

Pension Application for John P. Miller

S.11082

State of New York

Montgomery County SS.

On this twenty [section missing] personally appeared before [missing] one of the Judges of the Court of Common pleas in & for the County aforesaid John P. Miller a resident of the Town of Minden in the County & State aforesaid, aged seventy three years, who being first duly sworn aforesaid, aged seventy three 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 during the whole Revolutionary War he resided in a town there called Canajoharie, now that portion in which he then resided & now resides, is called Minden. That in the year 1776 being one of the militia in Tryon County (then so called) he was called upon as a soldier & entered the service of his country, discharged his duty as such, for several years, in a variety of way, circumstances & places, but all the particular thereof, in systematick detail, he cannot now state with precision, owing to the lapse of time & the infirmity of age—but does recollect that at said time Henry Diefendorf was his Captain, Jacob Diefendorf, Lieutenant & George Cantreman, Ensign—that he was then about seventeen years of age—

He recollects that a Mr. Cox (Christian name not remembered) was a high officer in the Regiment, but what office he held, does not now remember—during said year he was called upon several times to stand as sentinel on guard at different Forts, in Tryon County, to guard the inhabitants against Tories & Indians, who were then committing, as they continued during the War, murders and devastations along the border of the Mohawk, where deponent resided, but cannot distinctly now recollect, but one or two of said Forts, viz, Fort Plank, near deponents then residence & a Fort at Stone Arabia, in the then Palatine district & now also called by said name, while last Fort was about seven miles distant from deponent's residence. That he was on duty at said Forts during said year, for several weeks, cannot tell the number.

That in the summer of said year (month not remembered) he & some or all of his company with the regiment he believes, were called upon & ordered into service, but under command of what Colonel, he does not remember, but recollects Cox held a high office & was then with them. They were then commanded by & under Genl Nicholas Herkimer & marched through Cherry Valley to Unadilla, now in Otsego County about seventeen miles from deponent's residence at which place we remained several weeks, perhaps from five or six weeks, & at all events until some satisfactory arrangement or understanding was effected between Genl. Herkimer & the commanding officer of the enemy, viz. Colo Joseph Brandt, who commanded a larger party of Indians & Tories.

We were then discharged & returned to our respective homes—the time during said year that he served his country at different Forts as guard & at Unadilla

aforesaid, in going to, returning from & remained at said places, he cannot now precisely tell but thinks & verily believes said time in all amounts to about three or four months more or less—that on his return from Unadilla, he thinks but is not positive, he served as a soldier about the Forts & in scouting parties, but how long, cannot tell. Scouting parties was a common thing & necessary precaution in those perilous days along the Mohawk—

Besides in the summer of 77 aforesaid, what month he cannot tell, but recollects the apples were getting eatable, he with the company & regiment aforesaid, under the officers aforesaid, were again called upon, in defence of their country, & marched westward, up along the Mohawk, towards & for Oriskany, to engage in fighting the enemy, but on the march, deponent was taken sick & remained at Fort Herkimer, in Herkimer County, near or at the Mohawk & about twenty miles from his residence, where he remained several weeks, cannot tell how many & was there at said Fort, on duty, during the Oriskany engagement & remembers well that whilst stationed at said Fort Herk'r, an alarm came, that the Indians [?] were committing havoc & devastation down the Mohawk, about eight or ten miles below, at or near the Indian Castle (so called) when he & other fellow soldiers, went pursuant to order, in the night to said place, in order to protect the inhabitants & their property, when it turned out to be a false alarm, but recollects well that he & his fellow soldiers remained there stationed, but recollects well that he & his fellow soldiers remained there stationed, to protect as aforesaid if necessary, for about three weeks.

He recollects that at the Oriskany battle aforesaid, his captain viz. [??] of aforesaid was killed—also the same Cox, who was at Unadilla as aforesaid, a high officer—also our Genl Herkimer there received a wound, of which he subsequently died—that the time he was on duty at Fort Herkimer, at or near the Indian Castle on this occasion & in going to & from said places, he cannot precisely state but thinks & believes it was nine or ten weeks in all—

That now one Jacob Diefendorf (who had been Lieutenant) became his captain – further says he is sure that in 77 before & after the Oriskany battle in the spring, summer and fall, he did duty or guard around & about the Forts aforesaid & in scouting parties as aforesaid, he was employed as a soldier in defence of his country three months at least.

