Whigs were so much enraged against them that they went in parties & whipped the Tories. The Tories swore the [blazes ?] of them, & the Whigs, to the number of eight or nine, went captive to jail at Johnstown. The news was brought to Stone Arabia & deponent & several others went to Johnstown, broke [into] the jail & liberated the prisoners. The same winter Jacob Klock, who had been a Lieutenant in the Continental service, & turned Tory as above mentioned, returned home about six miles from Stone Arabia. His father & Capt. Christian House sent a letter to Stone Arabia saying they would protect him to the utmost of their power. The militia of Stone Arabia were collected to go & take said Klock & they chose deponent, Samuel Gray & Isaac Paris their leaders & went to the house of said Klock's father,

where he stayed & was kantonned [*i.e.* cantoned], but he had fled to the woods. A file of men was sent after said House & brought him to said Klock's & said House and said Klock had to beg for their lives with their hats under their armes & confess they had done wrong & promised to do better.⁴

That he is unable to obtain any witness who can testify in detail to his service and has made signed formal witness that he was born at Stone Arabia in the now County of Montgomery in the year 1756. That he has no record of his age. That when he entered the service of the United States in the Revolutionary War he resided at Amsterdam in the Palatine District in the now County of Montgomery.⁵ Since the Revolutionary War he resided at Stone Arabia about two years when he removed to the now Town of Little Falls in Herkimer County where he now resides.

That he rendered his first service in the militia in which he was enrolled. In 1778 he was drafted and served as in his statement related & in 1780 he volunteered to enter the service and served as a volunteer as related in his statement.

Some of the regular officers who were with the troops where he served, Colonel Willett, Colonel Gansevoort, General Clinton, Col. VanSchaick, Gen. Sullivan, Gen. Poor, Gen. Hand, Gen. Maxwell, Gen. James Clinton, Surgeon Doctor Green.

That he never received a written discharge except the affidavit hereto annexed made before Peter S. Dygert a Justice of the Peace on the day of this taking and date thereof, the 14 January 1783, which affidavit is signed by Samuel Gray who was the Captain of the deponent during the war, and the others were the deponents companions in many a perilous scout upon the trail after Indians & Tories serving the term stated in said affidavit. Deponent saith that his name then & many times since has been spelled Vetter, but saith this affidavit was made for him this deponent, & has been ever since been in deponent's possession. Deponent saith that all the persons who have signed said affidavit are dead except Barent Cryser [Chrysler] who is so feeble in mind as not to remember scarcely anything.

... [Repeats information in last paragraph] ... That he is known to Peter Woolaver of the Town of Manheim & John P. Spinner minister of the gospel of the Town of Herkimer [from his neighborhood – crossed out] who can testify as to his character for veracity and their belief as to his service 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.

Sworn to & subscribed, the day & year aforesaid in open court.

[signed] William Fater

Julius C. Nelson, Clerk

[Transcript of document submitted as evidence and mentioned above]

State of New York

That the representatives & Inhabitants of the County of Tryon testify, certify and declare upon oath that William Vetter of Palatine District and County aforesaid hath constantly and uniformly since the ninth day of July 1776 demeaned himself as a friend to freedom and independence of the United States and hath, as far as his circumstances would admit taken an active and defensive part to maintain and perpetuate the same.

Sworn before me this 14 day of January 1783.

Peter S. Deygert, Justice

Samuel Gray	Martin Nesbet	Conrath Kils [Kilts]
George Sprege [Spraker]	Andrew Wirner [Warner]	Peter B. Young
Gerred Lesaker [Lenneker ?]	Gerele Kern	Richd. Young
Wellem Warmud [Wormuth]	Barend Crysler [Chrysler]	Frances Bader [Bauder]

¹ Feeter is mistaken, Van Schaick's expedition was against the *Onondaga* village, not the *Oneidas*. The *Oneidas* remained allied to U.S. interests throughout the war.

² The two raids Feeter references in the northeastern part of what is now the Town of Manheim occurred in the late winter and early spring of 1780. The earlier raid was on March 15; the second attack came on April 3, 1780.

³ Once again the applicant's memory is faulty. The Battle of Johnstown was fought on October 25, 1781.

⁴ This is an interesting and rare account of enmity and coercive activities that must have occurred regularly after 1782, when loyalists attempted to return to their former homes in the Mohawk Valley. Official documents and records rarely refer to these incidents.

⁵ The city of Amsterdam was actually in the Mohawk District, Tryon County in 1776. By 1832, it was in the Town of Amsterdam, Montgomery County. Not surprisingly, 57 years later the judge who attested to this document in neighboring Herkimer County did not realize this was a mistake.