The most service, at this time, about Forts, was at Fort Plank. That in the ensuing winter of '78 or he now recollects and thinks it was before or about the first of January he & many of his fellow soldiers were ordered to go to Lake George to repair damages the enemy had done the Americans by burning & destroying their Forts, Boats &c he went down & along the Valley of the Mohawk or as far as to Schenectady, there remained a short time, from thence they were transported in a sleigh to Saratoga, from thence they went to Lake George, when he & others were engaged in the winter in chopping [tear] timber in the [missing] & in building the Forts & Boats aforesaid [missing] & employment he recollects no officer except Genl. Schuyler, who was there & superintended the works—when they completed the objects of destination they returned home by the way of Half Moon & Schenectady & got home in the spring,

when they were preparing to manufacture Maple Sugar, which as generally in March & April—that all the time thus occupied in going to remaining at & returning from Lake George, was three months at least, according to deponents best recollection.

Deponent has no clear or distinct recollection of having been at Cherry Valley twice, or as a soldier, that is to say, any other time than as above mentioned, when he went to Unadilla & which was or he believes in 1779, but does recollect clearly that a report came to him & his neighbors that the enemy were about committing or had committed murders & conflagrations at said village & that he & others were ordered to go there & did go to protect inhabitants & property, under whose command as officers, he does not recollect, but we must have had one. When we arrived at Cherry Valley it was too late many inhabitants had been murdered, the settlement burnt down & the enemy had disappeared—whilst there he distinctly recollects of seeing dead bodies, which had been murdered by the enemy—the time when Cherry Valley was destroyed was November 78 as deponent is informed & believes—hence he thinks & believes he was at said place twice.

Cherry Valley is about seventeen or eighteen miles from deponents then residence—he remained at C. Valley a short time, but can't tell how long – during said year he was also called out as a soldier (can't tell what month) by his officers aforesaid & did duty in & about the Forts in his neighborhood as guard & sentinel & also engaged in scouting parties, to guard against incursions of Indians & Tories, who were continually infesting the Mohawk country—and though he can't remember all the time of such service, in such capacity, but should think it was three months at least.

That in 1780 he was again pursuant to orders from his officers employed as sentinel & scout—the most part of the time, as aforesaid, until some time in the summer, but what month cannot remember, the militia were ordered to Fort Stanwix, in the present County of Oneida, 15 or 20 miles above Utica, we marched up along the Mohawk, about sixty miles, under command of Genl VanRensselaer but recollects no other officers, we went to guard the Boats going up said river containing munitions, provisions &c –

After reaching Fort Stanwix we stayed a short time & then returned—in all this time he was engaged about two weeks—that in the following fall what month can't recollect, he thinks it was that he with the Militia were ordered to go west to West Canada Creek under command of Major Coopman, Major Fink & Colo. Willett, but recollects no other officer in pursuit, until some of that under command of Col. Marinus Willet, pursued Butler's party still further, but without success & thereupon the soldiers & officers returned home & he thinks the time thus on duty, in pursuing Butler, until he returned home, was three weeks or thereabouts—

That all the time this season that he was on duty, under his officers, or guard he at home & about the Forts, his march to Fort Stanwix & in pursuit of Butler he can't precisely tell, but thinks it must be at least four months—he distinctly recollects a second time he went with others on duty as a soldier to Fort Stanwix aforesaid & thinks it was in the spring, but what month or year he cannot now possibly state, but thinks it was in 1780—

The officers commanding him, then, he cannot recall to mind—he believes the time thus, on this occasion, employed was three weeks, more in said year, than above computed.

During the remainder of the Revolution he was on duty, under his officers aforesaid, just part of the time, as guard & scout, but nothing remarkable which fixes times, facts he in his mind, except that on one occasion as scout he & others travelled to Schuyler's Lake, twenty odd miles distant, through the wilderness, in the now Otsego county under command of an officer by the name of Grey (Christian name not remembered) either a Lieutenant or Capt's to spy out Indians & Tories, who were said to be depredating, murdering [?] & was thus engaged in this tour, several days—on another occasion he went as scout under command of an officer from & out of Fort Plank (name not remembered) & the same Lieut or Capt Grey went again—another went to Andreas Town (so then called) in Otsego C'y aforesaid, about twenty five miles distant from said Fort, through wilderness & from there we took a circuit wes[t]wardly & came out at Fort Herkimer aforesaid, about twenty miles up the Mohawk & from deponent's residence & from thence home & were again absent for a number of days, can't tell how many—

That during said remainder of the war he was engaged as scout about the country at different places & as guard at the Forts, in particular Fort Plank & did duty under his officers, at least three months in each year as he is satisfied, this is in 1781, 2 & 3. He remembers well that besides having served under Capt. Henry & Jacob Diefendorf in succession, he also served under Captains Geo. Contreman & Joseph House, in succession, & which said Joseph House afterwards became a Major—

Does not recollect of ever getting a regular discharge—if so, he has lost it—

Don't know in what year he was born, but thinks, from information he was seventy three years old last February—has no record of his age except the Church Book, which was always said to be in Albany, but has never seen it to his recollection—

He was born in the Town of Minden aforesaid & has there resided ever since—served during the war as one of the Militia of Tryon County.

Has no documentary evidence of his services during the war—

Has no recollection of his then knowing any regular officers of the Continental line—served with no Continental regiments or company—

He knows of no fellow soldier, living, who can testify to all his services during the war & indeed it would be, even they all living, impossible for he always believed he did more service for his country during the war, than almost any one of the Militia, of his acquaintance.

He further states that, besides the above services detailed, he now remembers one weeks services, in the e 1779 or as he thinks at another place in the now town of Minden about four miles from my house when he & others of the militia were stationed, to guard & or scout against Tories & Indians, but officers not recollected – his services during the whole war, was as volunteer soldier, he always having got [?]

when he & the militia were called upon to draft for services, which was several times that he drafted but get free the number of time not recollected.

Deponent 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. John P. Millers mark X

Subscribed & sworn the 25th day of Sept 1832 before me Henry J. Dievendorff, a judge of the Court of Montgomery County Common Pleas Court.

Letter in folder dated July 18, 1935, written in response to an inquiry.

Reference is made to your letter in which you request the record of your great great grandfather, John P. Miller, born in 1760, died January 13, 1837, who lived at Fort Plain, Montgomery County, New York, during the Revolutionary War, fought in the battle of Oriskany and served under General Herkimer.

The data which follow are obtained from the papers on file in Revolutionary War pension claim, S.11082, based upon the military service in that war of John P. Miller.

John P. Miller was born in Minden, Montgomery County, New York. Soldier stated that he was not certain as to the date of his birth, but thought that he was seventy-two years of age in February, 1832. The names of his parents are not shown.

While residing in Canajoharie, New York, he volunteered in 1776, and served at various times on short tours until 1782 under Captains Henry Diffendorf, Jacob Diffendorf, George Condreman and Joseph House, Colonels Ebenezer Cox, Clyde and Marinus Willett, Generals Schuyler and Nicholas Herkimer in the New York Troops. He served as a guard at Forts Plank and at the fort at Stone Arabia, went on one tour to Unadilla, started for Oriskany, but was taken sick on the road and remained at Fort Herkimer, and did not participate in the battle of Oriskany; went to Lake George and working during one winter in the woods cutting lumber and rebuilding forts and boats destroyed by the enemy; wen tot Cherry Valley when that village was burned and its inhabitants killed; marched along the Mohawk River guarding the boats loaded with provisions and ammuniton; and wen to West Canada Creek at the time General Butler was killed. His entire service amounted to one year and eight months.

He was allowed pension on his application executed September 5, 1832, while residing in Minden, New York.

John P. Miller died January 13, 1837, place not shown.

There are no data as to soldier's family.